

**"Feminism and the Cold War in the U.S. Occupation of Japan, 1945 – 1952"**

Mire KOIKARI

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Providing historical context for contemporary political issues relevant to women and gender in Japan, this first article examines gendered power structures in the U.S. Occupation of Japan (1945-1952). Occupational policies targeted Japanese women and the ideal of gender equity to remake Japan as a democratic nation. The Constitution of Japan, enacted May 3, 1947, states that "All of the people are equal under the law and there shall be no discrimination in political, economic or social relations because of race, creed, sex, social status or family origin" (Article 14).<sup>1</sup> In addition, women received the right to vote and to mutual consent in marriage based on the "equal rights of husband and wife" (Article 24). Although drafting and revising the post-WWII constitution involved numerous political actors including a few Japanese women, historical accounts of this complex process often celebrate General Douglas MacArthur (1880-1964) as a generous patriarch who "granted" rights to women in Japan. Similarly, historians in the U.S. and Japan credit women working for the occupation forces, such as Beate Sirota Gordon (1923- ), for "giving" Japanese women gender equality. Depicted as a liberator who helped to rescue Japanese women from feudalistic traditions, Lt. Ethel Weed (1906-1975) encouraged women to "pull themselves up by their *geta* straps to pioneer in democratic procedures."<sup>2</sup>

The author, Mire Koikari, challenges this gendered narrative of the occupation as a triumph of democratic emancipation for women. She argues that gender reform under the occupation represents an example of "imperial feminism" whereby women's liberation cannot be separated from Cold War "imperialist dynamics of gender, race, class, and nation." In order to view women's negotiations with power as dynamic and multifaceted, Koikari employs an interdisciplinary approach to analyzing the occupation. Her article creates a dialogue between occupation studies, feminist colonial studies, and Cold War cultural studies.

Koikari notes that occupation studies, which remain a primarily "masculine" field, often overlook the crucial intersections between race, gender, and empire, even in their treatment of female historical agents. While creating a space for women's voices, recent feminist colonial scholarship recognizes the importance of challenging the role women play in supporting, promoting, and expanding the goals of imperialism. Koikari cites historian Tani Barlow (1997) to explain how gender under the U.S. Occupation remained closely linked to Japan's own imperial history. Koikari argues that American female occupiers' efforts to empower Japanese women ironically helped to reassert some of the same racial and national dynamics central to Japan's history as a colonial power, particularly those related to "modernizing" women's bodily practices in Okinawa, Hokkaido, Taiwan, and Korea.

<sup>1</sup> From the English translation provided on the Prime Minister and Cabinet of Japan website, [http://www.kantei.go.jp/fo\\_reign/constitution\\_and\\_government\\_of\\_japan/constitution\\_e.html](http://www.kantei.go.jp/fo_reign/constitution_and_government_of_japan/constitution_e.html)

<sup>2</sup> Comment from Ethel Weed recorded in 1948, cited in Koikari (1999, 348CHECK) and as a header quote for the introduction to her book, *Pedagogy of Democracy* (YEAR).

Finally, the author addresses how the occupation must be situated within gendered politics of the Cold War era, especially new meanings associated with a post-WWII “cult of domesticity.” Cold War civil defense programs and military notions of containment targeted female gendered spaces of the home, kitchen, and even bomb shelters. However, as Koikari concludes, Japanese women actively participated in but also resisted Cold War politics of domesticity and should not be viewed as helpless victims without historical agency. Overall, this article offers new insights on the U.S. occupation of Japan along with an accessible review of current scholarship for studying women and gender as a category of historical analysis in postwar Japan.

## Feminism and the Cold War in the U.S. Occupation of Japan, 1945 – 1952

Mire Koikari

### Introduction

On August 15, 1945, World War II came to an end with Japan's unconditional surrender. General Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP), flew from the Philippines to Japan with a mission to occupy and demilitarize the defeated nation. The place and manner of MacArthur's arrival seemed to signal the victor's absolute confidence and unquestioned authority over its vanquished enemy. MacArthur – the embodiment of U.S. military power and a consummate actor well known for his grand performance – landed at the Atsugi Airfield, previously a training field for Japanese kamikaze fighters, with a handful of Allied troops. MacArthur himself was armed only with a cornucob pipe. Despite his staff's concern about possible attacks by enemy soldiers not yet disarmed, MacArthur's triumphant landing was followed by a smooth procession to the New Grand Hotel in Yokohama and later an entry into Tokyo where he established the General Headquarters (GHQ) of SCAP in the Dai-ichi Seimei Insurance Building. A new chapter of postwar U.S.-Japan relations thus opened with richly gendered and racialized symbolism: the United State's imposition of white masculine military authority over Japan, now a defeated and subjugated nation in the Far East.



Following the ferocious belligerence between the enemies in World War II, many Japanese feared that the objective of the occupation was to punish Japan. Yet, MacArthur declared U.S. intentions benign and noble: to "reorient" and "rehabilitate" Japan into a modern, democratic, and enlightened nation. Perceiving the Japanese as an "alien race of spiritual growth stunted by long tenure under the physical, mental and cultural strictures of feudal precepts," he was supremely confident of his ability to transplant American ideals to Japan and to civilize its subjects. He had what he considered evidence to support his conviction: a half century of U.S. governance in the Philippines had demonstrated America's capacity to "civilize" an alien and inferior race and lay the foundations for "democracy" abroad. Just as the U.S. policy of "benign assimilation" in the Philippines had uplifted its subjects from a state of ignorance and savagery, so would the U.S. occupation give the Japanese an unprecedented opportunity for civilization and enlightenment.<sup>1</sup>

It was within this context of the American project to civilize and democratize a racially inferior other that Japanese women as gendered subjects emerged as centrally important figures. Seen by the occupation authorities as victims for centuries of "Oriental male chauvinism," Japanese women embodied feudal tradition, backwardness, and lack of civilization. As helpless women of color, they became ideal candidates for American salvation and emancipation. The occupier's zeal for liberation of Japanese women from indigenous male domination was all-consuming and

multifaceted. MacArthur granted suffrage to Japanese women and praised their "progress" under U.S. tutelage as setting an example for the world.<sup>2</sup> Other male occupiers "emancipated" Japanese women by initiating various constitutional and legal changes and policies. Following a familiar colonial trope of heterosexual rescue and romance, some American men expressed their desire to save Japanese women in more personal ways: Earnest Hoberecht, a correspondent for United Press International, advocated kissing as a path to liberation.<sup>3</sup> Raymond Higgins, the military governor stationed in Hiroshima, married his Japanese maid to "save" her from the aftermath of the atomic bomb and her abusive husband.<sup>4</sup>

The postwar U.S.-Japan encounter involved dynamics that went beyond the colonial trope of heterosexual romance, however. No less earnest in their attempt to emancipate and transform Japanese women were American women reformers in the occupation forces. Beate Sirota Gordon, a twenty-two-year-old European Jewish immigrant to the US who had spent early years in Japan, pushed for a constitutional guarantee of gender equality – a guarantee nonexistent in the United States – as “the only woman in the room” where American male reformers debated the contours and content of postwar Japanese constitution.

A group of American women occupiers led by Ethel Weed worked tirelessly to implement the ideal of gender equality and transform Japanese women at the grassroots level. Using skits, role playing, pamphlets, among others, women occupiers such as Carmen Johnson and Helen Hosp Seamans disseminated the spirit and practice of “democracy” among Japanese women with whom they often formed strong bonds that continued well after the occupation. These American women's passion for gender reform was all the more remarkable, as they were utterly unfamiliar with Japan, with few exceptions had no Japanese language skills, received no extensive training for their task, and were often relegated to marginal positions within the predominantly male SCAP bureaucracy. Many Japanese women enthusiastically welcomed American reformers and their efforts to democratize Japan, and tapped into shared discursive repertoires of gender equality and democracy to articulate their own visions of postwar womanhood. For some, such as KatÅ • Shizue, the occupation provided unprecedented opportunities to collaborate with American reformers and to promote herself as the feminist leader in postwar Japan. Even those who explicitly challenged American rule, such as Nosaka RyÅ • and Miyamoto Yuriko who were communist writer-activists and champions of working-class women's causes, also benefited from the occupation as they stepped into a new space opened up by American reformers to articulate their own visions of gender and nation in postwar Japan.



