GLOBALIZING SPORT STUDIES

Japanese Women and Sport

Beyond Baseball and Sumo

Robin Kietlinski

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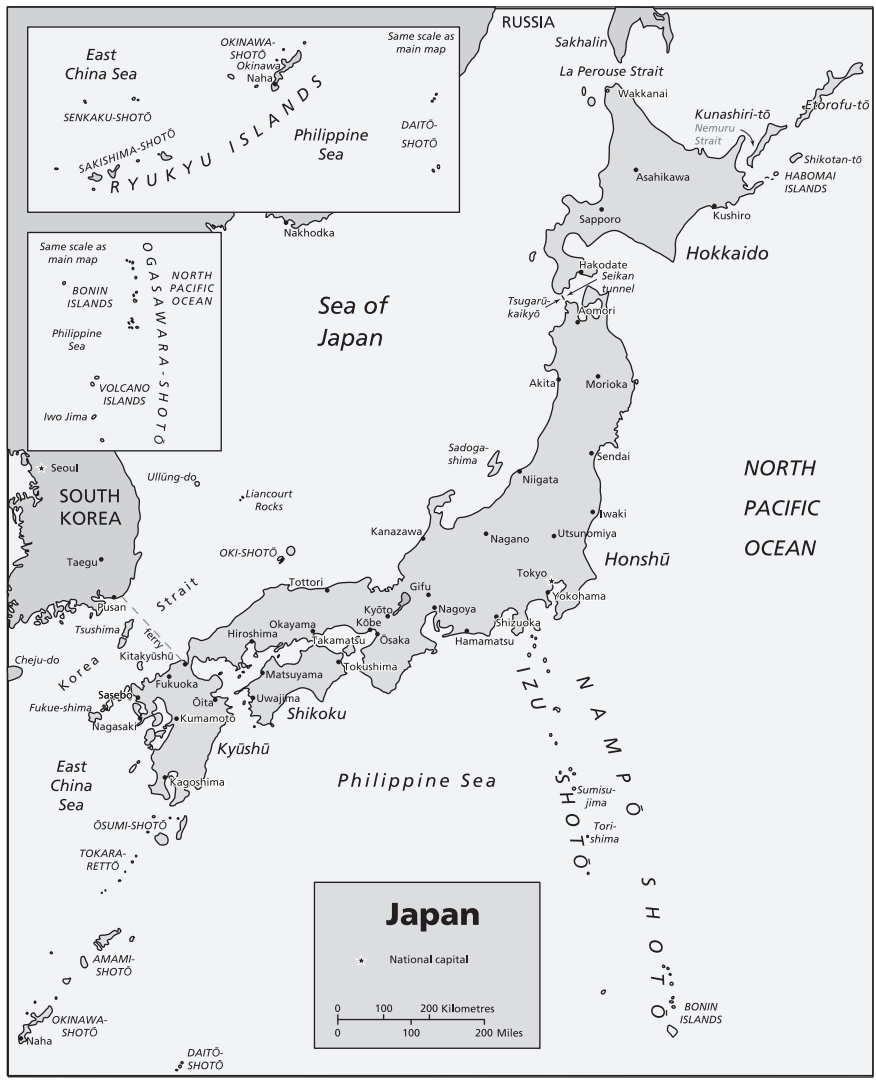

Map of contemporary Japan

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Author's Note

The convention of surname first has been used for Japanese names, with the exception of Japanese authors whose work is primarily written in English.

Glossary

gakkō = school
gorin = Olympic Games
joshi = women/girl/lady
konjō = fighting spirit/guts
mombushō/monkashō = Ministry of Education (Culture, Sports, Science and Technology)
Nihon supōtsu shakaigakkai = Japan Sport Sociology Society
Nihon supōtsu to jendā gakkai = Japan Society for Sport and Gender Studies
orinpikku = Olympic Games
rikujō = track and field
ryōsai kenbo = good wife, wise mother
shimbun = newspaper
suiei = swimming
supokon manga = sports comics
supōtsu = sport(s)
Supōtsu shakaigaku kenkyū = Japan Journal of Sport Sociology
taiiku = physical education
taiiku kagaku, supōtsu kagaku = sports sciences
taisō = gymnastics/calisthenics
undō = exercise, sport
yakyū = baseball

Chronology of Events in Modern Japan

Japanese Eras	Year	Major historical events	Developments for women	Developments in sport
1615–1867: Tokugawa	1853	American Commodore Matthew Perry arrives in Japan		
	1858	Commercial treaty with the United States		
1868–1912: Meiji	1868	Proclamation of imperial restoration, end of the Tokugawa shogunate, capital city moved from Kyoto to Tokyo		
	1871			Ministry of Education established, physical education institutionalized in schools
	1872		Fundamental Code of Education passed, requiring eight years of compulsory elementary education for boys and girls	First men's baseball club established
	1875		Atomi Girls' School founded, the first private school for girls	
	1880		Tokyo Women's Normal School established (now Ochanomizu Women's University)	
	1890		Law passed prohibiting women from attending political meetings or joining political organizations	
	1894–95	Sino-Japanese War, Japan victorious		
	1896			First Olympic Games held in Athens (men only)

Japanese Eras	Year	Major historical events	Developments for women	Developments in sport
	1900			First (Western) women take part in the Olympic Games
	1904–5	Russo-Japanese War, Japan victorious		First women's golf tournament held in Kobe on 9 September 1905
	1909			First Japanese delegate joins the International Olympic Committee (Kanō Jigoro)
	1910	Annexation of Korea (until 1945)		
1912–26: Taishō	1912	Death of Emperor Meiji, accession of son, Yoshihito		First two Japanese athletes take part at the Olympic Games in Stockholm (two male runners)
	1913			Japan and five other nations take part in the first Oriental Olympics held in Manila (the precursor to today's Asian Games)
	1914–18	First World War, Japan involved as part of the Allied powers		1916 Olympics cancelled due to First World War
	1917			First competitive track meet held for women in Osaka
	1920		Founding of the New Women's Association (Shin Fujin Kyōkai), an organization seeking equal rights for women in politics, home and workplace; first union of female office workers formed	
	1922		Ban on female attendance and speaking at political meetings lifted	Establishment of Japan Women's College of Physical Education in Tokyo
	1923	Great Kantō earthquake around Tokyo and Yokohama		

(*continued*)

(*Continued*)

Japanese Eras	Year	Major historical events	Developments for women	Developments in sport
	1924			First Japan Ladies' Olympic Games held in Tokyo with 1,800 athletes taking part
1926–89: Shōwa	1926	Death of Emperor Taishō, accession of son, Hirohito		Hitomi Kinue takes part in the Second Annual Women's Olympic Games in Gothenberg, Sweden – wins prize for outstanding overall athlete
	1928			Hitomi Kinue takes part as first Japanese female at the Olympic Games, wins silver medal in 800 metres, Japan sends first male delegates to the Winter Olympics in St Moritz
	1929	Global economic depression begins – prices of agricultural commodities fall over 40 per cent in Japan	Women's Labor Academy founded by female union organizer	
	1932	Creation of puppet state of Manchukuo in north-eastern China		
	1936			Japan sends first female delegate, Inada Etsuko, to the Winter Olympics in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, first gold medal won by a Japanese woman (swimmer Maehata Hideko) at Berlin Summer Olympics
	1937	Outbreak of war with China		
	1940			1940 Tokyo Olympics cancelled

Japanese Eras	Year	Major historical events	Developments for women	Developments in sport
	1941	Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, start of the Pacific War		
	1943		All single women between twelve and thirty-nine ordered to register as workers in the Women's Volunteer Labor Corps	
	1945	Nuclear bombs fall on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan surrenders and accepts terms of Potsdam Proclamation		
	1946		Women given the right to vote	
	1947		Women given full legal equality to men in new post-war constitution	
	1945–52	US occupation of Japan		
	1948			Japan and Germany not invited to take part in the Olympic Games in London
	1952			Japan sends delegates to first post-war Olympics in Oslo (Winter) and Helsinki (Summer)
	1956	Japan admitted to the United Nations		
	1964			Tokyo hosts the Summer Olympics, heavily publicized gold medal win of Japanese women's volleyball team over the USSR
	1972	Okinawa returned from the United States to Japanese administration	Working Women's Welfare Law passed to 'improve the status of working women'	Sapporo hosts the Winter Olympics

(*continued*)

(*Continued*)

Japanese Eras	Year	Major historical events	Developments for women	Developments in sport
	1979			First annual Tokyo International Women's Marathon held
	1980			Japan and sixty-four other nations boycott the Moscow Summer Olympics
	1985		Equal Employment Opportunity Law passed	
	1986		Election of Doi Takako as secretary general of the Social Party (main opposition party)	
	1987		First time two women are selected to be cabinet members by the Liberal Democratic Party	
1989–present: Heisei	1989	Death of Emperor Shōwa, accession of son, Akihito		
	1992			First medals won by Japanese women at the Albertville Winter Olympics (figure skater Itō Midori and speed skater Hashimoto Seiko)
	1995	Massive earthquake strikes Kobe		
	1998			Nagano hosts the Winter Olympics
	2011	9.0-magnitude earthquake hits north-eastern Japan, subsequent tsunami and nuclear crises		Japanese women win the FIFA World Cup

Globalizing Sport Studies Series Editor's Preface

There is now a considerable amount of expertise nationally and internationally in the social scientific and cultural analysis of sport in relation to the economy and society more generally. Contemporary research topics, such as sport and social justice, science and technology and sport, global social movements and sport, sports mega-events, sports participation and engagement and the role of sport in social development, suggest that sport and social relations need to be understood in non-Western developing economies, as well as European, North American and other advanced capitalist societies. The current high global visibility of sport makes this an excellent time to launch a major new book series that takes sport seriously, and makes this research accessible to a wide readership.

The series ***Globalizing Sport Studies*** is thus in line with a massive growth of academic expertise, research output and public interest in sport worldwide. At the same time, it seeks to use the latest developments in technology and the economics of publishing to reflect the most innovative research into sport in society currently underway in the world. The series is multi-disciplinary, although primarily based on the social sciences and cultural studies approaches to sport.

The broad aims of the series are to: *act* as a knowledge hub for social scientific and cultural studies research in sport, including, but not exclusively, anthropological, economic, geographic, historical, political science and sociological studies; *contribute* to the expanding field of research on sport in society in the United Kingdom and internationally by focussing on sport at regional, national and international levels; *create* a series for both senior and more junior researchers that will become synonymous with cutting edge research, scholarly opportunities and academic development; *promote* innovative discipline-based, multi-, inter- and trans-disciplinary theoretical and methodological approaches to researching sport in society; *provide* an English language outlet for high quality non-English writing on sport in society; *publish* broad overviews, original empirical research studies and classic studies from non-English sources; and thus attempt to *realise* the potential for *globalizing* sport studies through open content licensing with 'Creative Commons'.

Despite professional women's football having a longer history in Japan than in almost any other country, when the Japanese national women's football team became world champions at the FIFA World Cup in Germany in July 2011 it came as some surprise. Although the Japan Women's Soccer League started in 1989, and enjoyed a fair amount of popularity in the early 1990s

before the emergence of the professional men's J. League, in the past decade media attention and resources for the sport have dwindled. Becoming the first Asian team to have won a world football tournament at any level was explained by some sections of the media with a feel-good narrative about the Japanese players' courage and resilience, which sprang from their desire to offer brief respite from the aftermath of the 11 March earthquake and tsunami. Additionally, the national women's team that won in 2011 is referred to as Nadeshiko Japan. 'Nadeshiko' is the name of a flower, which also represents a certain ideal of Japanese femininity that is demure, quiet and accommodating to men. These are just a few of the contradictory discourses about women and sport in Japan that Robin Kietlinski explores in this book.

As she notes, sport has played a key role in the development of modern Japan, often being linked to various dramatic political and social transformations that have taken place since the late nineteenth century and the emergence of Japan into the modern age. As she correctly observes, however, both Japanese women and men have competed in, and excelled against, international competition in virtually all sports. Following an overview of women's involvement in sport in East Asia, the core of the book provides a historical account of Japanese women's participation in competitive sport, including at the Olympic Games. The book concludes with a discussion of the theoretical and conceptual issues for the study of sport in a globalizing world that are raised by this focus on non-Western, non-male athletes.

Japanese Women and Sport: Beyond Baseball and Sumo thus provides a timely and unique contribution to writing on the fields of sports in Japan and women's sports for an English language readership. It is the first monograph dealing exclusively with a century of female elite athletes in Japan. As such, it will prove to be a valuable resource for a readership unfamiliar with women's engagement in sports in Japan.

John Horne, Preston and Edinburgh 2011

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Introduction: Why Women's Sport? Why Japan?

Between August 1999 and December 2000, the Japanese Postal Service issued a series of commemorative 'Twentieth Century Museum Series' postage stamps. Each month, a new set of stamps would be issued, chronologically and thematically working through the most important events of the twentieth century. The fifth set of stamps issued was titled 'The Start of the Shōwa Era (1926–1989)', and included a stamp showing a woman in full running stride, her well-defined muscles exposed below her small, close-fitting uniform. This image seems to go against not only the entrenched stereotype of weak and overtly feminine Japanese women but also how we today envision women of the 1920s. This was a time in which taking part in sport at all, let alone a sport that required exertion and a revealing uniform, was almost universally considered inappropriate and even dangerous for women. It is curious, then, that the accomplishments of this Japanese woman were singled out by the Japanese Postal Service as being among the most significant moments of the twentieth century in Japan.[1]

Sport has indeed played a key role in the development of modern Japan, as it has been intricately linked to the dramatic political and social transformations that took place in quick succession following the 1868 Meiji Restoration. Baseball and sumo wrestling, Japan's two unofficial national sports, have received significant attention in both the academic and popular press for the various ways that they represent change and tradition in modern Japan. To look only at these two undeniably popular, almost exclusively male-only sports, however, would be to ignore a rich and important history of Japanese participation in a wide range of sports. Over the past century, Japanese men and women alike have competed in and excelled against international competition in virtually all sports.

