

now, to make such a choice is to be extremely privileged. For a Japanese woman of her time, Tsuda Ume was even more privileged. She made her choices with courage and steadfastly carried them out. Furuki's admiration for her is fully understandable. But it is sad if admiration for one brave woman leads to detraction of those who trod other paths.

Recreating Japanese Women, 1600–1945

Gail Lee Bernstein, ed.

Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991. 340pp.

Reviewed by Elizabeth Gano, Tokyo

THIS VOLUME IS A compilation of multidisciplinary essays that strives to define the various roles of Japanese women from the Tokugawa era to the end of World War II. The book describes the various forces and agents of change that have influenced Japanese women and their lives through essays drawing on original source material as varied as poetry, folklore, religious teachings, government publications, screen plays, newspapers, and magazines.

In the general introduction, Bernstein states that Japanese women were never a monolithic, unchanging group. Rather, numerous forces affected the state of women (such as their position in the family, changes in society, prevailing social/religious values, and political, legal, and economic institutions). As these forces changed over time, so did the status and role of women in Japanese society. This premise is basic to any historical study, but the unique contribution of this book is its specific concern with the "creation" of the female "gender" for Japanese women. According to Bernstein, the study of "gender creation" assumes that gender, unlike sex, is

a "socially constructed and culturally transmitted organization of our inner and outer worlds" (p. 2). This study distinguishes between sex roles, which are seen as biologically determined, and gender roles, which are seen as sociohistorical conventions that define masculine or feminine behavior. Going beyond description and analysis, this book sets out to actively "reconstruct" Japanese women's ideals of femininity. It attempts this through reexamining the processes by which women were trained to emulate feminine ideals and the ways in which the actual behavior of women diverged from these ideals.

This book describes the diversity that has characterized the lives of Japanese women since 1600. While the primary task assigned to Japanese women over the centuries has been the preservation of the family system, the means by which they were expected to perform this task has varied throughout history. The essays in this book define and focus this primary task and describe some of the many factors that influenced the lives of Japanese women. They illustrate how official ideology laid out by the state, scholars, the community, the media, society, and women themselves have defined traditional feminine virtues and thus the female "gender" in Japan.

The book is divided neatly into two sections. Part One covers the Tokugawa era (until 1868) and Part Two carries on from the Meiji Restoration until the end of World War II. Part One begins with three essays on the experiences of women within the family system and how this experience shaped gender construction during the Tokugawa period. The topics covered include the division of labor in the household (the productive and reproductive work of men, women, and children), the life-cycle of farm women (their roles of wife, daughter-in-law, and mother), and geronticide and the mortality rate of elderly women. The three remaining essays in this section examine the lives of

three untypical women and how they diverged from the feminine ideals of the Tokugawa era (Jion-ni-kenke, a disciple and teacher of the Shingaku movement, the poet-painter Ema Saiko, and Tatsu'uma Kiyo, a female entrepreneur in the sake brewing industry).

Part Two begins with an analysis of the Meiji state's policy towards women (1890–1900), with a focus on its promulgation of the ideal woman as “Good Wife, Wise Mother.” This is followed by a description of women leaders in the Taishō era (especially Yosano Akiko), their discovery of the “meaning of the female gender” and the emerging “New Women.” The next two essays focus on the increasing autonomy of middle-class working women and on the activism among women laborers in the textile industry during the Taishō and inter-war years.

The increasing “empowerment” of women is a theme developed in an essay on the “Modern Girl” in the media, which described them as a symbol of the crisis facing the traditional family system and the nation at large. This section of the book concludes with two essays on Japanese women during the War. One examines how government policies during these years promoted motherhood and reproduction as the ideal role for women, and how policies protected and glorified working women of childbearing age during national mobilization and conscription. The other examines wartime films and the images they project of women: the ideal Japanese woman is usually housebound, the pillar and preserver of family solidarity while the men are away fighting, an image which may not have corresponded to the actual lives of most Japanese women during this time of national crisis. The book concludes with an Afterword that compares the gender construction experiences of Japanese and Western women.