**Gordon in the Occupation**

Over the past six decades, belief in the successful transformation of Japanese women's lives provided many occupiers and subsequent generations of Americans with "unquestionable" evidence that U.S. interventions in Japan were beneficent. The picture of Japanese women being liberated from feudal male domination and gaining new rights under U.S. tutelage is also etched in the minds of many Japanese, and is understood as a turning point in the history of Japan. The view of the occupation as a remarkably generous effort by the victor to democratize Japan and emancipate its women has constituted a gendered historical account shaping American and Japanese self-understandings.



Kato Shidzue with Margaret Sanger

### Rethinking the Occupation: Women, Gender, and Cold War US Imperialism

*Pedagogy of Democracy: Feminism and the Cold War in the U.S. Occupation of Japan* (Temple University Press, 2008) intervenes in the triumphant narrative of the occupation, women, and democracy to provide a critical feminist perspective. Rather than assessing the impact of constitutional revision, civil code reform, and other gender reform on Japanese women, it traces how the occupation opened up a new space where American and Japanese women would articulate certain forms of feminism by drawing on prewar notions of gender, race, nation and empire and refitting them to the Cold War context of anti-communism and imperial expansionism. Far from a moment of women's liberation, the occupation's gender reform was a case of "imperial feminism"<sup>5</sup> where the agenda of "women's emancipation" became deeply intertwined with imperialist dynamics of gender, race, class, and nation, turning American and Japanese women into complicit participants in the Cold War.

Specifically, during the occupation, American women participated in U.S. imperialism by disseminating Cold War discourses of femininity and domesticity and promoting the Americanization of postwar Japan in the name of women's emancipation. Such a project of women's emancipation was inspired by, and in turn promoted and justified, U.S. imperial expansionism, sustaining the pattern of feminism's collaboration with nationalist and imperialist politics that had emerged since the late nineteenth century. At the same time, American women also subverted the dominant structure of power, as their participation in gender reform in a foreign country visibly contradicted the Cold War notion of women safely contained within domestic boundaries.

Equally complex dynamics were observed among Japanese women. Japanese middle-class women enthusiastically welcomed the occupiers' reform project and embraced American discourses of democracy and gender equality, while also re-circulating prewar and wartime discourses of women, family, and nation in order to reassert their own respectability as "Japanese women."<sup>6</sup> Despite their complicity in dominant dynamics of power, Japanese women also developed a close personal bond with American women reformers, deviating however subtly from the Cold War tenet of heterosexual normativity and causing anxiety among American male occupiers. At times, Japanese women's resistance led to outcomes at odds with the occupation authorities. Women unionists openly defied the Americans by participating in communist-led labor protests and praising gender policies in the Soviet Union and China. However, they also



hewed generally to Cold War ideals of domesticity and heterosexuality and stigmatized poor, economically displaced women who earned their means as prostitutes. In U.S.-occupied Japan, then, American and Japanese women were constantly stepping in and out of the dominant apparatus of power, sometimes reinforcing and at other times undermining an emerging structure of hegemony. Recast from a critical feminist perspective, the U.S. occupation of Japan becomes an extraordinarily dynamic and multifaceted story about women's negotiations with power. Simultaneous tenacity and instability of hegemony, and unpredictable and ironic outcomes of political mobilization attempted in the name of women's liberation, constitute the major facets of this historical drama.



**Pan Pan girls soliciting during the Occupation**

In analyzing the occupation as a case of Cold War imperial feminism, I create an interdisciplinary dialogue among occupation studies, feminist colonial and postcolonial studies, and Cold War cultural studies, each one of which highlights the centrality of gender for critical understandings of nineteenth- and twentieth-century global politics. As discussed below, this interdisciplinary dialogue not only results in richer analysis of the occupation itself; it also challenges each discipline to consider some of its preexisting analytical and empirical assumptions.

## Occupation Studies

Since the end of World War II, the task of documenting and evaluating the U.S. occupation of Japan has generated numerous and contentious debates among scholars and journalists in Japan and the United States, resulting in a large body of work collectively referred to as occupation studies, or *senryō • kenkyō*. Spearheaded by such notable scholars as John Dower, Carol Gluck, and Takemae Eiji among others, the field has produced diverse interpretations of the occupation,<sup>7</sup> including recent critical studies such as John Dower's *Embracing the Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* and Yukiko Koshiro's *Trans-Pacific Racisms and the U.S. Occupation of Japan*.<sup>8</sup> John Dower situates the occupation within the larger context of imperial culture, history, and politics and provides a genealogical perspective on race and racism. Observing American racism toward Japan during the war and the postwar occupation, he argues that American understanding of self as civilized and superior and Japan as uncivilized and inferior can be traced back not only to "racial stereotypes that Europeans and Americans had applied to nonwhites for centuries: during the conquest of the New World, the slave trade, the Indian Wars in the United States, the agitation against Chinese immigrants in America, the colonization of Asia and Africa, the U.S. conquest of the Philippines at the turn of the century," but more generally to the long-standing Western colonial vocabularies of the superior West and the inferior Orient/Other.<sup>9</sup> Defining the occupation as an instance of "imperial democracy" driven by the notion of white supremacy, he argues that "[f]or all its uniqueness of time, place,

and circumstance – all its peculiarly 'American' iconoclasm – the occupation was...but a new manifestation of the old racial paternalism that historically accompanied the global expansion of the Western powers."<sup>10</sup> Dower illuminates how within the context of American imperial democracy and racism Japanese actively engaged in a diverse range of political negotiations with the occupiers – from collaboration to manipulation to resistance – at the grassroots and intergovernmental levels.

Focusing on the parallel and mutually reinforcing development of American and Japanese racism and imperialism, Yukiko Koshiro argues that race constituted a common discursive ground where the two former enemies came to affirm each other's standing in international hierarchies, which led to "successful" and indeed "smooth" Cold War alliance making. Adopting Western imperial discourses of racial and national hierarchies (i.e., the superiority of self and the inferiority of others) to engineer its own colonial expansionism in Asia, Imperial Japan had constructed itself as an "honorary white," a nation capable of assimilating into superior Western culture and civilization while standing apart from and above other inferior Asians. Despite its challenge to Western imperialism during the war, Japan had affirmed and reinforced Western imperial understanding of white supremacy, and Western nations in turn had accepted to an extent Japan's sense of superiority to Asia and proximity to the West. This mutual dependency of Western and Japanese racism continued into the postwar years. After a short period of time during which race was used as a punitive tool to put Japan back in its "proper place," the United States actively cultivated and even manipulated Japan's admiration toward the West and its distance from the rest of Asia to transform the former enemy into an effective Cold War ally. As Koshiro argues, race and racism functioned as a source of productive power during the occupation.<sup>11</sup>

Despite its enormous contributions, however, occupation historiography has primarily been a "masculine" field of studies. Women may enter into discussions of the occupation in descriptive terms but are rarely treated as a central site of analysis where the occupation-time political and cultural dynamics could be reexamined and reinterpreted from new perspectives. Equally or more problematically, existing studies have hardly taken gender as an important category of historical analysis whose intersection with other vectors of power such as race, class, and nation deeply informed postwar U.S.-Japan negotiations.