The success and international prominence gained by Japan's female athletes in particular seems to stand in stark contrast to the 'traditional' image of Japanese women – an image of submissiveness and powerlessness created and supported by popular and academic discourse alike. Japan is often seen as being unprogressive in terms of gender compared to other advanced economies, as women still comprise only a small fraction of managerial and governmental positions.[2] These statistics, however, look quite different from those of Japanese women's participation in the international sporting arena. In the past century, Japanese women have received impressive financial and popular support for their endeavours in sport, and the results have been remarkable surges of

success at such international events as the Olympic Games. A Japanese woman took part in the first-ever women's track and field events of the Olympics in 1928. On more than one occasion, female Japanese delegates have brought home more Olympic medals than their male counterparts. In 2011, the Japanese women's football team won the FIFA World Cup, the first championship for both Japan and for Asia. These facts complicate the notion that Asian women have somehow been less progressive than their Western counterparts and that Japanese women have persistently lagged behind their male counterparts.[3]

In considering how and why sports have come to represent an arena in which Japanese women are encouraged to excel, we begin to challenge the hegemonic portrayal of Japan as a country filled with submissive women and to appreciate the diversity of options available to women in modern and contemporary Japan. A history of Japanese women's participation in sport is, in other words, a response to those works of history, sociology and anthropology that paint Japan as a restrictive and oppressive place for women.

To date, little has been written about Japanese women's involvement in competitive sport, and it may consequently come as a surprise to some readers that sportswomen have been flourishing in Japan for as long as they have been in Western nations. Japanese women have been taking part in international sporting events for about a century, which is longer than they have had a presence in the Japanese government or the white-collar workplace. Women did not have a place in Japan's government until 1946, when they were given the right to both vote and be elected to public office.[4] While specific data about women in white-collar positions are a bit harder to quantify, women have traditionally held supportive, non-career track positions in Japan's private sector, and these positions (on average) constitute less than half the number of employees in the company. What can women's long-standing participation in sport thus tell us about the significance of sport in Japanese society? Not only has little been written about women's role in Japan's sport history, but in the literature on women's participation in sport, one would also be hard-pressed to find significant research on sportswomen in non-Western countries.

Beyond the social impact that sport can have on society and vice versa, sport in the twentieth century has historically been closely linked with politics. It has been argued that sport is more intricately tied up with politics in Asia than in other parts of the world. As Victor Cha posits in his book on the politics of sport in Asia, '[s]port matters more in Asia because of the turbulent histories that still afflict the nations there. Historical animosities translate readily into political disputes in Asia. There is no denying that historical memories linger among Europeans, but any resentments and anxieties arguably may not sit as close to the surface as they do in Asia'.[5] This argument does not only apply to post–Second World War resentment towards Japan from its former colonies but encompasses the entire twentieth century – before, during and after Japan spread its empire westward.[6] So how has the nationalist fervour that is tied up

with sport, particularly in Asia, had an impact on the construction of gender in twentieth-century Japan?

A wealth of resources is available to help us answer these questions about the significance of women and sport to twentieth-century Japan. Global media outlets have, since the turn of the twentieth century, provided a running commentary on the emergence of Japanese women on the sporting scene and on their triumphs, failures, struggles and scandals. These outlets, namely newspaper articles, then radio and television broadcasts, can give us a clear picture of how dramatically attitudes towards women's sports have changed as well as how athletes and the sports they take part in have changed over the years. For example, take the following 3 August 1928 *New York Times* article about the women's 800-meter race at that year's Amsterdam Olympics:

> The final of the women's 800-meter run, in which Frau Lina Radke of Germany set a world's record, plainly demonstrated that even this distance makes too great a call on feminine strength. At the finish six out of the nine runners were completely exhausted and fell headlong on the ground. Several had to be carried off the track. The little American girl, Miss Florence MacDonald, who made a gallant try but was outclassed, was in a half faint for several minutes, while even the sturdy Miss Hitomi of Japan, who finished second, needed attention before she was able to leave the field.[7]

This snippet plainly demonstrates the climate in which women of that era were competing. Because sport takes place in the public eye, there is an abundance of media coverage that can be used to look into the ways that attitudes toward Japanese women and sport have changed.

In addition to their media coverage, many female athletes as popular public figures write memoirs or autobiographies either during or after their sporting careers. Critical scholarly discourse on sport has also been written since the turn of the twentieth century, and like the media coverage this writing has changed strikingly. Over the years, opinions on what sports were or were not 'acceptable' for women has evolved considerably, and much can be said about concurrent changes in society by analysing the contemporary discourse. In short, all writing is a reflection of the time and place from which it was produced, and because of the large volume of discourse on sport, it is a valuable (and yet virtually untapped) source of information on gender in modern Japan.

Before delving into the rich resources that will help us construct an understanding of women's sport in twentieth-century Japan, it is important to understand the backdrop against which developments in sport were taking place. In other words, a basic appreciation of gender in a modern Japanese context is needed in order to see the points at which female athletes have alternately fit into and gone completely against the gender ideals of their time.

In the following sections, a brief overview of gender and sport studies in Japan is provided. The chapter concludes with a discussion of research methodology and an outline of the rest of the book.

Gender in the Japanese context

Serious academic inquiry into the issue of gender in Japan began appearing in English in the early 1980s. Prior to that time, very few academic articles and even fewer books had been written about Japan in terms of gender issues. The work that did exist generally focused on the subjugated position of women in Japanese society, and was rarely founded in any sort of unified theory, as the academic pursuit of women's and gender studies was itself in a fairly nascent state.[8]

Women's studies first began appearing in Western institutions of higher learning in the late 1960s, when feminist scholars began creating 'new courses that would facilitate more reflection on female experience and feminist aspiration'.[9] By the 1980s, serious academic inquiry into gender in Japan had begun to appear in the West. Institutions of higher learning began to offer women's/gender studies courses and programmes by the 1980s, but gender had yet to become a topic worthy of much attention in studies of the history, anthropology, politics, economics or sociology of Japan.

In 1985, a report in *The Journal of Japanese Studies* discussed the ways that scholars of that time had begun to consider gender in Japanese studies.[10] For example, the article asserts that gender ideologies were being looked at in a historical context in order to understand how certain domains have come to be defined as male or female and how unequal relations between the sexes have worsened or improved in light of specific historical circumstances. In looking at the history of women's sport in modern Japan, it is important to keep this paradigm in mind, as many changes and developments in the sporting world were closely linked to historical transformations such as industrialization and militarization.

Another way that Japan scholars in the 1980s had begun considering gender was in relation to other forms of structured inequality, namely class. Indeed, it is important to be sensitive to the fact that women in Japan can have vastly differing experiences depending on their class. In the scholarship of Japan, gender has been treated as one of many lines of stratification intersecting one another and thus impacting experiences of inequality.[11] Other forms of inequality have been looked at as well. For example, a growing literature on the experiences of minorities in Japan has considered ways that inequalities due to gender, class, race and sexuality have waxed and waned over time.[12] In addition to historical and anthropological works, many scholars who study Japan's economy and politics have dealt with the various ways that structured systems of inequality have affected gender relations over the past century.[13] In the context of sportswomen in twentieth-century Japan, considering lines of inequality that go beyond gender will prove to be very important, as class played a major role in the development of leisure activities (generally available only for the upper classes) and competitive sports (at first only popular among the working class).

The ways that definitions of gender in Japan are affected by Japanese views of other societies (and vice versa) have also been considered in the scholarship. For example, during the Meiji period Victorian ideals of male and female roles were often emulated by elite Japanese in order to impress the West with the nation's modernity.[14] In post-war society, American ideals have similarly affected definitions and conceptions of gender, sometimes resulting in significant change to policy and/or attitudes towards women's education and participation in politics and the workforce.[15]

This angle is important to keep in mind with respect to the history of Japanese women and sport. Competitive women's sport stemmed directly from Japan's interactions with the West and from subsequent changes in the education system that included the addition of physical education for girls and young women. The first international competitions at which Japanese women competed served as windows into the wider (primarily Western) world, as athletes competed against women from different nations and became more attuned to the differences between women's sports in Japan and in the Western world. As the twentieth century progressed, the trend of globalization became increasingly entwined with women's sports, with global trends seeping ever more easily into Japan. It thus remains important to consider this international dimension of gender when looking at the history of female athletes in Japan.

Moving beyond conventional categories

As evidenced by the sheer volume of references in the notes of the earlier section, the categories of proposed study laid out in the 1985 *Journal of Japanese Studies* article have been covered somewhat exhaustively in the work of scholars in subsequent years. This is not to say that these categories do not remain important and fundamental to considerations of gender in Japan, but it does suggest that in order for groundbreaking work to continue being generated, new and different paradigms for considering gender must be used. Indeed, more recent approaches to looking at gender in Japan have been arguably more dynamic than the pioneering works in the field. A brief consideration of some of these alternative ways to consider gender, in conjunction with their more conventional antecedents, can aide us in understanding how studies of gender in Japan may be applicable to the way gender is conceived on a more theoretical, universal level. This will ultimately aide us in using a study on women and sport in Japan to better conceptualize women and sport universally.

One example of a different paradigm for considering gender has involved looking at how a feminist consciousness and feminist action have taken root in Japanese society.[16] These works have focused on the backdrop against which feminist thought emerged in Japan (i.e. the ways in which women in earlier eras

struggled against patriarchy, capitalism and the state) and the way feminisms manifest themselves in contemporary Japanese society. Works on feminisms make a particular impact on universal discussions of how modernity and gender have intersected. Scholars have explored certain seemingly unique aspects of Japanese modernity, along with related particularities in their women's rights or feminist movements when compared with their Western counterparts. For example, unique facets of Japan's modernity have included the following aspects: that the (Western) understanding of Japanese modernity was overlaid with theories of cultural difference, that the 'tradition' against which modernity opposed was one of a feudal economy, hierarchical relationships and military rule, and that Japanese modernity was imbued with characteristics of a colonial and imperial power.[17]

Several prominent Japanese feminists in the early twentieth century talked of the main dilemma for women being that they had to 'choose between dependence on an individual male or dependence on a patriarchal state'.[18] Thus some of these women, in particular Yosano Akiko, advocated for women's individualism, since they believed that change at the national level could only come about through women changing on the individual level. The lasting effects of feminisms in Japan have been contested by various scholars, some highlighting primarily their progressive and positive outcomes but others focusing more on their shortcomings. For example, it has been argued that sexual differences between men and women cannot be considered the *only* differences that matter, but rather should be recognized as part of a complex interrelationship with various other differences such as race and class.[19] The legacy of Meiji-era rights advocacy is indeed complex as a result of its socio-historical circumstances. That is, when rights are considered as part of a complex web of political and social power, economic interdependence and competing views of what should constitute women's dignity, no straightforward depiction of 'women's rights movements' or 'feminisms' can accurately describe what exactly women have fought for over the past century in Japan.[20]

What looking at feminist movements *can* tell us definitively, however, is that many of the causes and rights that Japanese women have fought for have been different from those fought for in Western societies. Whether it is because of Japan's imperial past or simply because its citizens espouse different values, the trajectories of Japanese feminisms and women's rights movements require that we stretch the conceptual framework of Western feminisms to include the concerns of women in societies with histories very unlike our own. There are many overlaps between the discourse of feminisms and that of women on the playing field. In Western and Japanese scholarship alike, research on women in sport has focused largely on the ways and reasons that women have been marginalized over the years, in much the same way that feminist scholarship does.

The inclusion of masculinity into the discussion of gender in Japan in recent years has also helped further gender studies on a more universal level. While 'gender studies' theoretically ought to focus on issues of sexuality and human experience across both genders, the field has historically been conflated with women's studies in both institutions of higher learning and in the scholarship produced. Certainly women's issues and feminisms are important aspects of gender studies, and their previous exclusion from many scholarly canons compels some scholars to focus solely on these issues. However, this focus on women can sometimes be to the detriment of studies of men and masculinity within the 'gender studies' rubric. Several books and articles focusing on Japan have worked to change this imbalance, however, and in doing so have opened up new possibilities for doing gender studies in other societies.[21]

The consideration of masculinity is important for historical studies of women in sport, as athletic endeavours have long been associated not only with masculinity but also with the masculinization of women. Several of the athletes we will be introduced to shortly faced serious scepticism and critique precisely because they were venturing into a realm that was considered to be too masculine for ladies. Theoretical considerations of femininity and masculinity in women's sport will also factor into Chapter 8 of this book, as we look at the ways sportswomen in Japan have been portrayed and received over the past century.

Another contribution that scholars of Japan have made to the broader understanding of gender can be seen in several works focused on performance. For example, the ways that women have taken on different gendered roles on stage have been looked at critically.[22] Women entered a previously all-male world of acting in late Meiji-era Japan, which happened to be right around the same time that women were beginning to enter the male world of competitive sport. By the early twentieth century, women began to grace the pages of newspapers as both actresses and athletes, thus dramatically changing the fields (of acting and of sports) and contributing to a new image of womanhood and femininity in modern Japan. Interestingly, if this parallel between actresses and sportswomen were to be drawn out to the twenty-first century, it could be argued that women have not only become integral parts of their fields but that in many cases they have taken over these previously all-male domains and now actually epitomize theatre and sports. For example, actresses like Kikuchi Rinko, Kuriyama Chiaki and Miyazawa Rie are just as famous as their male actor counterparts, and sportswomen like Arakawa Shizuka, Takahashi Naoko and Tani Ryōko are equally famous as any male athlete in contemporary Japan. These women represent a new kind of ideal in the worlds of acting and sports.[23] Keeping this parallel in mind will be helpful in conceptualizing the various ways that women's 'performance' on the playing field throughout the twentieth century was interacting with what it meant to be a woman in modern Japan.

Related to the idea of 'performing' is the notion that certain sports are more or less acceptable for women. Certain 'performance' sports such as figure skating

and synchronized swimming have long been considered the most appropriate for women, while those sports associated with such 'masculine' traits as heavy physical contact or bulky muscles (e.g. wrestling, weightlifting) have been deemed less appropriate for women. Just as the above-mentioned, less-conventional ways of considering gender in Japan have contributed significantly to literatures on both gender (in a universal context) and Japan, studies of sport and gender can serve a similar end.