This book is a monumental study of Japanese female gender definition since

1600. Although the original sources are rather limited on some topics, the book provides a number of insights into the lives of Tokugawa women in the farming and merchant classes as well as the masses, thus presenting a more balanced picture of women during this period. These essays demonstrate that some Japanese women could overcome traditional constraints and find many ways to work alongside men in productive labor, and that some even became matriarchs of successful families.

The essays do not tell us for what proportion of Tokugawa women this was true. The extensive involvement of the state in the process of gender construction was particularly illuminating in Part Two of this volume. Several essays clearly describe how the Meiji and Taishō eras were a period of transition and experimentation for Japanese women as well as the nation at large. The essay on “The Meiji State's Policy Towards Women” is valuable for its focus on state-sponsored policies for gender definition. The article juxtaposes the Western model of home as a moral sanctum against the Japanese policy of home as a public place. The family was regarded by the state as a building block of national development and stability. By designating the family as public domain, the state claimed women—as pillars of the family—for its own purposes. This analysis of women in the context of public versus private life was particularly illuminating.

The essay on the “Modern Girl as Militant” places the Taishō Era “modern girl” (stereotyped as promiscuous, apolitical, and unemployed) alongside the experiences of militant Japanese working women. The author subtly shifts her images so that the modern girl emerges as the militant: challenging the existing structures not in class struggle but in adopting new fashions and entering new job fields. While this glossing of all modern girls as militants is rather thin, they can be seen as a symbol of

change. This essay gives fresh insight into this period of transition for Japanese women.

The chapters in Part Two clearly expose the fallacy that Japanese women have always been passive, subservient, housebound, cherry blossoms in a vase. To the contrary, it is shown that their confidence and autonomy have grown with their increased education and their participation in the labor force. Some Japanese women have taken political and social stands in spite of government opposition and manipulation for centuries.

One of this book's most valuable insights is the extent to which economic imperatives, state policies, and sociocultural norms have and continue to influence gender definition in Japan. But its greatest contribution is its documentation of how Japanese women have played an active and vocal role in the dynamic and ongoing process of their own gender definition. This collection of scholarly essays is well worth reading.

『性差別する仏教—フェミニズムからの告発』
[Gender Discrimination in Buddhism: A Feminist Indictment]

大越愛子, 源 淳子, 山下明子
 Ōgoshi Aiko, Minamoto Junko, and
 Yamashita Akiko
 Kyoto, 1990.

Reviewed by Mitani Takayasu, Matsuyama

THE FEMINIST OR women's liberation movement which began in the United States in the 1960s, spreading to Europe as well as to Japan and other Asian countries, has been called the second women's liberation movement to distinguish it from the one in the second half of the nineteenth century. The earlier movement strove to rectify gender-

based discrimination through reforms in the legal system, such as the fight for women's suffrage. The second feminist movement has attempted to dismantle patriarchal systems based on sexist ideology as expressed in the maxim "women are inferior to men and their place is in the home," a belief common to nearly all societies that support the visible fabric of those social systems. At the same time, it has aimed to liberate from those inner constraints women who have unconsciously accepted such systems. In order to do so, modern-day gender-based role divisions must be demythologized and a very radical, causally rooted theory is needed to negate authority and the very power structures that sustain it.

The authors of this book skillfully reveal, from a fundamentally feminist stance, the structure of the deeply embedded gender-based discrimination found in the religions of Japan, particularly Buddhism and the so-called new religions founded after the Meiji Restoration. The value of this book does not end there, however. As long as religion serves "as the center of the cultural paradigm rooted and structured therein and dominates all world views, sense of values, views about humankind, and morals which form the structure of social systems, sexual norms and the process of the formation of the self," the disclosure of the deep-seated gender discrimination found in religions constitutes concurrently criticism of that same society and culture through its clarification of the structure of that discrimination. The intent of the authors lies here. Because, at a glance, Buddhism seems characteristically highly egalitarian and world-denying, it is more difficult to identify its structure of discrimination than that of Christianity. This work clarifies that very structure of discrimination by exposing this invisible trait.

Three authors have contributed the three parts that comprise this book. In the first part, Ogoshi Aiko explains theoretically the gender discrimination found in Buddhism