Influenced by the increasing saliency of women's studies since the late 1970s, women scholars in the United States and Japan have begun to focus on women's experiences during the occupation and thereby intervene in the predominantly masculine field of occupation scholarship. Defining the occupation as an instance of "women's liberation," however, the dominant focus in this new body of scholarship has been on the positive effects the occupiers allegedly brought to Japanese women. Susan Pharr's influential article, "The Politics of Women's Rights," is a prime example. She analyzes the policymaking processes in which American women occupiers formed "an alliance for liberation" with middle- and upper-class Japanese women leaders and pursued women's rights against patriarchal resistance from both Japanese and American men. According to Pharr, the occupation was "the world's most radical experiment with women's rights" that resulted in successful "feminist reform": "The marriage of democracy and women's rights in the minds of most Occupation personnel heightened the significance of their contribution."<sup>12</sup> Such understanding of the occupation rarely questions the motives and intentions of American women

occupiers and ignores racism, sexism, classism, and imperialism that informed these women's practices in occupied Japan.

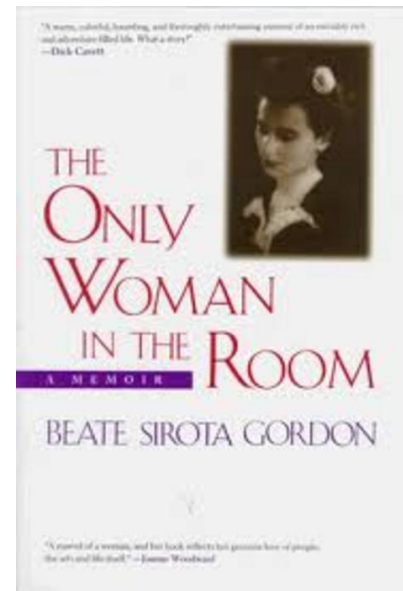
To a surprising degree, Japanese scholars share Pharr's perspective. Citing Pharr, Uemura Chikako and other Japanese women scholars argue that the occupation's gender reform provides overwhelming evidence of the positive role that the United States, and especially its women occupiers, played for Japanese women. Even though U.S. gender interventions might not have been thorough or sufficient, the occupation was a positive event for Japanese women. It is important to note, however, that the studies by these Japanese women scholars are significantly more nuanced than Pharr's, generally mentioning the limitations inherent in any effort to instill "foreign" notions of "democracy" and "gender equality." Uemura, for example, points out that U.S. gender policies were based on a U.S. middle-class ideology, and thus were not as radical as they might at first appear. Japanese women scholars, aware of the reverse course, also acknowledge the less than democratic nature of occupation interventions. Yet these observations do not lead them to a more critical reevaluation of U.S. gender reforms per se, nor of the meanings and implications of such reforms within the context of the occupation or of Cold War imperialism. They rarely question what they perceive as the genuinely liberatory motives and intentions of American women occupiers (or, for that matter, those of Japanese women), and ignore racism, sexism, classism, and imperialism that informed these women's discourses and practices.<sup>13</sup> This reflects a larger pattern of analysis that has emerged following a "women's studies turn" in studies of empire in the U.S. and Europe. As Jane Haggis points out, the feminist project of bringing women into historical analysis of empire has sustained and promoted, rather than challenged, Western hegemony as it has uncritically accepted Western women's claim for beneficent intentions in "helping" others and thereby reinterpreted imperialism as a feminized endeavor of education and civilization.<sup>14</sup>

Significantly, former women occupiers have played a salient role in facilitating this "women's studies turn" in occupation studies. Beginning with Susan Pharr's interview with Beate Sirota Gordon in the 1970s, scholars and media in Japan and the United States have sought participant accounts from women who served in the occupation. As a result, Gordon, an author of the gender equality articles in the postwar constitution, and Carmen Johnson, an officer in charge of grassroots democratization, have achieved a certain celebrity status as feminist mother-liberators of Japanese women. Not only have they become women scholars' favorite interview subjects; their memoirs have been published first in Japanese and later in English; documentaries depicting their efforts to emancipate Japanese women have been produced in Japan; academic conferences and lectures both in the United States and Japan have provided forums for them to tell their occupation stories. According to their narratives, the occupation was a moment of women's liberation where Japanese women gained freedom, equality and democracy under the guidance of American women. Importantly, the exhilarating story of American women emancipating Japanese women is not simply a product of American bias. For instance, Gordon's 1997 English-language memoir, *The Only Woman in the Room*, which was first published in Japanese, resulted from her collaboration with Japanese filmmaker, Hiraoka Mariko.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, the project of documenting Gordon's story started with Hiraoka who directed an all-female film crew to create a documentary about Gordon's involvement in the constitutional revision. The success of the film led to the publication of her autobiography, in which Hiraoka again played an



instrumental role as she interviewed Gordon and other individuals involved in the constitution revision, transcribed the interviews, and conducted archival research.

Clearly, many Japanese women – Hiraoka and numerous others who embrace the story of their emancipation by foreign women – share overlapping discursive spaces with their American counterparts, drawing on the same reservoir of ideas and assumptions about the occupation and its positive impacts on women. How do we explain Japanese and American women's collaboration in maintaining this understanding of the occupation? Crucially, the narrative of successful gender reform (dis)locates both women outside the purview of critical analysis of nation and empire. The narrative hinges on the long-standing Orientalist construction of Japanese women as helpless victims who, until the arrival of American women in 1945, had been incapable of autonomous action. The image of Japanese women as victims without agency conceals, indeed makes unimaginable, their willing participation in Japanese colonialism. The same narrative also relies on and reinforces the notion of progressive, emancipated, and thus "superior" American women who selflessly pursued the emancipation of other, inferior women. Driven by good intentions, they initiated a remarkable, indeed revolutionary, feminist reform project. The congratulatory narrative of the occupation constructs both American and Japanese women as innocent bystanders to, rather than complicit participants in, the problematic politics of race, nation, and empire. That such women-centered accounts of the occupation were widely circulated in the last decades of the twentieth century, when the controversies involving Korean Comfort Women on the one hand, and the 1995 rape incident in Okinawa on the other, began to shed critical light on Japanese and American colonial pasts as embodied by colonized/minority women, indicates central and also contentious dynamics surrounding women and gender across the divides of race, nation, and empire in the Asia-Pacific region.



While recasting women in the occupation constitutes a necessary task, even more urgent is reexamining the occupation as a gendered and gendering political process. As Joan Scott argues in *Gender and the Politics of History*, taking gender as a category of analysis goes far beyond simply uncovering information about women. Scott defines gender as a socially constructed binary opposition between the meanings associated with masculine and those with feminine. Gender as a meaning system constitutes "a primary way of signifying relationships of power" or "a primary field within which or by means of which power is articulated," and "structure(s) perception and the concrete and symbolic organization of all social life." Thus incorporating gender as a category of analysis leads to a drastic shift in historical studies. As she points out, gender analysis

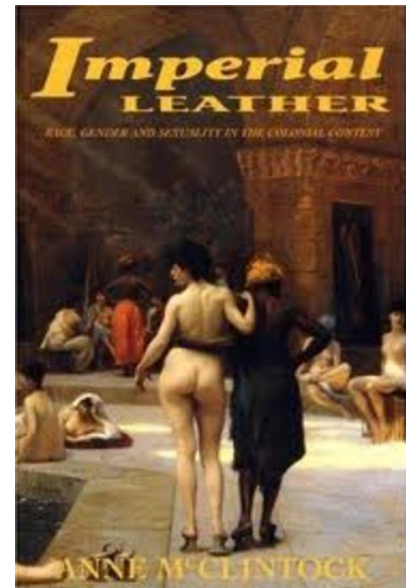
provides a way to decode meaning and to understand the complex connections among various forms of human interactions. When historians look for the ways in which the concept of gender legitimizes and constructs social relationships, they develop insight into the reciprocal nature of

gender and society and into the particular and contextually specific ways in which politics constructs gender and gender constructs politics.<sup>16</sup>

While I take seriously Scott's insight concerning gender as a centrally important category in historical analysis, I see the need to go beyond a study based on a single category of analysis. The recent important shifts in the feminist paradigm – from excavating women's stories, to incorporating gender as a category of analysis, and finally to examining the intersectionality of multiple categories of race, gender, class, sexuality, and so on – have placed studies of history on new terrain.