Sport in Japan, as elsewhere, has historically been male dominated, as has the scholarship and commentary about it. The entrance of women into the sporting arena is a subject that has warranted attention from scholars who focus on other parts of the world, particularly in the West, but to date very little exists on women in sport in Japan.[24] Such a paucity of English work leads Western audiences to have a skewed view of women's contribution to sport in Japan (i.e. say 'sport' and 'Japan' and most people will think baseball, sumo and perhaps martial arts – all traditionally male domains). I hope through this book to make clear that sport has been integral to the history of modern Japan, and this *includes* women's sport. A brief consideration of some of the work on women's sport in the West can give us insight into the use of such a study in the Japanese context.

Susan Cahn, who has done a detailed study of gender and sports in the twentieth-century United States, asserts that '[b]y looking at how athletes, educators, sporting officials, promoters, and journalists have clashed and compromised over gender issues in sport, we can learn something about how ordinary and influential people create society's gender and sexual arrangements, and how their actions are conditioned by the circumstances and beliefs of their time'.[25] Through first considering the 'feminine' sports such as archery and bicycling that women participated in during the first part of the century and progressing to discuss the reaction against women's entry into more aggressive and competitive sports, Cahn describes how US society and female sport stars alike have struggled to define their roles as both women and athletes. One of the points she stresses in her account is the importance of the public's acceptance of female athletes and how this acceptance has changed and been influenced over time depending on the race, class and perceived sexual orientation of the athletes. The media has played an important role in the ways female athletes have been constructed, as they tend to focus either on the 'presence or absence of femininity among female athletes, and the comparative capabilities of men and women in sport'.[26] Looking at the ways the media and sport commentators have fashioned the female athlete in Japanese history, just as Cahn has done in the United States, can tell us much about the prevailing views and biases that have existed over time in Japanese society at large.

Feminist scholars of sport have criticized the way that women have historically been excluded from the sporting arena, either through explicit economic

constraints and a lack of opportunity for women or through certain activities that reinforce gender inequality and a certain structure of power relations in society.[27] Just as women have been marginalized in other arenas of society (e.g. politics, workplace), they have historically experienced similar discrimination in sport. Sport tends to prescribe 'appropriate' gendered behaviour and appearance, as certain sports that emphasize physical attractiveness and aesthetics (e.g. figure-skating, synchronized swimming, gymnastics) have been deemed more acceptable for women than those that do not (e.g. bodybuilding, wrestling, track and field). While globalization has resulted in somewhat more universal norms regarding sport, the way that female athletes have been viewed in the West, which is where virtually all the theoretical feminist studies of sport originate, differs from the way they are viewed in Japan. Thus a study of women's sport in Japan can highlight the historical construction of gender norms in a new way.

One of the ways in which women have been marginalized in the sporting arena has been the relative absence of their presence in the historical development of sport.[28] One book and two doctoral dissertations (including my own, from which the present book emerged) have been written expressly about women's sport in Japan. Laura Spielvogel's *Working Out in Japan: Shaping the Female Body in Tokyo Fitness Clubs* details the ways that fitness clubs can serve as a unique window into many facets of contemporary Japanese society, including cultural conceptions of work, play, aging, beauty, power and gender.[29] Similarly, Elise Edwards' dissertation, 'The "Ladies League": Gender Politics, National Identity, and Professional Sports in Japan', looks at the way professional women's football has embodied social forces such as nationalism and gender ideology in contemporary Japan. The primary mode of data collection for both Spielvogel and Edwards was participant observation, the former working as an aerobics instructor in a popular Tokyo fitness club and the latter serving as both player and coach on a women's professional football team in Japan.

While these detailed accounts provide much insight into two specific facets of women's physical activity in contemporary Japan, as anthropologists the focus of their work is not on the history of women in sport. In looking at the subject matter from a historical and theoretical perspective, I have endeavoured in this book to provide this historical background so as to contextualize women's sport both in Japan and universally.

A major strength of the ethnographic approach used by Spielvogel and Edwards, of course, is their ability to use first-hand accounts of Japanese women involved in sport. Their inclusion of quotes and anecdotes gained through their extensive fieldwork enables the reader to get a nuanced perspective on what it means to be a female athlete in contemporary Japan. While the methodology of my project was designed to focus more on the history than on the contemporary position of sportswomen, I believe that future work on my subject would benefit from further ethnographic inquiry. While my work relies heavily on autobiographical works by female athletes and corresponding media coverage,

the incorporation of athletes' voices obtained through ethnographic fieldwork could help to fill in more of the gaps in this still nascent line of inquiry.

Sport studies in Japan

A common reaction when I tell people I am researching female athletes in modern Japan is one of surprise and confusion. I believe that there are several reasons for this, one being that sport studies constitute a relatively new and uncommon field, particularly within the US academy. English-language works that do fall under the rubric of 'sport studies' tend to be spread out across several disciplines, thus resulting in a somewhat ethereal 'field'. Scholarly studies of sport written in English can be found in works of history,[30] sociology,[31] anthropology[32] and gender studies,[33] not to mention area studies, which are themselves already interdisciplinary.[34] Along these same lines, sport scholars in the West tend not to be housed within one department, but rather in their respective departments or professional schools, as is the case with specialists in sports medicine, business or law.

Within Japan, the field of sport studies is somewhat more cohesive and well established, with departments of 'physical education' (*taiiku gaku*) or 'sports sciences' (*taiiku kagaku, supōtsu kagaku*) often uniting scholars with specialties that vary from sports ethics to history to exercise physiology to sports management. As Maguire and Nakayama point out in the introduction to their volume, *Japan, Sport and Society*, Japan also has 'arguably the largest national sociology of sport membership',[35] resulting in a constant renewal and growth of the field. During the course of my fieldwork in Tokyo I attended numerous sports-related study groups, ranging in topic from the history of martial arts to the discourse of body culture, and every time the room was filled to capacity with faculty and students alike. Also, several academic journals such as the *Japan Journal of Sport Sociology* (*Supōtsu shakaigaku kenkyū*) and *Contemporary Sports Critique* (*Gendai supōtsu hyōron*) contribute regularly to the analytical literature on sport and Japanese society.

Sport studies in Japan began with practical, pedagogical and policy-related work and have evolved to include much more critical and cultural approaches, including symbolic analyses.[36] The first Department of Physical Education was set up at Tokyo University of Education (now Tsukuba University) in 1949 as a response to government reforms expanding the requirements for physical education in all levels of Japanese education. In the early 1960s as universities and graduate programmes grew in number, so too did the number of sports studies departments and scholars. Following the 1964 Tokyo Olympics, government and corporate spending on sport and physical education increased, and the national interest in sport reached a new peak.

Against this backdrop of high spending and attention to sport, critical sport studies began to emerge in Japan in the 1970s. In considering the cultural and sociological implications of Japanese involvement in sport and physical activity, several quantitative analyses of sports participation were published in this decade.[37] Throughout the 1980s more sports-related work in the social sciences and humanities began to appear, and scholars' approaches to sport shifted from being only pedagogical or quantitative to including more cultural studies approaches that combined anthropology, history, philosophy, gender and media studies. In 1991, the Japan Sport Sociology Society (*Nihon supōtsu shakaigakkai*) was founded and has since remained the eminent organization for sports scholars in Japan, including cultural anthropologists, sociologists, historians and philosophers.[38] In 2002, the Japan Society for Sport and Gender Studies (*Nihon supōtsu to jendā gakkai*) was founded, an organization that runs regular workshops and lectures, publishes the *Journal of Sport and Gender Studies* and maintains an online forum on issues of gender and sport in contemporary Japan.[39]

The academic community in sport studies in Japan is undoubtedly thriving, although within this community, as in virtually all groups of sport scholars, the majority of work is still being done by men and about men's sport. In more recent years, several prominent female scholars have been adding to the diversity of the scholarship, and the amount of material on women's sport produced in Japan continues to grow at a rapid pace. I have relied on the work of many of these female scholars, whose work can be found quoted throughout this book and listed in the 'Japanese Sources' section of the Bibliography. As perhaps the most well-known contemporary Japanese scholar of women's sport history, Raita Kyoko, stated in the late 1990s, 'a great deal of research has been carried out in Japan on the subject of the history of physical education for women, [but] not much progress has been made in elucidating the history of women's sport'.[40] She explains that in addition to a disproportionate focus on physical education over sport, those works to date that have looked at sport have focused on individual athletes rather than comprehensive accounts of Japanese women's involvement in competitive sport. While I hope that this book helps to bridge this gap, it should also be noted that some progress has been made by other female sport sociologists and historians in Japan since the time Raita made this observation.[41]

While contemporary scholarship has indeed progressed to include many insightful and increasingly diverse academic critiques, still the bulk of work in the Japanese language is instructive rather than analytical. Bookstores tend to catalogue their 'sport' books next to other books about leisure or hobbies, such as crafts, cooking and travel. While one can usually find a handful of works in the 'sport' section that are critical academic works of sport sociology or history, the vast majority include such pedagogical content as how to improve your golf swing or what the best foods are to eat after running a marathon.

Another major constituent of Japan's literature on sport can be found in its booming sport comics (*supokon manga*) industry.[42] These comics, like the instructive manuals, are intended for popular rather than critical consumption and are read by both males and females of all ages in Japan. And, of course, the most widespread literature on sport can be found in the media that covers it in daily newspapers, weekly tabloids, television and radio broadcasts and in various online formats.

Methodology

In considering the ways that female athletes have helped shape and been shaped by twentieth-century Japanese society, it is crucial to consider these popular media in addition to the insightful academic work by both Japanese and foreign sport scholars. For this reason, a cultural studies approach is used to deal with the multiple facets of women's sport in modern Japan. This approach combines textual interpretation, historical background and observation.[43]

The bulk of the research for this book was conducted in the periodical and newspaper reading rooms of the National Diet Library in Tokyo. In addition to newspapers and popular and scholarly journals, I relied heavily on autobiographies and biographies of women athletes. I drew on work by Japanese scholars ranging in topic from body culture to gender and the media in sports. It was essential that most of my research be carried out in Japan, since so little work in English has been written on the topic of Japanese women in sport. While in Japan, I benefited greatly from my affiliation with the Institute of Health and Sport Sciences at the University of Tsukuba. My advisor there, Dr Shimizu Satoshi, informed me about pertinent study groups and presentations that were helpful in informing the direction of my fieldwork.

Because the bulk of my research was text based (as opposed to being primarily participant observation), my narrative naturally began to gravitate towards those figures who appeared most commonly in the media and scholarly material, namely high-profile athletes. I have carefully considered how focusing on the achievements of a number of individual, well-known athletes lends itself to the construction of a history of Japanese women in sport. As will become clear in the following chapters, the individual athletes that I focus on did not merely enter the scene, impress the nation, then fade into obscurity. Rather, the intense media scrutiny they received (from the very beginning) led to the reach of these women going far and wide, extending well beyond the short time that they actually competed.

In the early twentieth century, high-profile female athletes appearing in a heavily male-dominated sporting world sent the message that competitive sport for women was even possible, and the concurrent growth of physical

education and school sport programmes for girls suggests that this message was being embraced by the public. Throughout the twentieth century and up to the present day, female celebrity athletes have been held up as role models and had an arguably profound impact on the way Japanese women think about and take part in sport.[44] Sociological research about popular participation of girls and women in sport supports this argument, which is to say that across all segments of society the participation of females has grown through the past century, with particularly inspiring events (e.g. the women's volleyball win at the 1964 Olympics) provoking surges in popular participation.[45]

While textual research on high-profile female athletes was the primary source of information for the history contained within these pages, I also felt it important to observe sport on a non-elite level in order to gain a better understanding of the role of sport for women in contemporary Japan. During one of my extended research trips to Japan, I joined a co-ed track club with regular practices in Tokyo and took part in several road races and relay races (*ekiden*). Beyond the camaraderie I enjoyed from the team and the necessary physical activity that helped to balance out months of sitting at a desk reading and writing, this experience gave me a glimpse into the world of women's sport, both competitive and recreational. While a small number of women in the track club would regularly compete in both national and international running races (particularly marathons), the vast majority joined for reasons of fitness and/or social interaction. Many had taken part in track clubs during secondary school; some had come to running later in life. The nature of my project was such that my participation in the track club constituted only a small fraction of my overall research, and yet it ultimately gave the work a different flavour from one based on textual examination alone.

While recognizing all the limitations of participant observation, it is important to acknowledge that such activities can provide access into certain facets unattainable through solely text-based research. Anthropologists have long debated the problems of insider and outsider status and have made it clear that pure objectivity is impossible to attain. Nonetheless, even in this age of postmodernist critique and extreme self-reflexive caution, participation remains a critical component to most works of anthropology and sociology. My experiences in competitive racing (both before and during my fieldwork) helped to shape my perspective on women's sport in contemporary Japan and have resulted in a more textured account. As I ran against a strong wind during a race, heard a crowd cheering as I took the *ekiden tasuki* (sash) from my teammate or simply made the trip to the track for practice on a cold January night, I certainly felt throughout the course of my fieldwork that I was, at the least, gaining a great appreciation of the subject matter that I was studying. In short, the cultural history of women in sport that I have produced was informed and created primarily through textual research but was coloured by my own experience in the field – or on the track, as it were.

Book outline

Chapter 2 will locate the discussion of Japanese women in sport within the larger context of women in sport in East Asia. This will include a consideration of the role that sport has played in the sociopolitical history of modern Japan. A brief discussion of the history of women's sport in surrounding East Asian nations will be included in order to highlight the relative progressiveness of Japanese women on the international sporting scene. The objective of this chapter is to further acquaint the reader with modern Japanese society before looking at the history of their female sportswomen in greater detail.

Chapters 3 through 7 discuss the history of Japanese women's participation in competitive sport, including their participation in the Olympic Games from 1928 onwards. After looking briefly at Japanese women's role in pre-modern Japanese 'sport' (namely martial arts), the focus is turned to modern sport and its evolving relationship with women in Japan. The introduction and growing significance of Western sport for both men and women following the late nineteenth-century Meiji Restoration is examined in Chapter 3. As Japan sought to rapidly modernize and Westernize during this time period, sport became an increasingly important component of Japanese society and of the education system. Several female sport pioneers (both athletes and educators) are looked at, including Nikaidō Tokuyo, who established the first women's school of physical education in the 1920s. This school would serve as the training grounds for Japan's first female Olympian, Hitomi Kinue, who is discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

Having laid out the foundations of women's competitive sport in Chapter 3, Chapter 4 focuses on the entry of Japanese women to the international sporting scene. The first female Olympian was a track and field star named Hitomi Kinue, who had already gained fame in national and international competitions by the time she took part in the 1928 Summer Olympics in Amsterdam. These Olympics were the first in which women's track and field events were included, and Hitomi's success at these Games is evidence that Japanese women have quite literally been on the front lines in the development of women's sport in the twentieth century. Hitomi paved the road for a rapidly growing number of Japanese women to compete in both Summer and Winter Olympics from 1928 onwards. Chapter 4 will consider not only Hitomi and her contemporary female sport pioneers (from the 1920s and early 1930s) but also the larger social issues of how these women were viewed by a relatively conservative Japanese society.

Chapter 5 looks at several more pioneering Japanese sportswomen, with its starting point being the 1936 Berlin Olympics. It was at these Games where Japanese excitement over the Olympics reached a new pinnacle, as the nation was gearing up to play host to its own (ultimately cancelled) mega-event in 1940. The year 1936 also saw the first Olympic gold medal brought home by

a Japanese woman, and with this a new standard was set to which Japanese sportswomen would aspire throughout the rest of the twentieth century. This chapter looks particularly at how Japanese attitudes towards female athletes changed as women began to represent Japan so favourably at international sporting events. This was a time, after all, when Japan was aggressively trying to assert itself politically and militarily, and sport came to take on a growing nationalistic significance as Japan's empire spread across Asia. The years covered in this chapter will be the late 1930s to the early 1960s; thus the relatively brief lull in Japan's sporting culture that occurred during and after the Second World War will be looked at. By the late 1950s, the nation's post-war social and economic rebound was in full effect, and in 1959 Tokyo was (again) selected as the first non-Western nation to host the Olympic Games. As Japan prepared to welcome the world to its shores for this event in 1964, the national fervour over several highly successful female athletes and teams would escalate even further.

Chapter 6 begins with a look at the pivotal 1964 Summer Olympics in Tokyo. One of the most significant turning points in the history of women's sport in Japan came with the gold medal success of the women's volleyball team at these Olympics. The women of this team, who were dubbed the 'witches of the Orient', are discussed in this chapter, as is their controversial coach who applied his military training to his coaching techniques. As Japan's economy flourished in the 1960s and 1970s, so too did women's sport, and the rest of Chapter 6 examines ways that Japan's post-war economy manifested itself in women's sport.

Chapter 7 looks at Japanese sportswomen in a contemporary context, from 1980 to the present day. The way that global controversies like the 1980 Olympic boycott of the Moscow Games affected women athletes in Japan will be considered. The chapter looks at a number of contemporary sportswomen and the role they play in Japanese society, including the ways they have been commercialized and sometimes (though often times not) sexualized.

The final chapter of the book is primarily analytical and synthesizes various theoretical issues raised by the historical account of Japanese women's involvement in sport. These issues include modernity, globalization, commercialization, spectacle and femininity. These topics have been considered in other general studies of sport and the Olympic Games, but examining them in the context of Japanese women provides a fresh perspective. Not only do these theoretical concepts become more concrete and comprehensible through individual case studies, but also our understanding of the concepts themselves can be altered and broadened by looking at examples of non-Western, non-male athletes. After examining these theoretical concepts, the book concludes with a consideration of potential future projects.

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Japanese Sportswomen in Context

Seven-time Summer and Winter Olympic athlete Hashimoto Seiko has served in the highest level of the Japanese government, the Upper House of the Diet, for over fifteen years.[1] She has, over the course of her time in office, served with a number of other prominent female athletes, including a professional wrestler, an Olympic gymnast and currently with Japan's most celebrated female judō star, Tani Ryōko. While it is not uncommon for high-profile individuals to take government positions, it is notable that in Japan sport has been a key avenue for women to gain fame, political power and subsequently to make decisions that impact the entire nation. It is particularly important to recognize the potential power of female athletes in light of the fact that Japan is often criticized for its 'bamboo ceiling' for women in the workplace, meaning that, like bamboo, the ceiling can bend and bend but never break. That sport should provide such a path to the top for women (and men, it should be noted, as a number of male politicians including former Prime Minister Aso Tarō have also been prominent athletes) implies a certain valuing of athletes by Japanese society. This chapter will explore the role of sport in the sociopolitical history of modern Japan.

In order to better understand sport and gender in contemporary Japan, we will also look briefly at how Japanese women's involvement in sport compares with that of its neighbours in East Asia, namely China and the Korean peninsula. With each nation having its own complex sociopolitical history, the involvement of women in sport has taken different paths. As anyone who follows international sport knows, the twenty-first century has seen a number of notable Chinese and South Korean women athletes rise to fame in such events as the Olympic Games and World Championship tournaments. While these nations have their own rich histories of sport that go back well before the modern era, I will take the nineteenth century as a starting point for looking at women's involvement in modern sport. As will be elucidated in Chapter 3, the nineteenth century was the point at which women around the globe began to make the transition from recreational sport or self-defensive sport (i.e. martial arts) to competitive sport that would be carried out on an international level by the early twentieth century. In looking at the involvement of East Asia in this evolution of women's sport, we will see that women from this region did not simply join in on a Western-dominated arena of women in sport but indeed made important contributions that would shape the history itself.

Sport and the sociopolitical history of modern Japan

While an all-encompassing history of sport in Japanese history is beyond the scope of this book, a brief look at the significant role that sport has played in modern Japan can give us a good backdrop for better understanding the rise of women's sport there in the late nineteenth century. An in-depth discussion of the nation's long tradition of martial arts will not be included, as a number of sources are already available for better understanding this history and its relation to sport and body culture in modern Japan.[2] After considering the pre-modern ancestors of sport in modern Japan, I will provide a more thorough examination of sport during and after the Meiji Restoration of 1868. The focus will be on sport and modern Japan's sociopolitical history in general, with some references made to the role of women when relevant. Greater detail about the emergence of women's sport in Japan and the individuals responsible for it will be provided in Chapter 3.

Defining 'sport': Did it exist in pre-modern Japan?

To this point, I have not yet provided a definition for 'sport', the reason being that sport, in Japan as in other parts of the world, has not had one static definition over time. Prior to the modern era, people in Japan were partaking in a number of activities which would be classified as sport today. There is very little textual evidence upon which to base research on pre-modern Japanese sport and even less about women's sport during this time. G. Cameron Hurst III asserts that the tradition of sport developed in pre-modern Japan 'did not leave a significant impact on the literary or artistic heritage [of Japan]' and that despite the archaeological and textual evidence of certain sports, 'these activities did not become the focus of literary or artistic concern until well into the Tokugawa period'.[3] The lack of organized sporting activity in early Japanese history and the absence of athletes who were held up as national heroes highlight the difference between Japan's pre-modern history of sport and that of Greece, for example.

However, evidence suggests that inhabitants of pre-modern Japan *did* participate in activities that we would now consider sport-like, including wrestling, ball games and martial techniques. Whether these activities were considered 'sport' at the time they were practised remains up for debate, but their existence is irrefutable. Much of the discourse on sport in modern Japan paints a picture of it being 'introduced' into Japan by Western nations, but many of the characteristics of modern sport already had deep roots in Japanese society by the time Western-originated sports were imported to Japan in the nineteenth century.

Historian Allen Guttmann, who has written several influential books on modern sport in general, and a few pieces on Japanese sport in particular, has a paradigm for distinguishing modern from pre-modern sport. This paradigm, which he relies on in several of his works,[4] provides a simple framework through which pre-modern sport and the subsequent transition to modern sport in Japan can be understood. The distinguishing characteristics of modern sport are as follows: (1) secularism or being unrelated to a transcendent realm of the sacred, (2) equality or that the rules be the same for all contestants, (3) bureaucratization or some sort of administrative structure, (4) specialization, such as specialized roles and playing positions for participants, (5) rationalization or a 'means-ends point of view' whereby the rules are scrutinized and revised, (6) quantification or the use of numbers to qualify achievement and (7) an obsession with records, resulting from the quantification of results.[5] This framework is especially useful for understanding how and why some of the activities of pre-modern Japan may not necessarily be categorized as 'sport', despite the fact that they share some characteristics with their modern successors. For example, a form of sumo wrestling is known to have taken place about 2,000 years ago as part of a religious ceremony praying for abundant crops,[6] but because of the secular nature of modern sport we would not consider this ritual to be a 'sport' *per se*.

Bearing in mind this distinction, several activities from the pre-modern era can be seen as precursors to modern-day sport in Japan. In addition to wrestling, a ball game called *kemari* was played in Japan from around the twelfth century onwards, and this game shared many characteristics of modern sport, including its secular nature (it was played primarily for the enjoyment of spectators and players) and the codification of the game's rules.[7] *Kemari* was played on a square court with a hollow deerskin ball. Eight players would kick the ball, first in order of court rank (the player with the highest rank would pass to the next highest and so forth) and then freely to one another, the object being to keep the ball in the air for as long as possible using the right foot alone. While the game was usually played only by men, the memoirs of a court lady, Lady Nijō, suggest that women occasionally played as well. In her 1307 memoir, *Confessions of Lady Nijō*, she writes that a priest suggested eight court ladies dress in the *kemari* attire and to play a game, saying, '[t]hat certainly would be a rare sight'.[8]

There is also evidence suggesting that women were involved in martial arts in the pre-Meiji era. While the modern sport of jūdō is often noted for its open acceptance of women upon its founding by Kanō Jigoro in 1882,[9] biographies of women living in the mid-nineteenth century discuss certain martial techniques being practised by women in order to gain strength or confidence. For example, one of the pioneers of physical education in Japan, Toyoda Fuyu, became skilled in the *naginata*, or long pole sword, as a teenager in the 1850s.[10] Women of all social strata would train in such self-defensive methods, typically

to be used to protect themselves if and when their husbands were away from the home in combat.

Other pre-modern Japanese sporting activities show little or no evidence of women having taken part. These male-only domains included such activities as *dakyū*, a game using sticks to propel a ball into a goal, *gitchō*, a game similar to *dakyū* but using a round disk similar to a hockey puck instead of a ball, and *chikaraishi* or the lifting of heavy stones. Combat techniques such as swordsmanship and archery have also been around in Japan for many centuries, and several of these techniques still exist today in one form or another.[11] In an essay on archery and the modernization of Japan, Guttmann claims that Japanese archery embodied several important characteristics of modern sport well before the modern era, which he believes can partially explain the quick and welcome diffusion of Western sport following the Meiji Restoration.[12] For example, in the ninth-century CE (the Heian period), while the practice in the West was to shoot arrows only at live targets (i.e. animals), the Japanese were shooting at standardized targets, much like the modern-day Japanese sport of *kyūdō* and Western-style archery. Guttmann posits that this link can go beyond the sports themselves and indeed suggests that Japanese modernization in the Meiji era and beyond is easier to understand because of these 'seeds of modernity' that had been in Japan for centuries prior.[13] I will now turn to this period of modernization in the late nineteenth century, for modernization (and Westernization) brought with it important changes in the way the body was viewed in relation to the Japanese state, along with the first strong impetus for the inclusion of women in sport.

Sport and the Meiji Restoration

Mori Arinori, who would become the most prominent and influential education minister of the Meiji era, stated in 1882 that '[i]f the body is strong, the spirit will advance of its own accord without flagging. Physical training is an indispensable element for character training'.[14] This mode of thinking did not get introduced to Japan from the West, as may be assumed based on the large-scale importation of Western goods, people, ideologies and trends after the Meiji Restoration. Rather, it developed indigenously from the late-Tokugawa focus on military training. By the mid-nineteenth century, private schools that taught martial arts and domain-sponsored schools that trained local samurai were proliferating throughout the archipelago. It has been argued that this infrastructure and societal reverence of physical culture strongly influenced the Meiji-era reception of Western sport, as they were seen not merely as recreational but, for a more significant purpose, like spiritual training or social bonding. Mori Arinori and other influential Meiji-era figures had themselves,

as former samurai, taken part in intense physical training in their youth and thus saw its immediate value in instilling such values as the observance of hierarchy and comradeship with one's peers, along with the physical benefits of improved health and stamina.[15] Compulsory organized physical activity was therefore promoted by Mori and swiftly introduced to the Japanese education system following the Meiji Restoration.

At the same time, in the late nineteenth century, sport in the West had come to be increasingly linked to militarism, and the Japanese quickly adopted this mindset as well. Again, the samurai tradition of education in the military arts still loomed large, so it was no great leap for the Japanese elite to give primacy to physical training in the revamping of the education system. The introduction of physical activity into schools was seen as part of a larger scheme to prepare youths for war. This was the era of Social Darwinism, and so the improved physical discipline and strength promoted by adding physical education into the schools was fundamentally linked to Japan's effort to raise its status as a major military player on the world stage. Moreover, as historian Donald Roden has said of sport in this time period,

> along with the notion of the rectitude of might was a corresponding fear that the mechanization of power in an industrializing state spawns moral lassitude. Routine, convenience, docility, and protruding stomachs were all alarming signs that, as [then US Civil Service Commissioner Theodore] Roosevelt declared in 1894, 'a peaceful and commercial civilization' was on the verge of forfeiting those 'virile fighting qualities' that were the source of its rise.[16]

Participation in sport was thus inextricably linked to the mindset that characterized Social Darwinism – that only the strongest of nations could flourish and survive.

It was during this time, only a decade or so after Japan opened its ports to the world after over two centuries of isolationist policies, that Western sport was introduced to Japan. This 'introduction' came in several different waves all around the same time (from 1860s to 1890s). The unprecedented influx of foreigners to Japan after the 1860s meant that foreign communities were being established and recreational activities from abroad were being introduced both informally and formally. Ending its long period of isolation did not only mean foreigners were coming into Japan but it also meant that the Japanese were allowed to travel abroad. This led to an even broader establishment of sport in the Meiji era by returning Japanese citizens themselves, again both informally and formally.