Among numerous studies that examine multiple and intersecting vectors of power, Anne McClintock's study, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Context*, is particularly useful for the analysis of the U.S. occupation of Japan, as she delineates the intricate and often convoluted workings of gender and power in imperial and colonial settings. McClintock points out that gender is always articulated in relation to other vectors of power, and insists on the importance of an analytical paradigm that takes into account more than one category, cautioning against "narratives that orient power around a single, originary scene":

Race, gender and class are not distinct realms of experience, existing in splendid isolation from each other; nor can they be simply yoked together retrospectively like armatures of Lego. Rather, they come into existence in and through relation to each other – if in contradictory and conflictual ways. In this sense, gender, race and class can be called articulated categories.



As she emphasizes, race, gender, class, and so on are not "reducible to, or identical, with each other; instead, they exist in intimate, reciprocal and contradictory relations." What she refers to as "a fantastic conflation of the themes of gender, race and class" is a distinctive feature of both Western colonialism and the U.S. occupation of Japan.<sup>17</sup>

Applied to the U.S. occupation of Japan, the analytical approach suggested by McClintock not only casts new light on American and Japanese women's discourses and practices during the occupation; it also leads to the observation that the occupation was an extraordinarily dynamic political process simultaneously animated by gender, race, class, and sexual dynamics. A multivector analysis of the occupation and its gender reform provides a unique analytical framework that leads to different interpretations of a given event that often oppose those exclusively focused on race, gender, or class. The significance of this approach is pointed out by Dorinne Kondo, who succinctly argues that analysis that pays attention to a single category of power "forecloses the possibility of ruptures and interventions when other forces are considered."<sup>18</sup> Indeed, the heterogeneous – and often disruptive, contradictory, and uneven – nature of the occupation and its gender reform can only be illuminated by attending to the intersection of multiple strands of power that sometimes work with, but other times against, each

other. A multivector analysis of power allows us to examine, for example, how the occupiers' gender reform as an apparatus of domination was made all the more powerful as it was energized by the convergence of race, gender, and class dynamics. Gender reform relied on and reinscribed the racialized imperial notions of American superiority and Japanese inferiority on the one hand, and on the other recruited Japanese middle-class women as a tool of class containment, that is, as conservative, anticommunist allies in the midst of increasingly volatile labor mobilization. Yet, gender, race, and class dynamics did not always so neatly line up. Gender reform also caused instability and incoherence in the occupation, as Japanese middle- and working-class women forged a cross-class alliance in critiquing the "undemocratic" treatment of Japanese women in the occupiers' approach to venereal disease control and reasserted their racial, sexual, and national respectability. A feminist analysis informed by McClintock's and Kondo's insights thus sheds light on the ubiquitous nature of hegemony, but equally or more problematically, allows us to recognize hegemony's inability to hold itself together, or its constant "leakage," in U.S.-occupied Japan.

### **Feminist Colonial and Postcolonial Studies**

The centrality of women and gender in the politics of empire has been emphasized by feminist colonial and postcolonial scholars in recent years. In Western colonial processes, the colonizers often analogized relations between colonizers and colonized to a male-female sexual encounter, in which Africa, the Americas, Asia, and the Pacific were imagined feminine, colored, and sexualized bodies, while European and American colonizing forces were white and masculine, invading, exploring, and conquering "virgin lands." Furthermore, in colonial imagination, native women were frequently constructed as helpless victims under indigenous patriarchal domination, indicating the uncivilized and racially inferior condition of colonized societies in contrast to the gender progressive, and as such, civilized and racially superior, condition of colonizers' societies.<sup>19</sup> Such construction of native women did not remain rhetoric, but frequently led to interventions in the name of "civilizing" native women and indigenous gender relations. Notwithstanding the colonizers' seemingly benign intentions, such reform process turned indigenous women into an important "entry point" for the Western civilizing project whose objective was tantamount to socializing indigenous women with Western values to create obedient and loyal colonial subjects. Gendered and racialized acculturation projects were further informed by class dynamics, as they often focused on schooling indigenous elite women. Following such reeducation, Western values would "filter downward" to the rest of the indigenous population, destructing the indigenous power structure.

American women, including feminists, actively participated in these gendered and racialized dynamics of empire building. Studies by scholars such as Jane Hunter, Ian Tyrrell, Leila Rupp, and Tracey Jean Boisseau have persuasively shown that American women's articulations of "women's emancipation" – their own as well as other women's – were inseparable from the process of nation and empire building.<sup>20</sup> With ideologies and practices underpinned by a "feminist" critique of male domination at home and an endorsement of an "international sisterhood" among Western and non-Western women, American women missionaries, moral reformers, and suffragists were often critical of U.S. imperial expansionism. Nevertheless, they often uncritically accepted and disseminated the notions of racially inferior, uncivilized, and oppressed non-Western women and civilized and emancipated Western women who were to save

women of color. Driven by a feminist intention of emancipating other women, Western women's feminist reform work provided a critical means for U.S. imperial expansion abroad, lending force and justification to its pursuit of hegemony.

In *Scattered Hegemonies: Postmodernity and Transnational Feminist Practices*, Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan explore the intimate – and problematic – relation between feminism and imperialism:

Our critique of certain forms of feminism emerge from their willing participation in modernity with all its colonial discourses and hegemonic First World formations that wittingly or unwittingly lead to the oppression and exploitation of many women. In supporting the agenda of modernity, therefore, feminists misrecognize and fail to resist Western hegemonies.<sup>21</sup>

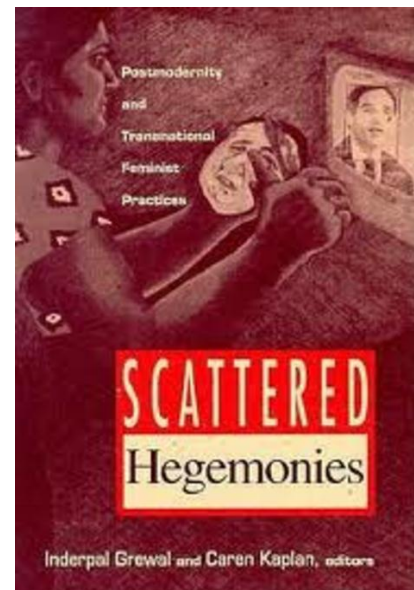
Their observations about feminism's "imbrication" with modernity and its related institutions, such as colonialism, racism, and nationalism, provide a crucial insight for analysis of Western feminist formation and its relation to other women. The question we need to ask is no longer whether Western feminists were imperialists or anti-imperialists. Rather we need to investigate when and how feminist discourses and practices inform and are in turn informed by politics of nation and empire.

In *Home and Harem: Nation, Gender, Empire, and the Cultures of Travel*, which examines British and Indian feminist formations, Inderpal Grewal offers analytical insights that are applicable to instances beyond British imperialism and that put not only Western but also non-Western feminist formations under critical scrutiny:

[M]any forms of feminisms existed through participating in certain dominant discourses so that the issue, then, is not a search for a transparent or transcendent feminism but a need to examine the conditions of possibility of these feminisms... Rather than debate feminism's collusions or resistance, I argue that nationalism, imperialism, and colonial discourse shaped the contexts in which feminist subjects became possible in both England and India."