As foreign communities grew around port cities such as Yokohama, facilities for recreational activities quickly came to be built – often for use first by the foreigners and then by elite Japanese.[17] From the outset, sport was a central component of the social and recreational lives of the foreign communities in treaty port cities. John Morris, a British employee of the Japanese Imperial

Public Works Department who was part of one such foreign community in the late 1800s, wrote a book titled *Advance Japan: A Nation Thoroughly in Earnest* (1895), in which he discusses the foreign communities of Japan's treaty ports. He writes,

> Sport is pursued in all its branches with that which distinguishes the Anglo-Saxon race wherever met with. An extensive racecourse is situated not far from the public gardens, and a magnificent recreation ground – where cricket, tennis, and other games are played with a zest which amazes the native population – lies just in the rear of the business thoroughfares. Boating and yachting, rife shooting and athletics, further tend to fill the cup of youthful happiness to the brim.[18]

It is clear that the foreign communities brought with them many of the recreational activities they had enjoyed in their homelands, and many of the Japanese living around them would soon be engaging in these activities as well.

The early engagement of the Japanese in Western sport came not only from their 'amazement' at the activities in which the foreigners were partaking but also from the rapid institutionalization of physical activity into the Japanese education system. Foreign teachers were invited to work in Japanese schools (among other government-sponsored locations), and there they would teach subjects ranging from English and law to calisthenics and physical education. Some of these foreign teachers, including those not hired specifically to teach physical education, have been credited with having introduced sport from abroad to their students. Perhaps most famous among these educators was Horace Wilson, an American hired by the Japanese government in the early 1870s to teach English and mathematics at what would become Tokyo University (at the time it was called *Dai ichi daigaku ku dai ichiban chūgakkō*). While Americans living in Japan had built baseball diamonds and had recreational leagues prior to his arrival,[19] Wilson is credited with having established the first baseball club at a Japanese university in 1872.[20] The sport was played as a novelty on college campuses for the next couple of decades, but baseball did not take off as an intercollegiate sport until the 1890s, well after Horace Wilson and his baseball-promoting American contemporaries had returned to the United States.[21] The timing of baseball's surge in popularity came not coincidentally at the same time that Japan was preparing for war and eventually defeating China in the Sino-Japanese War (1894–5). University students were growing more interested in sport not only as a fun recreational activity but also as a symbol of 'the collectivist ideal and fighting spirit of the nation as it prepared for war'.[22] This was, again, in line with the Social Darwinist thought of the day in which the strongest nations would flourish and the weak would be destroyed.

Wilson and the other baseball enthusiasts were not the only foreigners to introduce sport to the education system in Japan, as the Japanese Ministry of Education (*mombushō*) sponsored hundreds of educators in the Meiji era

to facilitate in new teaching methods to modernize the nation. This included foreigners being brought to Japan to serve as teachers and advisors, along with Japanese educators and government employees going abroad to learn and bring back new modes of educating and governing. This would have the most direct impact on the development of women's sport in Japan, as both foreigners and Japanese sent abroad began to promote physical activity for girls and women in Japanese schools beginning in the 1870s.

The introduction of women's sport to Meiji Japan

Before the Meiji Restoration, distinctions within Japanese society tended to be based first on social hierarchy (samurai, peasant, artisan or merchant) and then on gender, but with the abolition of the class system, gender came to play a larger role in the way society was structured after 1868. The Meiji-era slogans *fukoku kyōhei* ('enrich the nation, strengthen the military'), *wakon yōsai* ('Japanese spirit, Western technology') and *bunmei kaika* ('civilization and enlightenment') sum up Japan's interest in being seen as progressive by the rest of the world at this time – an interest driven largely by a desire to counter Western threats to Japan's nationhood. Education came to be an important tool that the Meiji government used to meet some of these nationalistic goals, and this included, for the first time ever, compulsory education for girls and young women. The government believed that without a literate and 'enlightened' population, Japan would never gain international recognition.[23] As part of the education reform, physical education was introduced to the elementary curricula for both boys and girls for the first time.

Although elementary education was made compulsory for all school-aged boys and girls in Meiji Japan, the government still gave clear preferential treatment to male students.[24] Prior to the Meiji Restoration, the Tokugawa government had stressed Confucian learning, with an emphasis on the morals of obedience, loyalty and filial piety as being necessary for maintaining a stable society. Women were to maintain complete loyalty to their husbands (in spite of the fact that keeping concubines was a regular practice for many men), and their roles were defined as being both subservient to and dependent upon men. Women did not have any political, legal or economic rights, and their sphere of influence was limited to the family. Tokugawa women were, for the most part, expected to be illiterate and uneducated.[25]

Following the Meiji Restoration, the priority given by the state to creating a stronger, more modern nation meant that Western notions such as individualism and equal opportunity in education came to be embraced, at least in theory. The goal of the education system was to create a stronger nation, and when it came to women, it was thought that 'the enlightenment

of future generations and the prosperity of the country rest on the nature of mothers'.[26] The transition was not as smooth or simple as is sometimes suggested by histories of Meiji Japan – since many families preferred to stick to their deep-rooted traditions; parents did not think that education was necessary for their daughters. Particularly in rural regions, the percentage of girls attending school remained under ten per cent throughout the 1870s and 1880s in spite of the fact that the Ministry of Education had deemed eight years of compulsory elementary education for boys and girls in the Fundamental Code of Education of 1872.[27]

Over time, more and more girls and young women began abiding by the compulsory education rule, especially as more schools for girls came to be built and female education became more mainstreamed. From the mid-1870s to the mid-1880s, foreign missionaries began establishing Christian girls' schools, in part to compensate for what was seen as a lacking effort on the part of the Japanese state with respect to girls' education.[28] In addition to foreign missionary-run schools for girls, private schools for girls were beginning to open around the country as well. Like the Christian schools, these schools could establish their own courses of study, as they were not run by the state. The first of such private schools was the Atomi Girls' School, founded by Atomi Kakei in 1875.[29]

At her school, Atomi included 'dance exercise' as part of the curriculum. This was significant because of the fact that physical education had not yet been established as part of the official curriculum for male or female students at this point. That would not come until 1878, when physical education for male students was added to public schools.[30] By 1880, the Tokyo Women's Normal School (*Tokyo joshi shihan gakkō*, now Ochanomizu Women's University), a government-sponsored institution, added courses in Western social etiquette, including home economics and social dance. Other prefectural-run women's normal schools added the same subjects to their curricula in the early 1880s.[31]

By the end of the nineteenth century, as the Meiji era had firmly established itself as one of drastic change and rapid modernization, the seeds of women's physical education in Japan had been sowed. Often trained first by foreign instructors who brought over the latest educational trends from the West, by 1900 there were a number of Japanese women who had graduated higher schools and were able to teach physical education throughout the Japanese school system. Several individuals were instrumental in the promotion and spread of this Western-influenced physical education, and they will be looked at in more detail shortly. Before doing so, I would like to further contextualize the rise of women's sport in Japan by briefly looking outward at Japan's neighbours. With such a long history of shared cultural traditions between China, Korea and Japan, one must wonder why the sporting traditions among women in East Asia have had taken such different paths to the present day.

Women's sport in East Asia

With Japan endeavouring to break from its traditional Confucian past by revamping its education system and providing more opportunities for young women, it stands to reason that other nations in East Asia went through similar transitions in the modern era. Confucianism, the millennia-old Chinese philosophy and system of social ethics has, in a multitude of different forms, had a great impact on all of East Asia. Much has been written on the ways that Confucianism (and/or neo-Confucianism) has affected gender relations in East Asia.[32] It has been argued that Confucianism limits individual personalities within the parameters of prescribed roles and that virtually all interpersonal relationships are held together by a social hierarchy.[33] While this is clearly a broad and nuanced topic, one might boil it down to say that in East Asia the notion that a women's role should be both closely tied to the family and subordinate to men remains strong. While there have certainly been individuals and groups who have helped provoke change, large-scale feminist movements have not taken hold in the region the same way they did in the West throughout the twentieth century.[34] And yet, in China, Korea and Japan, women today comprise a large, significant and lucrative portion of their thriving sporting industries. Looking solely at sport in East Asia, one might in fact come to the conclusion that the region has some of the most progressive attitudes in the world when it comes to women.

As has already been discussed, the literature to date on women's participation in sport has been heavily focused on issues pertaining to Western women. While the study of women in sport outside of Europe and North America is still at a nascent stage, there has been some progress made towards better understanding how sport has been affected by and impacts women in the non-Western world. With respect to East Asian women in sport, the majority of the [admittedly small amount of] English-language work has focused on China, as sportswomen there have been part of an unusual trend in the world of sport at the turn of the twenty-first century, namely that of the nation's women athletes outperforming the men.

Women's sport in China

China represents the only nation in the world in which women's sport excelled so swiftly past men's sport in the late twentieth century. While the level at which women perform in sport has reached monumental heights in the present day, the history of women taking part in sport has included extended periods of marginalization, as has been the case for women's sport in most nations. While sport around the globe has also long been tied up with politics, the

extent to which political ideologies have played a role in the development and direction of women's sport remains uniquely intense in China.

Sport sociologist Hong Fan has characterized modern Chinese women's sport as having developed in three periods: birth (1840–1911), growth (1911–49) and maturation (1949 to present).[35] Prior to the period of 'birth', there were of course traditional forms of women's sport, particularly during the Tang Dynasty (618–906). However, once Confucianism reached its peak and became the official doctrine in the Song Dynasty (906–1279), women were marginalized in society, and as Hong puts it, 'Chinese women's sport went into a drastic and terminal decline'.[36] The notion that women were to 'obey the father when at home, submit to the husband when married, and listen to the son after the husband dies' took hold, and such literal acts of subservience as footbinding became common practice.[37] Confucianism and its suppression of women's freedoms remained the dominant ideology in China well into the modern era.

Christianity came to China on a large scale after a series of invasions in the nineteenth century, and although it was ultimately unsuccessful in converting many Chinese to Christianity, it did make a significant impact on Chinese customs and culture. By the 1860s, Western missionaries were stationed in every province in China, establishing churches, missionary schools and hospitals. It was during this time, when Western ideals began to seep into the Chinese educational system, that physical education for women came to be seen as a symbolic arena for the liberalization of women.

As Andrew Morris discusses in his article on the late Qing dynasty origins of modern Chinese sport and physical culture, the *tiyu* (translated as physical culture or body cultivation) that emerged in China in the nineteenth century was 'a totalizing and systematic ideology of personal behaviour and its physiological implications, which was invested with definite ideals of the relationships between the individual and the national body, and between the individual body and personal character'.[38] In other words, modern sport in China has, from its inception, been deeply entangled with politics. For example, as traditional physical activities in China have been linked more to self-cultivation and ritual than to competition, when Western sport entered China there were many who believed that the Chinese should maintain their non-competitive nature and thus not engage in Western sport. Opponents of Western competitive exercises argued that Chinese national identity and solidarity were at risk if society were to adopt this new trend.[39]

As we know today, China did embrace Western sport (although has maintained a flourishing community of practitioners of traditional, non-competitive activities as well). Both internal and external forces led to a large-scale questioning of Confucian moral ethics by the mid-nineteenth century, which included an examination of the entrenched attitudes towards both physical activity and women in Chinese society. After a series of major foreign

invasions, domestic rebellions and wars, China at the turn of the twentieth century became more interested in strengthening itself by any means possible and less interested in holding on to those traditions that were now seen as barriers to progress in a modernizing world. The late Qing Dynasty (1644–1911) government added mandatory physical exercise to the national curriculum for all primary and secondary school students. This change in physical practices was a small part of a much larger revolutionary movement. The Qing regime was overthrown by the Nationalist government in 1911, and although the new political system was fragile and volatile, the Republican period (1912–49) would see changes that would help uproot Confucian attitudes towards women and physical activity.

After the Nationalist government was founded in the early twentieth century, Western democratic ideals of equality and liberty had a radical impact on the position of women in Chinese society. This, in turn, meant that new worlds of physical education, activities and competitive sports were now opened to women. Many women, who were eager to cast off the oppressive shackles of traditional Confucian ideology, enthusiastically took part in sport as a means of expressing their new physical independence. Importantly, modern sport was a completely new phenomenon in China at this time, which meant that male domination had not been established as it had been in many other parts of the world. Chinese women took part in international competitions such as the Far East Asian Games and performed outstandingly, which thus earned them further respect and social standing in the liberalizing Chinese society.[40]

The Communist Revolution that rocked the foundations of Chinese society in the 1940s and the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949 had a largely positive effect on women's sport. The centralized socialist state and Marxist ideology upon which the new nation was built led to massive growth in women's sport along with a theoretical stamping out of male chauvinism. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) quickly acknowledged that sport could help the nation establish international respect, which was particularly important in light of the repeated humiliation by Western nations that China had dealt with for the past century. Furthermore, sport was a way for the government to prove the benefits of socialism over capitalism. The relationship between sport and politics in China became all the more glaring after 1949.

From the late Qing Dynasty onwards, in spite of the sweeping changes in government and state-promoted ideologies, women's bodies were of greater concern than men's. The reason for this was an ongoing desire to preserve the Chinese race by giving birth to 'strong and stately infants'.[41] Women's sport after 1949 was thus aggressively supported administratively, politically and financially by the CCP. By selecting young women to endorse, the government is able to inculcate its political ideology and social values in individuals while simultaneously rearing athletes to represent China and its successful political ideals on the heavily publicized stage of international sport competitions.

This model has remained more or less in tact from the mid-twentieth century up to the present day.

Of course, an irony exists in the CCP's heavy investment in women's sport. Should not the massive investment that the government makes into an Olympic gold medal be used instead to improve women's physical education for the masses? The nurturing of a small number of elite athletes appears to go against the communist ideal of equality or sport for all.[42] The impulse to prove its political superiority on the world stage seems indeed to have overshadowed certain facets of the very political ideology it seeks to promote, though this is only one of many contradictions in the changing face of Chinese communism in the twenty-first century.