Recognizing imperialism as an enabling condition – a condition that "provided possibilities and problematic" for feminism – is crucial.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, by showing colonized (in this instance, Indian) women's feminist formation as equally, although differently, embedded in modernity, nationalism, and imperialism, Grewal challenges binary, oppositional notions of dominant and oppressed, or colonized and colonized.

The US occupation of Japan and its gender reform shed light on the important connections among women, gender, feminism, and empire: the American masculine gaze toward Japanese women, indeed toward the Japanese nation as a whole; constructions of Japan as feudal, patriarchal, and thus racially inferior, in contrast to the modern, gender progressive, and thus racially superior United States; the centrality of Japanese women's reform as an American





civilizing and modernizing project; mobilization of Japanese elite women as a point of “infiltration” in the project of postwar Americanization of Japan; and finally, American women’s feminist discourses and practices concerning Japanese women’s “emancipation” which were inseparable from gendered colonial understandings of emancipated American women and victimized Japanese women who were in need of guidance and rescue. In American gender reform in postwar Japan, feminist emancipatory rhetoric and practices were never outside, but rather at the center, of postwar American imperial expansionism.

Despite these similarities between the U.S. occupation of Japan and other instances of imperial endeavors, it is also important to analyze the distinct feature of postwar U.S. imperialism in Japan. Importantly, U.S. imperialism in the case of the occupation was significantly shaped by the nature of Japan itself. What Tani Barlow calls Japan’s “double relation” to colonialism – Japan’s own development as a colonial power in Asia since the late nineteenth century within the context of Western imperial and colonial domination – complexly shaped the postwar U.S. occupation of Japan. While contending with Western colonial domination, Japan pursued its own imperial project by colonizing neighboring nations in the name of creating the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.<sup>23</sup> Japanese modern feminism emerged out of this context, sharing intimate and problematic ties with Japan’s nationalist and colonial dynamics. Despite its unconditional surrender and enormous reduction in territory at the end of World War II, many aspects of Japanese colonialism, including its gendered nationalist politics, survived after the summer of 1945. As John Dower documents in *Embracing Defeat*, the existing Japanese ruling sector tenaciously negotiated with and even covertly resisted the U.S. authorities. Since the U.S. needed to remake Japan into its ally in the emerging Cold War context, MacArthur often compromised and even collaborated with the existing elites, which led not only to a retention of the Imperial Household but also to the emergence of a conservative, pro-American regime in postwar Japan. This led to, among others, the Japanese rearticulation during the occupation of its own hegemonic nationalist and imperial discourses concerning women, race, family, and nation. Japanese middle- and upper-class women leaders who were empowered under the guidance of American women occupiers participated in these political dynamics and reasserted their racial and national respectability, which in turn contributed to marginalization of those historically dispossessed in Japan’s colonial modernity, i.e., poor, working-class women as well as colonized and minoritized women.

### Cold War Cultural Studies

Finally, in examining the U.S. occupation of Japan as a case of imperialism, it is important to attend to its specific context, i.e., the Cold War. As well documented by scholars on Cold War culture such as Elaine Tyler May, Alan Nadel, Laura McEnaney, Guy Oaks, Christina Klein, and Ruth Oldenziel and Karin Zachmann, among others, Cold War culture spawned several distinct political discourses and practices which were deeply informed by gender.<sup>24</sup>

Elaine Tyler May’s study traces how the Cold War produced “containment culture” which was “more than the internal reverberations of foreign policy, and went beyond the explicit manifestations of anticommunist hysteria such as McCarthyism and the ‘Red Scare’” to involve women and domesticity as the central sites of its articulations.<sup>25</sup> To understand the significance of gender in containment culture, it is by now almost customary to cite the 1959 “kitchen debate”



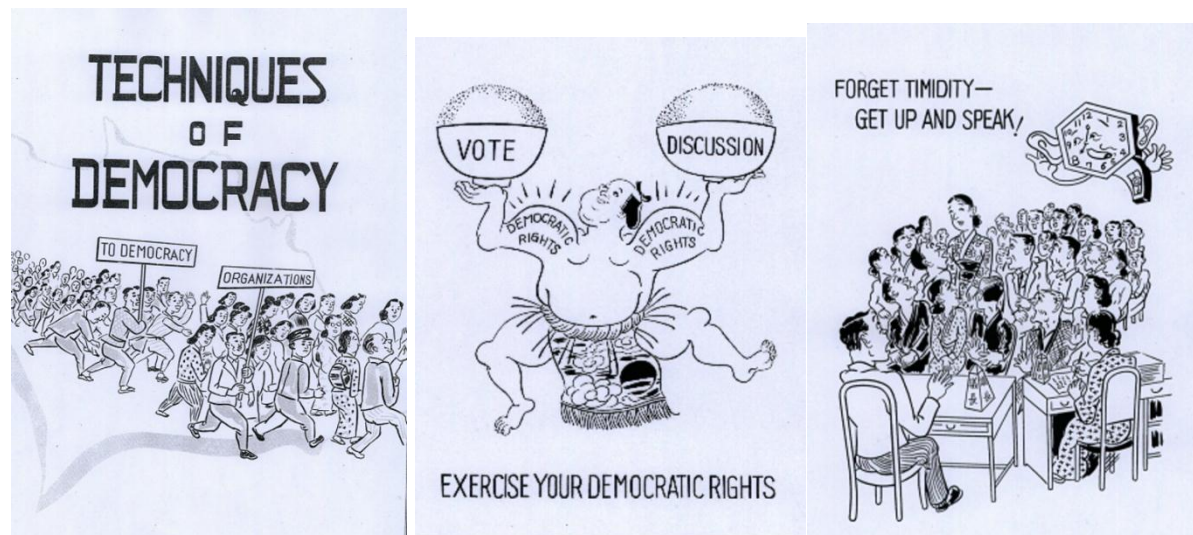
between Richard Nixon, then the vice president of the United States, and Nikita Khrushchev, the premier of the Soviet Union. At the site of the American National Exhibition in Moscow, Nixon emphatically argued that the American suburban home, equipped with modern household appliances, such as a “built-in panel-controlled washing machine,” allowed women to perform household labor more efficiently and thus to enjoy “freedom” and a good life. American women owed this to capitalism, free market enterprise, and the abundance of consumer good. All of this, Nixon insisted, demonstrated the clear superiority of American capitalism to communism. Khrushchev flatly disagreed. He pointed to Soviet women workers as evidence of the superiority of communism. Under the communist system, he argued, women were free of “capitalist” assumptions about gender roles and participated in productive activities. The debate gave new meaning and status to domesticity, endowing it with political significance specific to the Cold War era.<sup>26</sup> The importance of American domesticity – of American kitchens, fashions, supermarkets, hairstyles, and cosmetics – in Cold War politics was not limited to this instance.<sup>27</sup> As Robert Haddow documents, “exhibiting American culture abroad” constituted a salient U.S. Cold War strategy, and things associated with American domesticity, such as kitchen gadgets, played critical roles in selling the desirability of American democracy and containing the proliferation of communism in the “free world.”<sup>28</sup> As Igarashi Yoshikuni documents, occupied Japan was one of the sites where such gendered containment strategy flourished: the occupiers’ gender reform utilized radio programs, films, exhibits at department stores, and so on to introduce American domesticity as the marker of superiority and desirability of the American way of life and to mobilize Japanese women as allies in the Cold War.<sup>29</sup>

That domesticity came to possess new political significance in the Cold War is observed in other instances as well. As evidenced in the civil defense programs in the U.S., preparing for and defending the nation against Soviet nuclear attacks became a gendered project. The Federal Civil Defense Administration initiated the nation-wide campaign of “Grandma’s Pantry” which defined the home bomb shelter and its orderly maintenance by women as a chief means to securing families’ and nation’s survival in the event of nuclear holocaust. “Nuclear readiness” was equated with readiness at home, with women at the center of this domestic containment project. By “infus(ing) the traditional role of women with new meaning and importance,” Cold War culture helped “fortify the home as a place of security amid the cold war,” generating the postwar cult of domesticity where the white middle-class heterosexual marriage and family became a source of personal and national security, a symbol of (American) democracy and freedom, and a bulwark against the danger of communist infiltration.<sup>30</sup>

The civil defense programs also urged Americans to master skills and procedures through repeated practices in preparation for nuclear war. As exemplified in the drill exercise of “duck and cover,” the civil defense programs “identify the procedures essential to survival and teach the American people how to perform them,” with the understanding that “a set of rules, if correctly followed, would produce the desired results.”<sup>31</sup> The acquisition of techniques and procedures had moral and ethical implications: civil defense was a means to build a national ethic, solidify morale, and ensure the survival of the American way of life.<sup>32</sup>

Postwar Japan became a highly charged theater for emerging Cold War culture, where containment discourses and practices, including mastery of skills and techniques through repeated exercises, became disseminated as the central component of gender reform. Not only

was the American middle-class heterosexual family presented as the model of “gender equality” which Japanese women were to emulate. In reeducating and democratizing Japanese women, American women occupiers utilized numerous skits and role playing, and at training sessions, Japanese women were required, quite literally, to play a part, practicing their roles until their performance became flawless, proof that Japanese women were “rehabilitated” and “reoriented.” Through repetition, American women occupiers, and many Japanese women, came to believe in the veracity of American democratization of Japan and the desirability of the American way of life. In order to “democratize” Japanese women, Carmen Johnson devised skits and drill exercises based on the materials found in “Techniques of Democracy: A Guide to Procedure for Japanese Organization,” the pamphlet that specified the basic procedures for running an organization such as voting and making motions. In other instance, Japanese women were required to engage in role playing that depicted American-style heterosexual marital relations as a way of learning the meanings of “democracy” and “gender equality.” Thus, occupied Japan became a highly charged theater for emerging Cold War culture. It was not simply that Cold War culture was being exported to and imposed on Japan. It would be more appropriate to argue that despite its geographical distance from the U.S. continent, Japan became a salient site for the articulation of Cold War culture, with a remarkable degree of willingness on the part of many Japanese women to participate in its performance. The occupiers’ gender reform constituted one exemplary locus of gendered containment culture.



Despite its ubiquitous nature, Cold War containment culture was also fraught with ambivalence and anxieties. Extolling the virtue of traditional wives and mothers as the source of national security, containment culture stigmatized (and feared) those who fell outside of traditional heterosexual domesticity – not only “failed” wives and mothers but also leftist women, prostitutes, and homosexuals, among others – as the source of threats and even subversion. Women’s sexuality was at the heart of the problem, as seen in the proliferation of sexual symbolism in the Cold War U.S. The notion of a sexy woman as a “bomb shell,” “knockout,” or “dynamite” emerged, and a new design of women’s swimwear, the “bikini,” appeared four days after the dropping of the hydrogen bomb on the Bikini Islands. In one of the civil defense brochures, the image of women striking a seductive pose in bathing suits personified atomic radiation, articulating “the symbolic connections between the fears of atomic power, sex, and

women out of control.”<sup>33</sup> A Harvard physician predicted that an atomic explosion would result in the breakdown of familial-sexual order, leading to rampant promiscuity and a “1,000 percent increase in venereal disease.”<sup>34</sup> Moral-sexual anxieties were inseparable from anxieties about communism, and thus “[f]rom the Senate to the FBI, from the anticommunists in Hollywood to Mickey Spillane, moral weakness was associated with sexual degeneracy, which allegedly led to communism.”<sup>35</sup>

In occupied Japan, Cold War sexual politics produced a number of ambivalent and often ironic dynamics. By relegating the task of gender reform to women, the occupation authorities inadvertently created a “women-only” sphere consisting of American women reformers and Japanese middle- and upper-class women leaders. While these women were ardent promoters of containment politics, they also developed close working relationships, and on some occasions even extremely strong and passionate bonds, with each other, which led MacArthur and other male occupiers to caution against the formation of a “women’s bloc.” While this is often interpreted as a sign of American male occupiers’ reluctance in promoting genuine gender equality, reexamined within the context of Cold War containment culture, their reluctance could be read differently, possibly as an expression of ambivalence toward female-to-female homosocial bonding.<sup>36</sup> Sexuality became a source of disturbance in another way as well. Fraternization between American soldiers and Japanese women, and the resulting widespread venereal disease infection, caused a whole new set of sexual controversies. Far from being compliant subjects of the occupation, Japanese women proved to be a source of “contamination,” indeed “menace.” Unruly and uncontainable, Japanese women’s sexuality was endangering the very success of the occupation. Equally or more problematic, venereal disease was considered a sign of American soldiers’ moral, spiritual, and physical degeneration, whose lack of self discipline was jeopardizing the U.S. mission of defending democracy in postwar Japan.<sup>37</sup>

The dynamics described above challenge and complicate earlier analyses of the occupation. Recent work by scholars such as Naoko Shibusawa, Caroline Chung Simpson, Michael Molasky, and Yuki Tanaka, among others, apply gender as a category of analysis for examining postwar U.S.-Japanese encounters, i.e., the U.S. as a dominant, masculine figure with a mission to rescue and subordinate a feminized Japan. As they argue, fraternization between American soldiers and Japanese women constitutes a concrete manifestation of hierarchical, gendered, and sexualized dynamics between the victor/occupier and the defeated/occupied.<sup>38</sup> However, insights drawn from Cold War cultural studies point to a need for far more complex analysis of gender and sexuality in U.S.-Japan relations. The crisis of American masculinity represented by venereal disease and unruly and uncontainable sexuality of Japanese women indicate the precariousness of the notion of America as masculine and powerful and Japan as feminine and docile. The emergence of female-to-female bonds in the course of gender reform further challenges and complicates the argument that the occupation be read exclusively as a heterosexual narrative of white men dominating subjugated and docile women of color. Stepping into a postwar imperial project primarily defined in heterosexual and masculinist terms, American and Japanese women shifted, rather than simply replicated, these terms. A reform network consisting of American and Japanese women introduced a narrative of female-to-female homosociality into a Cold War project predicated on the erasure of any sign of sexual transgression. The current, almost exclusive emphasis on masculinization of America and feminization of Japan in gender analysis of U.S.-Japan relations falsely constructs Japan and its women as subjugated and without agency,

and thus inadvertently reproduces the dominant orders of gender, sexuality, and nation without due attention to numerous examples of resistance, subversion, and contradictions that occurred during the occupation.<sup>39</sup>

## Conclusion

Reinterpreting the meanings and consequences of the occupation from a critical feminist perspective generates a multidisciplinary dialogue among occupation studies, Cold War cultural studies, and postcolonial feminist studies where assumptions of each discipline are challenged and even altered. Occupation studies have long neglected the centrality of gender (as distinguished from “women”), and as a result, failed to understand the occupation as a deeply gendered project where American and Japanese women played centrally important roles in postwar U.S.–Japan negotiations. Insights from Cold War cultural studies and postcolonial feminist studies would lead occupation scholars to reexamine Japanese women as active and complicit participants in containment politics and to reinterpret the occupation's gender reform as a complex instance of Cold War mobilization of women where Japanese and American racism, nationalism, and imperialism converged to enable a deeply problematic form of feminism.

Cold War cultural studies has conventionally focused on domestic dynamics but not fully investigated the ways in which containment culture was also articulated abroad, with significant involvement of non-American and nonwhite others. The occupation's gender reform suggests that the international feminist movement constituted a significant site of Cold War cultural formation where American and Japanese women played active roles in simultaneously bolstering and subverting the emerging orders of gender, race, sexuality, and nation. To gain a fuller understanding of the Cold War, it is necessary for scholars to cast their gaze beyond the national domestic context and examine transnational space, especially international feminist discourses and practices, as yet another site of historical and analytical significance, with critical attention to a multitude of tensions, dissonance, and incoherence in containment culture.