It is impossible to discuss women's sport in contemporary China without making mention of performance-enhancing drugs. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, a number of female athletes, especially swimmers and weightlifters, tested positive for anabolic steroids at major international competitions such as the Olympic Games. Far more Chinese women than men have tested positive. It has come to light that the government in China, in addition to those of formerly communist nations of Eastern Europe, produced and administered performance-enhancing drugs to female athletes as young as seven years old. Depending on the sport, these drugs included growth stimulants, growth retardants and anabolic steroids.[43]

Drug tests were not carried out in China until 1988, which was when the issue came to light. In spite of supposed state-sponsored random drug tests and the formation of anti-doping organizations, Chinese athletes continued to test positive at international events through the early nineties. The height of the scandal came in October 1994, when seventeen female Chinese swimmers tested positive at the Asian Championships, which was nearly fifty per cent of the entire team. Among those who tested positive were Lu Bin, who had just won four gold and two silver medals at the World Swimming Championships the month before. Moreover, two canoeists, a cyclist, a discus thrower and a 400-metre hurdler also tested positive.[44] It remains unclear how much involvement state and/or sport officials had in the manufacturing and administering of these drugs, but the blame fell more on the shoulders of the government than it did on the individual athletes.

The heavily tarnished state-sponsored sport programme in China had to work extremely hard to regain its footing on the international stage following the Asian Championships debacle, and it could be argued that it was largely successful in doing so. Members of the Chinese Olympic Committee publicly declared lifetime bans on those athletes caught doping. Officials, coaches and medics involved in the administering of drugs were threatened with imprisonment.[45] The widely held belief that China's chequered past would inhibit it from ever hosting the Olympic Games was overturned when Beijing received the bid to stage the 2008 Summer Games.

At these Games, Chinese women appear to have regained the ground they lost after the drug scandal, winning an unprecedented forty individual gold medals and steering clear of any drug-related scandals.[46] The only blemish in these otherwise glorious Games for Chinese women came with the heavily publicized controversy over the age of some members of the gold medal-winning women's gymnastics team.[47]

The gold medals won by Chinese women at the 2008 Beijing Olympics were in a diverse range of sports, from rowing to weightlifting to table tennis to diving. Having taken part in the Olympic Games for just over two decades (the first official showing of PRC women at the Olympics came in 1984),[48] the Chinese women's rise to the top in so many sports in international competitions has been rapid and dramatic. Of course, the turn of the twenty-first century and China's involvement in the Olympic Games represent only a small portion of Chinese women's involvement in sport, and clearly a strong foundation was built through their participation in domestic and regional competitions prior to the 1980s. While heavy political involvement and accusations of cheating have led many to question the 'purity' of sport in contemporary China, the high level of performance and success that their sportswomen have reached is undeniable. Moreover, the late twentieth-century global trend away from amateurism in sport, along with the constant battle against performance-enhancing drugs worldwide, makes Chinese athletes more the norm than the exception these days. To think that just over a century ago Confucian ideals were literally 'binding' Chinese women's physical freedoms makes their successes all the more astounding.

Women's sport on the Korean peninsula

Although Confucianism originated in China, the philosophy's impact on the world of women's sport was perhaps felt most strongly and for the longest amount of time on the Korean peninsula. This was because of policies adopted during Korea's longest imperial dynasty, the Chosŏn dynasty (1392–1896), that would create deep-seated societal norms about gender roles in the modern era.[49] That said, by the late twentieth century Korean women had completely turned on their heads the societal attitudes towards women that had been so deeply entrenched in the early part of the century.

Sport in Korea in the modern era was initially dominated by men, as it was around the world at that time. During the 'Korean Empire' (1897–1910), however, Korean society was uniquely hostile to the reception of Western sport, as the recently fallen Chosŏn dynasty had established a social system that severely limited what was considered acceptable for women. The neo-Confucian school of *Sung-ri-hak* adopted by the Chosŏn rulers was a conservative philosophical

world view that stressed control of the individual as a means of producing virtue.[50] This school of thought established a strict division of social roles between male and female, including a rule called *Nam-nyeo chil-se bu-dong-seok*, meaning that boys and girls over seven years of age should never be in the same room together.[51] The Chosŏn state sponsored the creation of instructional Confucian manuals that promoted family norms and social values, and through the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, private individuals came to publish their own widely read manuals on Confucian mores.[52] Women were defined as subordinate to men and were cut off from educational opportunities. Women were also cut off from receiving inheritance, as they became members of their husbands' families upon marriage, and legal sanctions forbade widows from remarrying.[53] Clearly, by the end of the Chosŏn dynasty, Korean women faced an uphill battle when it came to taking part in sport, let alone receiving support for doing do.

One of the strongest obstacles facing Korean women in the modern era was the strict Chosŏn social code that had dictated that the female body was to be hidden in public and that female physical activity was not morally or physically acceptable. At Ewha Haktang (the precursor to Ewha Womans University and the first modern girls' school founded in Korea), physical education classes were offered for the first time in the late nineteenth century. The calisthenic exercises taught in these classes were met with harsh criticism, as they required women to raise their arms and legs in the air, which was considered inappropriate and immoral for upper class women. Parents withdrew their daughters from the school in anger, and young men were told by their families not to marry any woman who had attended Ewha. The municipal government henceforth forbade physical education for girls in late nineteenth century Korea.[54]

By 1911, some girls' schools had begun to offer a limited number of modern sports, such as gymnastics, basketball and tennis, all of which were globally considered to be acceptable for the feminine physique at that time. Much like what had happened in Japan after the Meiji Restoration, modern sport entered Korea following the 1876 Treaty of Kanghwa, when Korea opened its ports to the world. Foreigners began living in and pursuing leisure activities in Seoul, and physical education for boys was simultaneously introduced into the modernizing education system. The 1895 Royal Edict on Education defined the new goals of Korean education to be 'the rearing of the physical, spiritual and intellectual capabilities of individuals'.[55] Once Korea was colonized by Japan in 1910, sport and physical education became prime avenues for the colonizers to cultivate loyal imperial Japanese subjects. Thus, as the twentieth century progressed, Korea began to follow closely behind in the footsteps of Japan, which included a greater inclusion of women into the educational system and subsequently into sport.

Much can and has been written about how sport served as a stage for playing out tensions between the Japanese and the colonized Koreans, particularly with respect to (male) marathon runners Sohn Kee-chung and Nam Sung-yong at

the 1936 Berlin Olympics. Imperialist tensions and intentions aside, the period of Japanese colonization was one of growth in the world of sport for Korean men and women. Foreigners (i.e. Westerners) remained in Korea through the first part of the twentieth century, and they were instrumental in furthering the women's sport movement. The American Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) established itself in Korea in 1903, and sport was one of the central activities carried out by the Seoul YMCA.[56] The YMCA sponsored and co-hosted several women's sporting competitions. For example, in 1934 it began sponsoring a women's table tennis tournament that was organized by the Korean Association for the Promotion of Women's Sport (*Chosŏn yŏja ch'eyuk changnyŏhoe*) and also financially supported the first All-Korea Girls' Middle School Basketball Tournament in 1935.[57] The growth of modern women's sport, fuelled dually by the Japanese seeking to rear strong colonial subjects and Westerners seeking to modernize Korea, continued until the end of the Second World War and the withdrawal of the Japanese in 1945.

Through the post-war period, the number of sports and the level of performance grew higher for women around the globe, including Korea. In the 1960s and 1970s, under the dictatorial military regime of Park Chung Hee, emphasis was placed on sport as a means of unifying the nation, validating political power and enhancing the nation's prestige abroad. The government lent financial support to the Korean Sports Council in an effort to make the nation more competitive internationally, not unlike the Chinese model.[58] The government lending support to sport, which was seen as a way help to legitimate state ideology, was an increasingly common practice during the Cold War (1945–91). South Korea entered the Olympic Games in 1948 and, with the exception of the 1980 boycott of the Moscow Olympics, has sent athletes to every Summer and Winter Games since. North Korea first took part in the 1964 Winter Olympics, with women's speed skater Han Pil Hwa taking home the nation's first Olympic medal. North Korea did not compete in several Games after 1964 for political reasons (including the Soviet-led boycott of 1984) but has had a relatively strong showing in the Games they did compete in, especially at the Summer Olympics.

By the turn of the twenty-first century, women from the Korean peninsula were excelling at certain sports, beyond what anyone could have imagined only several decades prior. South Korean women have excelled in particular in archery, golf and figure skating. Interestingly, these three sports represent some of the earliest sports in which women's involvement was considered acceptable (with golf being one of the first official Olympic sports for women in 1900 and archery and figure skating joining the women's Olympic programme a few years later). This is not to say, of course, that South Korean women have not excelled at less traditionally 'feminine' sports, as they have also excelled in speed skating, taekwondo, judo and have a world champion weightlifter.[59] North Korean women have had strong showings in football and speed skating.

In the twenty-first century, South Korean women have been a growing presence in the sport of professional golf, indeed making up one of the largest national contingents of women in the sport. In 2010, of the top 100 female golfers in the world, South Korean women comprised a third of this group. According to *The Times*' sports reporter Patrick Kidd, '[i]f a Korean child, especially a girl, shows talent with a golf club at a young age, her parents will stop at nothing to ensure that her skills are nurtured with constant coaching'.[60] As golf is scheduled to return to the programme of the Summer Olympics in 2016, the global visibility of South Korean women in this sport is likely to continue to increase.

Perhaps the most publicized South Korean athlete in the twenty-first century, male or female, has been figure skater Kim Yu-na. At only nineteen years old, she bore the heavy weight of her nation's expectation of gold as she competed in the 2010 Olympic Games in Vancouver. Not only had a Japanese skater, Arakawa Shizuka, taken the coveted gold medal in the 2006 Games, but Kim's main rivals in Vancouver were Asada Mao and Ando Miki, both also Japanese. As *The New York Times* reported, 'the competition between Kim and her Japanese rivals will also be viewed as a referendum "on which country's culture is better regarded by the rest of the world"'.[61] Whether the elation over her gold medal win was fuelled by pure nationalism or tinged with a darker anti-Japanese sentiment is impossible to determine, but it is clear that it skyrocketed the sport of women's figure skating to new heights in Korea. As with what happened in Japan after Arakawa Shizuka took the gold in 2006 (to be discussed in more detail in Chapter 7), Kim became a media sensation and spurred a flood of commercial products related to her and her sport.

Women's sport on the Korean peninsula has come a long way in a relatively short amount of time. The successes by contemporary Korean sportswomen are particularly striking in light of the uniquely difficult set of circumstances that women there faced at the onset of the twentieth century. Likewise, the accomplishments of female athletes in the rest of East Asia make us take pause at widely held assumptions of the lasting effects of Confucian ideology on female liberation. While it may well be true that a national prioritizing of women's sport may be more linked to the 'national pride gained in the only clearly visible area where [East Asian women] can take on and beat the world's most economically advanced countries',[62] women's liberation is nonetheless a secondary consequence. How Japanese society transitioned from one in which 'good wife, wise mother' was the official ideal for women to one in which strong sportswomen were not only supported by Japanese society but would also become influential lawmakers themselves is the subject of the forthcoming chapters.

3

The Road to Participation in Competitive Sport

The twentieth century brought with it a flood of changes to Japanese society. The seeds that had been sowed immediately following the Meiji Restoration and Japan's opening up to the outside world were beginning to bear fruit by the turn of the century. The earliest pioneers of women's physical education and sport, such as Atomi Kakei, whose private girls' school offered courses in 'dance exercise', were inculcating a new ethic of physical freedom into a small number of young women. As courses in physical education became formalized by the state in the 1880s and 1890s, more and more young women were exposed to the calisthenic exercises that were in vogue in Europe around the same time. How these low-impact routines transitioned to full-blown competitive sport in a matter of decades is a key question to keep in mind while reading this chapter. We will look at how the foundation of women's competitive sport was laid at the turn of the twentieth century by a number of influential educators.

While Atomi Kakei was the first Japanese women to open a private girls' school, and to incorporate dance into the curriculum, she was not alone in introducing the precursors to sport in Meiji-era Japan. A number of other influential educators would change the face of education for young women and would help open society up to the idea of women taking part in competitive sport.

Toyoda Fuyu: Introducing movement into primary education

Toyoda Fuyu was born in Ibaraki prefecture in 1845. After losing both her parents at a young age, she began practicing martial arts, becoming skilled in the *naginata* or long pole sword. At the age of eighteen, she married Toyoda Kotarō, a student of Dutch sciences. When Toyoda Fuyu was twenty-four and her husband thirty-three, he was tragically assassinated in Kyoto during the fights between those trying to keep out foreigners and those, like Kotarō, wanting to open the ports.[1] Seeking to carry on the spirits of her parents and her husband, Toyoda absorbed herself fully in her studies, taking a special interest in Fukuzawa Yukichi's ten-volume series *Seiyō jijō* ('Conditions in the West'), which discussed the strengths of Western institutions and culture. By the early 1870s, she had begun gathering neighbourhood children and teaching them informally, and in 1875 she enrolled at the newly established

Tokyo Women's Normal School (*Tokyo joshi shihan gakkō*, now Ochanomizu Women's University) in order to become a teacher. She focused her studies on primary education, which included work by German educator and theorist Friedrich Fröbel, the so-called inventor of kindergarten.[2] At this time, the notion of primary education theory was still relatively unknown in Japan, and Toyoda Fuyu began giving public lectures with such titles as 'Understanding Motherhood' (*hahaoya kokoroe*) and 'The Theory of Kindergarten' (*yōchien no setsu*). These talks were published shortly thereafter in the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, and in this way many of Fröbel's theories of early childhood education became quickly disseminated throughout the country.[3]

These theories involved using play and games as a method of education for young children. Toyoda began using Fröbel's methods at a kindergarten she helped establish in 1876, incorporating song and movement into teaching such topics as colours, numbers and directions. Some of the songs were adapted from German or English, maintaining their original melodies, while others were products of Toyoda's own imagination. By the early 1890s, kindergartens had begun opening around the country, and Toyoda's adaptations of Fröbel's teaching method were being used by a rapidly growing number of educators. She travelled around the country helping to establish schools, and she also travelled abroad to Europe to exchange ideas with educators there. Toyoda lived until 1941 and is credited with having had a huge effect on primary education in the three eras she lived and taught in – Meiji, Taishō and Shōwa.[4] Had it not been for her fervent efforts to adopt and adapt Fröbel's methods of play, physical activity may not have been introduced into the education system until much later, and there would have been little precedent for the subsequent development of women's sport in Japan. However, Toyoda was not the only advocate of physical activity in schools at that time, and her focus was on young children rather than on girls or women alone. Another advocate, Tsuboi Gendō, was working around the same time to develop women's physical education.