Postcolonial feminist studies has been generating increasingly critical and sophisticated understandings of Western feminism. Understanding Western feminism as deeply implicated in racism, nationalism, and imperialism leads to examination of “the conditions of possibility” that contributed to feminist formations. In the case of the U.S. occupation of Japan, American and Japanese women's articulations of postwar feminism were enabled by and in turn enabled Cold War racism, nationalism, and imperialism, facilitating American (re)assertion for racial and national superiority and contributing to its pursuit of postwar global hegemony. Clearly the occupation's gender reform was at one level an instance of Western imperial feminism where the politics of “women's emancipation” reinscribed and reinforced the conventional hierarchy between a West and non-Western other. At the same time, the complex nature of the U.S.–Japan encounter requires a far more nuanced and multifaceted analysis. Far from powerless victims under U.S. domination, Japanese women engaged in a series of resistance, complicity, and subversion, not only challenging hegemonic orders imposed by the occupiers, but also appropriating them to reassert Japan's racial and national superiority and to articulate their own version of postwar imperial feminism that was no less problematic than that of the Americans. The stories of American gender reform in Japan challenge the binary, oppositional notions of



West and non-West, dominant and oppressed, or colonizers and colonized, and urge feminist scholars to critically reexamine the meanings and consequences of non-Western women's agency within the politics of race, nation, and empire.

Finally, critical examination of the U.S. occupation of Japan and its gender reform sheds light on American and Japanese postwar national memories and reveals a number of erasures, or incidents of historical amnesia, that have been enabled by the myth of American emancipation of Japanese women. The narrative of the occupation as successful emancipation and democratization of oppressed and subjugated people, especially women, has enabled America's self-understanding as the legitimate global leader in the post-World War II world, and has obscured the historical reality that the occupation was part of American pursuit of Cold War hegemony that entailed domestic and international violence and oppressions. The occupation narrative has played an equally or even more problematic role in Japan's postwar self-understanding. Not only has the myth of Japan's rebirth as a democratic and peaceful nation under MacArthur concealed the nation's colonial past filled with violence and atrocities; the narrative crucially depends on and sustains the understanding of Japanese women as helpless victims: Until the arrival of American women in 1945, Japanese women had been incapable of any action. This notion of Japanese women as victims without agency has erased from the nation's historical consciousness the problematic roles women played in prewar Japanese racism and imperialism in Asia. The two nations' continuing investment in the narratives of women's emancipation during the occupation thus needs to be interrogated and replaced by more critical understandings of women, nation, and empire in twentieth-century U.S.-Japan relations.

*Mire Koikari is the author of [Pedagogy of Democracy: Feminism and the Cold War in the US occupation of Japan, 1945 - 1972](#) (Temple University Press, 2009). She is an associate professor in the Women's Studies Program at the University of Hawaii at Manoa.*

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Douglas MacArthur, "A Fourth of July Message," *Life*, vol. 23, no. 1 (1947), 34. There are a number of excellent studies that examine U.S. colonization of the Philippines from critical gendered perspectives. See, for example, Vicente Rafael, *White Love and Other Events in Filipino History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000) and Kristin Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippines-American Wars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998). U.S. colonization of the Philippines was invoked as a showcase of America's benign and beneficent rule in subsequent U.S. interventions abroad. See, for example, Mark Bradley, "Slouching toward Bethlehem: Culture, Diplomacy, and the Origins of the Cold War in Vietnam," in Christian Appy, ed., *Cold War Constructions: The Political Culture of United States Imperialism, 1945 - 1966*, (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000).

<sup>2</sup> Douglas MacArthur, *Reminiscences* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), 305.

<sup>3</sup> Obituary, "Earnest Hoberecht, Popular Novelist in Occupied Japan, is Dead at 81," *New York Times*, September 26, 1999.



<sup>4</sup> Raymond Higgins, *From Hiroshima with Love: The Allied Military Governor's Remarkable Story of the Rebuilding of Japan's Business and Industry After WWII* (Phoenix, Arizona: VIA Press, 1995).

<sup>5</sup> For one of the earliest discussions of "imperial feminism," see Valerie Amos and Pratibha Parmar, "Challenging Imperial Feminism," *Feminist Review* no. 17, July 1984. For a review of subsequent scholarship on imperial feminism in the U.S. and Europe, see my discussion of feminist colonial and postcolonial studies below.

<sup>6</sup> For discussions on Japanese women's complicity in prewar and wartime nationalism and imperialism, see, for example, Suzuki YÅ«ko, *Feminizumu to sensÅ• : fujin undÅ• ka no sensÅ• kyÅ• ryoku* (Tokyo: Marujusha, 1988).

<sup>7</sup> For earlier reviews of occupation scholarship, see John Dower, "Occupied Japan as History and Occupation History as Politics," *Journal of Asian Studies* 34, no. 2 (1975), and Carol Gluck, "Entangling Illusions – Japanese and American Views of the Occupation," in Warren Cohen, ed., *New Frontiers in America –East Asia Relations*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983).

<sup>8</sup> John Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company/The New Press, 1999); Yukiko Koshiro, *Transpacific Racisms and the U.S. Occupation of Japan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).

<sup>9</sup> Dower, *War without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), 10. For another important study that provides a history of American constructions of "Orient" and "Orientals" (Asian Americans as well as Asians) within the context of Western colonial racism and culture, see Robert Lee, *Orientals: Asian Americans in Popular Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999).

<sup>10</sup> Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 211.

<sup>11</sup> Koshiro, *Transpacific Racisms*, 16. In this study, Koshiro sheds important light on the genealogy of racism in the United States. As she documents, despite a shift in American academic discourse of race that moved away from the notion of physical and biological superiority versus inferiority based on skin color to one of cultural and sociological differences and diversities in the 1940s, the physical and biological notion of race persisted. While the American authorities increasingly adopted cultural and sociological discourse of race to facilitate alliance making with Japan, the notion of physical and biological racial differences continued at the grassroots level, informing everyday U.S.-Japan encounters in covert and overt ways.

<sup>12</sup> Susan Pharr, "The Politics of Women's Rights" in Robert Ward and Yoshikazu Sakamoto, eds., *Democratizing Japan: The Allied Occupation* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987), 222 – 223, 248.

<sup>13</sup> Uemura Chikako, *Josei kaihÅ• o meguru senryÅ• seisaku* (Tokyo: KeisÅ• ShobÅ• , 2007). Though published in 2007, the book is based on a series of articles Uemura published in the late 1980s and early 1990s. For studies that characterize the occupation as positive for Japanese

women with personal accounts of Japanese women who were involved in gender reform, see Nishi Kiyoko, ed., *Senryō • ka no Nihon fujin seisaku: Sono rekishi to shō • gen* (Tokyo: Domesu Shuppan, 1985), and Sakai Harumi, "GHQ de hataraita joseitachi," *Joseigaku Kenkyō* no.3 (1994). For a study that focuses on constitutional revision as the foundation of Japanese women's liberation, see Kyō • ko Inoue, *MacArthur's Japanese Constitution: A Linguistic and Cultural Studies of Its Making* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991). Recent scholarship on the occupation has begun to offer far more nuanced and critical accounts of American gender reform and its consequences for Japanese women. For a study that examines occupation-time labor policies targeting women, see Toyoda Maho, *Senryō • ka no josei rō • dō • kaikaku* (Tokyo: Keisō • Shobō • , 2007). For a study that examines occupation-era education policies targeting women, see Tsuchiya Yuka, *Shinbei Nihon no kō • chiku: Amerika no tainichi jō • hō • , kyō • iku seisaku to Nihon senryō •* (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 2009).