Tsuboi Gendō: From movement to dance

In the early Meiji era, 'physical education' for girls was synonymous with 'dance'. The man credited with having introduced and promoted dance as a means of physical education for female students in Japan is Tsuboi Gendō. Tsuboi's gift for foreign languages, interest in furthering women's education and passion for Western sports led him to help formalize physical education for women (beyond the small number of private institutions that had begun to similarly experiment with dance in the Meiji era).

Born in Chiba prefecture in 1852, Tsuboi began reading the Chinese classics at a very young age and, after realizing his talent for learning foreign languages,

began studying English intensively at the age of fourteen. By the time he was nineteen, Tsuboi was working in the Ministry of Education (*Mombushō*) as a translator. When an Amherst College professor, Dr Leeland, visited Japan in order to help institutionalize a system of physical education in 1870, Tsuboi served as his translator and took a deep interest in the new systems of physical culture being introduced. When Dr Leeland returned to Massachusetts after being in Japan for four years, Tsuboi took over his position as Japan's primary organizer and proponent of physical education. He translated several works about Western systems of physical education and also wrote his own with such titles as 'The New System of Body Calisthenics' (*Shinsei taisō sho*) and 'Means of Outdoor Play' (*Kogai yūgi hō*). He eventually left his post at the Ministry of Education in order to teach at a number of different universities, including Tokyo Women's Normal School, where Toyoda Fuyu was also working to develop theories of play and physical activity in the Japanese classroom.[5]

Around 1876, government-funded research on physical education had begun focusing on dance as a method of modernization and Westernization, and Tsuboi was pinned as being the most appropriate person to help carry out its implementation in the school system. The *Educational Research* (*Kyōiku kenkyū*) documents of that year read as follows: 'The British and Germans have embraced a kind of round-and-round about dance (*kurukurukurukuru to mau*). We anticipate that if we Japanese could not only appear in our tailcoats (*enbi fuku*) but also have Mr. Tsuboi teach us in schools how to dance the quadrille, it would be most fine indeed'.[6] While girls in university at this time had already established certain forms of dancing in loosely organized club activities, Tsuboi sought to formalize dancing as part of Japanese women's education.[7] He wrote illustrated volumes describing step-by-step specific dances for women to use in an educational setting. At the many posh events Tsuboi attended in his capacity as a translator (and, later, as a prominent figure himself), he became impressed with certain forms of dance and music, and he chose his favourites to promote in the school system. For example, because Tsuboi had written books about and promoted the merits of the quadrille, a dance performed in groups of four that had been popular among eighteenth-century French aristocrats, the dance took hold quickly in Meiji-era Japan.[8]

Around the turn of the century, Tsuboi began spending significant time travelling abroad and learning about physical culture in Western countries. He travelled first to England, Germany and France and on subsequent visits went to Sweden, Denmark and lastly to the United States in 1902, making stops in Boston, New York, Chicago and San Francisco. The *Boston Globe* reported Tsuboi's visit on 8 May 1902 as such:

> Prof. Tsuboi has nearly completed a tour around the world in quest of new ideas for later practice in Japan … 'There is much variation in systems', he said yesterday in his quaintly accented English, 'but little difference radically is there in the German and Swedish and the American, which is more or less adapted

> from these… When I arrive home I shall instruct my large corps of teachers in the new and advanced methods which I consider superior to those now in use'.[9]

Tsuboi's sentiment seems to echo that of a generation of influential Japanese physical educators and theorists, namely that the methods and ways from abroad were superior to those in Japan.[10] While contemporary scholars and writers on sport in Japan often highlight the distinctly Japanese elements of imported Western sports,[11] it seems that in the early Meiji period there was little effort being made to retain the *wakon*, or Japanese spirit, in physical education.

In the later years of his life, the main focus of Tsuboi's efforts became establishing a formal system of physical education for Japanese girls. Drawing from his experiences abroad, his work highlighted the possibilities for and importance of physical education for girls and women. His later book titles included Means of exercising for ladies (*Joshi undō hō*) and Marching exercises for elementary schoolgirls (*Shō gakkō joshi kōshin undō*). While dancing and marching may not seem terribly progressive by today's standards, they were a radical change for turn-of-the-century Japanese women, and this is why Tsuboi is still recognized today as a pioneer in women's physical education in the Meiji and Taishō eras.

H. Irving Hancock: A foreigner's view of Japanese women

Interestingly, the flow of information on physical education during the early years of the twentieth century was not only from Western countries *into* Japan but also, less frequently, the other way around. During the Meiji era, an American writer named Harrie Irving Hancock (pen names included H. Irving Hancock and Douglas Wells), who had served as a war correspondent, a sportswriter and a general advocate of good health, spent some time in Japan in order to write a book titled *Japanese Physical Training: The System of Exercise, Diet, and General Mode of Living that has Made the Mikado's People the Healthiest, Strongest, and Happiest Men and Women in the World*.[12] The demand for this book in the United States was so great that Hancock published another book the same year, 1904, titled *Physical Training for Women by Japanese Methods*.

The latter book starts off with the author stating that '[i]n this volume [I have] endeavored, with painstaking care, to make plain the principles of the kind of athletic work that has resulted, undoubtedly, in making the little Japanese women the strongest and most cheerful members of their sex to be found anywhere on earth'.[13] He follows up this bold claim with discussions of his own training at a jujitsu school in Tokyo, how he got pinned to the ground there by a 'supple young woman'[14] and how if American women were to follow the jujitsu techniques laid out in his book, then 'feminine weaklings would be as rare in this country as they are in Japan'.[15] Throughout the book his phrasing

is heavily exaggerated and the conclusions he draws about all Japanese women based on his limited anecdotal experience are absurd, and yet the book's wide circulation in the United States make it nonetheless worth considering critically.

An article in *The New York Times* that ran shortly after Hancock's book was published discusses his reasons for choosing to write on Japanese women's physical training:

> The 'whole aim' of Mr. Hancock's new book is 'to show how the Japanese women become perfect physical women'. In Japan, he says the women contest with equal success with men of the same age, weight, and height. Consumption and coughs are rare among Japanese women, and their muscles are 'most prettily rounded'.[16]

The article suggests an unusually egalitarian system of physical training in Japan, which seems to run counter to the image of submissiveness connected with the *ryōsai kenbo* ideal that is often discussed by (contemporary) Western scholars of this time period. In considering the way that Hancock's work must have been received in the United States around 1904, one has to consider the dominant discourse about women's physical activity at that time as well. This was right around the time when the previously male-only Olympics started to allow women in select sports that were considered to be adequately feminine, namely golf, archery and tennis. There was active debate over the place of sport in women's lives – a debate summed up well by Lucille Eaton Hill, the director of Physical Training at Wellesley College at the turn of the century. In the introduction to her edited volume, *Athletics and Out-Door Sports for Women*, Hill writes, 'Our ever present ideal should be Health and Beauty; and during this early stage of our experience in athletics our watchword should be "Moderation".'[17] Hancock's work suggests much the same, with his repeated allusions to how graceful and attractive Japanese women are (as a result of their superior physical regimens) and with the final sentence of his book reading, 'GREAT MODERATION IN ALL EXERCISES!' (emphasis in the original).[18] Put simply, while physical activity for women was a subject worthy of both scholarly and popular attention at the time, it is clear that the dominant viewpoint in the United States held that too much exercise was harmful for the feminine physique.

While the focus of the present work remains on the discourse of women in sport generated *within* Japan, since such discourse was not created within a vacuum, Hancock's work should not be ignored. Following the Meiji Restoration, viewpoints and opinions among the Japanese populace were no doubt affected by the new relationships being created with other nations – particularly those Western nations that Japan sought to gain approval and/or learn from. Therefore, while it would be easy to write off *Physical Training for Women by Japanese Methods* as a mere entrepreneurial ploy, it is important to consider the ways that its popularity may have reverberated within the Japanese discourse of the time. Moreover, Hancock's work is helpful in pointing out that

Japanese women were, in fact, taking part and excelling in sports. Even though the majority of scholarly work within Japan at this time discuses the nascent stage of women's physical education (in schools) at the turn of the twentieth century, Hancock's work shows us that outside of schools some women were engaged in fairly rigorous physical activity, namely martial arts like the jujitsu[19] that he discusses or the *naginata* (pole sword) that Toyoda Fuyu was trained in.

The three pioneers: Inokuchi Akuri, Fujimura Toyo and Nikaidō Tokuyo

While Toyoda Fuyu and Tsuboi Gendō are widely credited with introducing physical activity into the education system, three women are acknowledged as having specifically targeted women's physical education. Inoue and Kameyama's authoritative *Supōtsu bunka wo manabu hito no tame ni* (For those who study sports culture) lists these three women as being pioneers in shifting the domain of sports from a male-only pastime to something that could be enjoyed by both sexes. From the 1890s to the 1920s, Inokuchi Akuri, Fujimura Toyo and Nikaidō Tokuyo profoundly affected the course of women's sport in twentieth-century Japan.[20] In addition, the first female Olympian from Japan was a direct product of one of the institutions founded by these women, which helps in highlighting the clear connection between physical education for girls in schools and women's involvement in competitive sport.

Inokuchi Akuri

Inokuchi Aguri was born on 22 November 1870 in Akita City in north-eastern Honshu. After moving south and graduating from Tokyo Women's Normal School at the age of twenty-one, she changed her name to 'Akuri', as she thought her given name resembled the English word 'ugly'.[21] Inokuchi was selected by the Ministry of Education (*Mombushō*) to study physical education in Massachusetts, the first Japanese person sent abroad to do so. It was significant that she was selected, as the vast majority of people sent abroad at that time were men. In fact, in the twenty-three years between 1889 and the end of the Meiji era (1912), of the 600 Japanese individuals sent abroad, only eight of them were women.[22]

In August of 1899, Inokuchi departed from the port of Yokohama and arrived in Northampton, Massachusetts, about a month later. There, she went to Smith College, as one of her teachers from Tokyo knew someone at Smith with whom she could live and study English. At Smith, a professor of physical culture, Senda Berenson, introduced Inokuchi to the Boston Normal School of Gymnastics, and it was there that she continued her studies after reaching a high level of competence in English at Smith.

In a 1902 interview with the *New York Herald*, Inokuchi told the reporter that while physical education did exist in Japan from the kindergarten level up to high school, the Japanese were unaccustomed to using apparatuses like those found in US schools at the time. She said, 'When I go back to Japan the first thing I shall ask for will be the apparatus such as we use here in Boston, and I think the government will get it for me.' When asked about women and exercise in Japan, Inokuchi responded,

> Our women are not as a rule weaklings, yet they are not universally strong. They owe the fact that they are generally in good health to the prevailing customs among the children. In Japanese families the older children, both boys and girls, are at an early age given the task of taking care of the younger children … The older children carry the younger children on their backs, even in play; so, you see, they have exercise very different from what you have in America.[23]

So taken was Inokuchi by the gulf between American and Japanese physical education systems that she compiled a chart in order to highlight the main differences. This chart read as follows:[24]

United States	Japan
Physical education in schools is considered essential and is held to a high standard	Physical education is regarded as having little educational value
Each class is taught with the use of high-quality teaching materials that focus on the strengths and weaknesses of the body	Without considering students' physical make-up (*taishitsu*), all students use the same teaching materials
The gymnasium is large and contains much equipment. Students must wear gym uniforms, and they come to class prepared to learn diligently	Class is carried out on a dirt floor under the open sky. Nothing more than a sash of material (*tasuki*) is used while exercising
Class will vary depending on the strictness of the teacher. Some will go through the teaching materials slowly and others fast	Students will be taken to the exercise area because it is compulsory, but it is often with little direction or instruction
Students are like one in body and mind (*isshin dōtai*), all paying very careful attention to the commands they are given	Little thought is given to the management of the class
Students are obedient to the rules, and even with many dozens of students they act as one, promptly and gracefully carrying out the exercises	Movement of the limbs is mechanical. Timing of class is unreliable, and it often ends early

It is quite evident from this side by side comparison which system Inokuchi found to be superior and therefore worth emulating. During her time at the Normal School of Gymnastics, Inokuchi took courses that were yet unknown to the Japanese academy, including kinesiology, medical gymnastics, athletics and anthropometry (the study of human body measurements). She later spoke of how rigorous the education was and what a difficult time she had, noting that, 'When I entered the school, it was with fifty fellow students, but at the time of graduation there were only twenty of us left.'[25] After graduating from the Boston Normal School of Gymnastics, Inokuchi took a short summer course in physical education instruction at Harvard University, and then returned to Japan in February of 1903 at the age of thirty-two. Upon her return, she was fully committed to incorporating the American system of physical training into the Japanese education system.[26]

Within a year after returning to Japan, Inokuchi was teaching at Tokyo Women's Normal School, conducting lectures and short courses on gymnastics and informing students about American methods of physical education. She established and headed the Department of Japanese Calisthenics (*kokugo taisō senshōka*), and within four years the department had graduated eighty-eight women. Many of these women went on to establish departments of physical education at various institutions across the country, and Inokuchi's direct impact on the genesis of modern women's sport in Japan is evident through the success of these new programmes.[27]

The establishment of new physical education departments for women was not the only place Inokuchi's impact could be seen. She also introduced Western-style uniforms into the Japanese physical education system, as she believed that an increase in physical activity for women was impossible without a change from the impractical *chakko* (bulky trouser pants outfits) being worn at that time. The outfits she carefully copied from those in the United States had bloomers and a short skirt, which enabled much more freedom of movement. She also designed a different Japanese-style uniform that she called the 'fastened hakama' (*kukuri hakama*), which was easier to transition to than the Western-style uniform. The fastened hakama added buttons and hooks to the *chakko* so that parts of the outfit could be easily adjusted to allow more movement during exercise. Both styles were used through the Meiji and Taishō eras, but by the start of the Shōwa period (1926), the Western-style uniforms with bloomers were being used throughout the entire country.[28]

The changes that took place as a result of Inokuchi's efforts were part of the larger trends towards modernization in the Meiji era, as discussed in Chapter 2. Inokuchi was sponsored and supported by the Meiji government for her study abroad in the United States, as Western sport and physical education were areas of particular concern by the government at this time. Meiji leaders sought to prove how advanced they were in both an ideological and a physical (militaristic) sense. The sports tournaments for men that had

begun taking place in Japan at the end of the nineteenth century were held for women as early as 1905.[29] Moreover, a growing body of literature, both popular and analytical, was being written about the inclusion of women in sports and physical training. One of the earliest and most active promoters of this literature was Fujimura Toyo, the founder of Tokyo Women's College of Physical Education (*Tokyo joshi taiiku daigaku*).