<sup>14</sup> Jane Haggis, "Gendering Colonialism and Colonising Gender? Recent Women's Studies Approaches to White Women and the History of British Colonialism," *Women's Studies International Forum* 13:1/2 (1990).

<sup>15</sup> Beate Sirota Gordon, *The Only Woman in the Room, A Memoir* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1997).

<sup>16</sup> Joan Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 44 – 46.

<sup>17</sup> Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 4 – 5.

<sup>18</sup> Dorinne Kondo, *About Face: Performing Race in Fashion and Theater* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 149.

<sup>19</sup> As Chandra Mohanty succinctly points out in her discussions on women, imperial politics, and production of knowledge, such imperial feminist discourses continue to inform Western feminist scholars' analysis and result in binary understandings of emancipated and autonomous Western women and oppressed and victimized non-Western women. Chandra Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses," in Chandra Mohanty, Ann Russo, and Lourdes Torres, eds., *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991).

<sup>20</sup> Jane Hunter, *The Gospel of Gentility: American Women Missionaries in Turn of the Century China* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984); Ian Tyrrell, *Woman's World, Woman's Empire: The Woman's Christian Temperance Union in International Perspective, 1880 – 1930* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991); Leila Rupp, *Worlds of Women: The Making of an International Women's Movement* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997); Tracey Jean Boisseau, *White Queen: May French-Sheldon and the Imperial Origins of American Feminist Identity* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004).

<sup>21</sup> Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan, eds., *Scattered Hegemonies: Postmodernity and Transnational Feminist Practices* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 2.

<sup>22</sup> Inderpal Grewal, *Home and Harem: Nation, Gender, Empire, and the Cultures of Travel* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996), 11 – 12.

<sup>23</sup> Tani Barlow, "Introduction: On 'Colonial Modernity'" in Tani Barlow, ed., *Formations of Colonial Modernity in East Asia* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 10.

<sup>24</sup> Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War* (New York: Basic Books, 1999); Alan Nadel, *Containment Culture: American Narratives, Postmodernism, and the Atomic Age* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995); Laura McEnaney, *Civil Defense Begins at Home: Militarization Meets Everyday Life in the Fifties* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Guy Oaks, *The Imaginary War: Civil Defense and American Cold War Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); Christina Klein, *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945 – 1961* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Ruth Oldenziel and Karin Zachmann, eds., *Cold War Kitchen: Americanization, Technology, and European Users* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2009).

<sup>25</sup> May, *Homeward Bound*, xxi.

<sup>26</sup> *ibid.*, 10 – 12.

<sup>27</sup> Nor was the significance of domesticity in imperial expansionism limited to the Cold War era. For discussions of domesticity as a site of racial conquest and national-imperial expansionism in the mid-nineteenth century, see Amy Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2002), especially Chapter 1 "Manifest Domesticity." For the continuing significance of domesticity in American imperial expansionism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, see Rafael, *White Love*, especially Chapter 2 "Colonial Domesticity: Engendering Race at the Edge of Empire, 1899 – 1912."

<sup>28</sup> Robert Haddow, *Pavilions of Plenty: Exhibiting American Culture Abroad in the 1950s* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1997), especially see Chapter 6 "Men's Gadgets, Women's Fashions, and the American Way of Life."

<sup>29</sup> Yoshikuni Igarashi, *Bodies of Memory: Narratives of War in Postwar Japanese Culture, 1945 – 1970* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 78.

<sup>30</sup> May, *Homeward Bound*, 90 – 93.

<sup>31</sup> Oaks, *The Imaginary War*, 80.

<sup>32</sup> Examining Cold War U.S. culture where containment narratives were repeatedly articulated at various sites, Alan Nadel argues that such "repetition of tropes... facilitates narratives that by virtue of their repetition seem 'natural,' like clichés, and like 'common sense,' refer to what

everyone ‘knows’ is true.” In the context of the Cold War where much remained unknown and unknowable and fears, anxieties, and ambivalence prevailed, “the rampant performance of narratives, in such a variety of sites and forms” helped “create the illusion that national narratives were knowable and unquestionable realities,” thus facilitating successful mobilization of the American public to the Cold War. See Nadel, *Containment Culture*, 8. For a documentary film that illuminates the significance of repetition as a sense-making practice in the Cold War U.S., see Kevin Rafferty, Jayne Loader, and Pierce Rafferty, “The Atomic Café” (New York: Docudrama, 2008).

<sup>33</sup> May, *Homeward Bound*, 96 – 98.

<sup>34</sup> *ibid.*, 81.

<sup>35</sup> *ibid.*, 86.

<sup>36</sup> For studies that examine sexual containment as a central theme of Cold War culture, see Geoffrey Smith, “National Security and Personal Isolation: Sex, Gender and Disease in the Cold War United States,” *The International History Review* 14, no.1 (1992); David Harley Serlin, “Christine Jorgensen and the Cold War Closet,” *Radical History Review* 62 (1995); Allan Berube, *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War Two* (New York: Free Express, 1990); John D’Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940 – 1970* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press). As Gayle Rubin argues, sexuality has its own institutional dynamics and hierarchy: the normative sexuality is heterosexual, marital, monogamous, and reproductive, and noncommercial, while other sexual activities and identities are defined as “bad,” “abnormal,” or even “unnatural.” These other forms of sexuality are further assigned hierarchical evaluations. Gayle Rubin, “Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality,” in Carole Vance, ed., *Pleasure Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality* (London: Pandora Press, 1989), 280 – 281. During the Cold War, not only homosexuality but also various other expressions of intimacy which fell outside the normative notion of sexuality came under intense social surveillance.

<sup>37</sup> Venereal disease has historically been a major issue for U.S. military operations both domestically and internationally. See, for example, Allan Brandt, *No Magic Bullet: A Social History of Venereal Disease in the United States since 1880* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985).

<sup>38</sup> Naoko Shibusawa, *America’s Geisha Ally: Reimagining the Japanese Enemy* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2006); Caroline Chung Simpson, *An Absent Presence: Japanese Americans in Postwar American Culture, 1945 – 1960* (Durham: Duke University Press, 20010); Michael Molasky, *The American Occupation of Japan and Okinawa: Literature and Memory* (New York: Routledge, 1999); Yuki Tanaka, *Japan’s Comfort Women: Sexual Slavery and Prostitution during World War II and the U.S. Occupation* (New York: Routledge), 2002.

<sup>39</sup> Indeed, emerging “feminist” analyses tend to simplify the occupation-era sexual politics, reproducing an essentialist and universalistic notion of women (and men) which prevents nuanced and complicated understandings of women and power. For instance, Yuki Tanaka argues that postwar controversies over prostitution are examples of masculine-military violence that is part of the universal pattern of male domination, and thus constructs women as victims under patriarchal oppressions. Tanaka, *Japan's Comfort Women*, 6. Examining Japanese postwar nationalist literature, Michael Molasky also characterizes the sexual politics during the occupation as the male or masculine domain where a “distinctly male perspective” that utilizes “metaphors of linguistic and sexual subordination” of women as the narrative vehicle prevailed. As a result, he argues, women writers were “less deeply invested in the gendered rhetoric of Japanese nationalist identity” and avoided the trope of gendered nationalist narratives. Molasky, *The American Occupation of Japan and Okinawa*, 2, 132. Far from being outside the problematic operations of power, however, Japanese women, especially middle-class women leaders, were deeply invested in a gendered and sexualized understanding of nation, national body, and women played extremely active and problematic roles in sexual regulation and containment of “fallen women” during the occupation. For a recent excellent study that avoids the pitfall of essentialist or universalistic understandings of women and provides historically- and contextually-specific understandings of U.S. military and women's agency in diverse geographical sites including Japan, Okinawa, South Korea, and Germany, see Maria Höhn and Seungsook Moon, eds., *Over There: Living with the U.S. Military Empire from World War Two to the Present* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010.)