Fujimura Toyo

Fujimura was born in 1876 in Kagawa prefecture on the island of Shikoku. She graduated from her local elementary school at the age of twelve but was forced to suspend her studies for several years after this due to poor health. While her father repeatedly insisted that education for girls was unnecessary, Fujimura's mother, Tane, insisted so strongly that her daughter continue her studies that it eventually led to a separation with her husband. At the age of sixteen, Fujimura Toyo and her mother both wanted her to go to Tokyo to continue her studies, but ongoing problems with her respiratory system inhibited her from doing so.[30] In spite of her health problems, she continued reading Chinese classics and other works on her own, keeping hope alive that she would soon be able to continue her education more formally. When Fujimura was nineteen, at the recommendation of her district official (*gunchō*) she was admitted to Kagawa prefecture's Normal School (*shihan gakkō*), but again she had to leave after only one year due to her weak physical condition.[31] When her strength was restored four years later, Fujimura moved up to Tokyo to study science at the Tokyo Women's Higher Normal School (*Tokyo joshi kōtō shihan gakkō*),[32] but her studies were again abruptly interrupted when her mother fell ill and she moved back to Kagawa prefecture to take care of her.[33] That Fujimura should be torn between her duties at home as a good daughter and her desire to further herself in the newly broadened education system suggests a struggle that many young women of her day were certainly faced with.

Back home in Kagawa, Fujimura did manage to continue her studies while taking care of her mother. She became licensed as an elementary school teacher and began teaching gymnastics and dance – subjects she had learned during her three years at Tokyo Women's Higher Normal School. In 1902 she arranged the first exhibition meet (*kyōshinkai no taiiku taikai*) of these two activities and received much praise and attention for her work following the meet. According to Fujimura, her own participation in these new physical activities also helped her to overcome the respiratory illnesses that had afflicted her and made her so feeble in her earlier years. For this reason, she became an active advocate for the inclusion of physical education in schools.[34] Moreover, since she had been discouraged as a child from furthering her own education, Fujimura put special emphasis on developing programmes specifically for female students.

In particular, Fujimura advocated a new kind of calisthenics that differed from the earlier methods put forth by Inokuchi. The form that was most widely practised at the time, Swedish calisthenics (*swēden taisō*) was based on a scientific system of stretches of different body parts (neck, arms, abdomen, back and legs) and required no equipment. The aim was to 'develop the body into a harmonious whole under the perfect control of the will' and to 'improve the functional activity of the body'.[35] Since this was the most common form of calisthenics for women in the United States at the time, Inokuchi had brought back this method and disseminated it through Japan's schools. Fujimura critiqued the Swedish method because its rigid movements made breathing difficult, which was an issue she was acutely aware of due to her respiratory conditions. She therefore advocated German calisthenics (*doitsu shiki taisō*), which resembled the system promoted through Tsuboi Gendō's 1882 book *Shinsei taisō sho* (New system of body calisthenics). She was strongly influenced by an eccentric American educator and promoter of calisthenics named Dioclesian (Dio) Lewis, who had published a book in 1871 titled *Weak Lungs and How to Make Them Strong*. Perpetually concerned about the declining health of Americans, Lewis developed a system of 'new gymnastics' that incorporated apparatus such as dumbbells and rings, and which emphasized precise, rapid movements and the use of every set of muscles.[36] This method was said to be equally beneficial to one's inner organs as it was to his or her outward appearance.

Fujimura sought to introduce Lewis' educational philosophies to the Japanese classroom and found that they were particularly applicable to young women who, if exercising at all, were doing so in the stiff Swedish style. In addition to the new style of gymnastics, Fujimura promoted *yūgi dansu*, or 'fun dancing', which had yet to gain much popularity among Japanese women. In 1908, she was suddenly appointed headmaster of the Tokyo Women's School of Gymnastics and Music[37] after its previous headmaster/founder Takahashi Chūjirō died while on a study trip to the United States. Unfortunately, school management was not Fujimura's strong suit, and the school was almost forced to shut down due to its shrinking number of students. Luckily, Fujimura's mother and siblings were highly supportive of her endeavours, and they managed to keep the school alive by working with barely any recompense – her little sisters Ei and Yone taught dance and home economics and her little brother Kamenosuke taught English and logic, while her mother assisted in administration.[38]

In spite of her lacklustre management skills, her prominent position enabled Fujimura to have a significant impact on the development of women's physical education, as it led her to a new platform for propagating ideas about women's health: publications. Beginning in the mid-1920s, Fujimura began contributing regularly to three popular women's magazines, *Josei bi* (Women's beauty), *Josei taiiku* (Women's physical education) and *Kenkō no josei* (Healthy woman).[39]

Her articles ranged in topic from 'aesthetics and creativity' to 'why we should offer courses outside during the summer'.[40] She developed a mantra about good posture being essential to good health, which came to appear on every cover of *Josei bi* magazine: 'Fujimura's key to health: Straighten your back. While standing or walking, sitting or lying down, thinking or exercising, get strength from the straightness of your back'.[41]

Like most of her contemporaries involved in developing women's education in the Meiji and Taishō eras, Fujimura travelled to Europe with some frequency in order to observe their programmes of physical education. Her travels around the Netherlands, Germany, England, France, Sweden, Denmark and Czechoslovakia included attending two Olympic Games (Amsterdam 1928 and Berlin 1936) and meeting with educators in each country. She took away from these experiences many new and different perspectives on the extent to which physical training should be a part of young women's lives.[42] It is important to note that while Inokuchi and Fujimura had somewhat differing philosophies on the kind of calisthenics and activities that should be taught, both were in agreement that a major goal of women's physical training ought to be aesthetic, that is, to help make women more beautiful. While improved physical health was a positive outcome of physical education, muscular strength was not a stated objective, nor was there any mention of competition being linked to physical training. Like their pedagogical methods, this way of thinking was also a direct importation of the Victorian ideals of turn-of-the-century Europe.

There was significant discussion in Europe and the United States at the turn of the twentieth century about what the role of physical education for women should be or indeed whether it was a good idea at all. Columnists, educators and health reformers in the West were actively discussing ways to combat a perceived female frailty while still maintaining a level of femininity. As more and more discourse began to circulate about the issue of women's 'physical culture', two distinct (yet interrelated) issues arose, namely the physical and the aesthetic consequences of women's involvement in sport.

A common physiological principle deployed by scientists and medical practitioners of the time was that of the 'conservation of energy'. The argument was that within any given system or organization there is only a fixed amount of energy available to be expended. Exertion would therefore create a drain on the energy reserves and would deplete the reserves of energy available to other organs. One staunch opponent to women's education who relied on such physiological arguments was Henry Maudsley, a British physician and professor of medical jurisprudence at University College in London at the end of the nineteenth century. He strongly believed that if women were to engage in any sort of mental (let alone physical) exertion, the energy used would lead to serious long-term impairment of fertility and overall health. He wrote, 'The energy of a human body being a definite and not inexhaustible quantity, can it bear, without injury, an excessive mental drain as well as the natural physical

drain which is so great [during the years after puberty]? … When nature spends in one direction, she must economise in another direction.'[43]

Maudsley was not alone in the circulation of such literature, as others around the same time were publishing scientific case histories of young women who, supposedly, suffered severe physical and mental maladies after engaging in academic work. It was also believed that education would pull necessary energy from the female reproductive system to the brain, resulting in lower birth rates, which was a subject of concern in turn-of-the-century Europe and the United States.[44] Social Darwinism was pervasive in the rhetoric of the era, which argued that because of their innate physical and emotional characteristics, women were better suited (i.e. biologically determined) to stay at home as wives and mothers.[45] Women's (perceived) physical inferiority was used to justify maternity as the most important function of womanhood. These various 'scientifically proven' arguments that were circulating in the West and trickling into Japan at the end of the nineteenth century resulted in physical education and sport for women being treated very cautiously, particularly when compared with the male counterpart, which was encouraging men to 'acquire the health benefits of vigorous exercise'.[46]

Beyond the physical concerns was the issue of appearance – both how sport would physically alter the body and how it would affect a specific aesthetic sense of femininity. While the scientific principles regarding sport's effects on women's health were somewhat implicit in the Japanese context, the arguments regarding appearances and femininity were more openly and widely discussed. As evidenced by the titles and content of the magazines to which Fujimura Toyo contributed (e.g. *Josei bi*), beauty and femininity were considered integral aspects of physical education in early twentieth-century Japan. That is to say, while we will see that sport in both the West and Japan would soon come to be considered an activity that ran *counter* to feminine ideals, it was not considered as such during the first decades of women's participation.

Beauty, of course, is subjective and has been a fluid concept over time in all societies. Laura Miller presents a thorough survey of the shifting attitudes towards beauty and body styles in Japan in her book *Beauty Up: Exploring Contemporary Japanese Body Aesthetics*. Beginning in the Heian era (794–1185), she discusses how the ideal shapes of faces, eyebrows, lips and bodies have changed drastically over the centuries for Japanese women and men alike.[47] During the Meiji era, as physical education started to be part of girls' schooling, modifications in beauty ideology were simultaneously being affected by Japan's increased contact with Europe and the West. For example, facial features such as well-projected noses and prominent chins, which were once considered to be unfeminine, came to be considered attractive for Japanese women.[48] Body ideals have similarly changed significantly throughout Japanese history, with certain traits such as frailty or robustness coming in and out of vogue. In the early twentieth century, it is clear that frailty and poor posture

were being promoted as being 'less attractive' than a degree of muscularity or strength and good posture. Fujimura believed that the steps to be taken towards the goal of becoming a more beautiful woman, including a nutritious diet and modest exercise, would allow women to live long and fruitful lives, which was at the root of her promotion of physical education for women.[49]

Nikaidō Tokuyo

The prominent position of femininity, beauty and aesthetics in women's physical education in early twentieth-century Japan is important to keep in mind when considering the transition from physical education to participation in competitive sport, as sport seems largely out of synch with the feminine ideals of the era. While Fujimura was active in promoting her specific brand of 'healthy woman' until her death in 1955, she was never a supporter of women's participation in competitive sport and instead encouraged the practice of calisthenics and dance. Japanese women began taking part in international competitive sporting events in the mid-1920s (and entered the Olympic Games in 1928), yet from the discussion thus far we have yet to see a space in which women could train for such events. The link between the development of physical education for women and their eventual participation in competitive sport can be largely attributed to the undertakings of one woman: Nikaidō Tokuyo.

Nikaidō was born in 1880 in Miyagi prefecture in a village called Ainosawa. Her father, who was the village chief, abandoned his family when Nikaidō was a child. She, her mother and her siblings lived for some time in abject poverty, eventually being forced to sell their small house and leave the village. Nikaidō nonetheless continued diligently with her studies, and after graduating from a higher elementary school she passed a test to become a licensed teacher at a regular elementary school.[50] She wanted to further her own education, but at that time (the 1890s) in Miyagi prefecture there were few options for girls after elementary school. Moreover, there was an ongoing movement to abolish female instructors in Miyagi, as it was argued that they took too much time off and the quality of their teaching was poor.[51] The forces against which Nikaidō was fighting seem only to have made her desire to further her education and teach others that much stronger.

Because her options were so limited in Miyagi, Nikaidō wrote a letter to a newspaper in the neighbouring prefecture of Fukushima explaining her situation and asking for any assistance. A reporter at the newspaper company helped Nikaidō move to Fukushima in order to attend their normal school (Fukushima shihan gakkō). Instead of paying tuition, Nikaidō agreed to teach at the school following her graduation. After this, she was able to matriculate at Tokyo Women's Normal School (*Tokyo joshi shihan gakkō*, now *Ochanomizu Women's University*, the same school that most of her predecessors in women's physical education had attended) and then moved to Kanazawa in Ishikawa

prefecture to teach at the women's higher prefectural school. Nikaidō was twenty-three years old at the time.[52]

Until this point, Nikaidō Tokuyo was interested in becoming a teacher but believed that the most important subject to be taught was literature, so her goal was to become a teacher in the humanities. When she arrived at Kanazawa, however, she was told that she would be teaching calisthenics (*taisō ka*), about which she later wrote that she was quite upset and humiliated.[53] During this time in Kanazawa, however, Nikaidō came into contact with two Canadian missionaries who eventually helped foster in her a genuine interest in physical education. These missionaries, Frances Kate Morgan and Alice E. Belton, taught at various girls' schools around Japan beginning in 1888, and in 1904 Nikaidō attended Miss Belton's Bible class at the Ishikawa Prefectural Girls' School. This class also eventually led her to convert to Christianity. As discussed in Chapter 2, the schools run by foreign missionaries were among the earliest to introduce physical education to girls in Japan (in the 1880s and 1890s), as their curricula were not regulated by the state. Through her association with Miss Morgan, Nikaidō learned about gymnastics and physical education in Canada, and in part because of her tremendous respect for these two women, she began to see the significance of bringing gymnastics and physical education to Japan.[54] From the early 1900s, Nikaidō's primary focus switched from literature to physical education for girls and women in Japan.

The summer after she had been transferred to Kanazawa, Nikaidō participated in a short course in calisthenics offered by the Ministry of Education (*Mombushō*), which was the first time she systematically learned about the different methods for teaching physical education. After this course, Nikaidō applied to study abroad and was chosen by the Ministry of Education from among many applicants to go to England to study gymnastics at the Bergman-Österberg Physical Training College. After a fifty-eight-day boat ride departing from Yokohama, she arrived in England at the age of thirty-one.[55]

Nikaidō spent a total of three years in England, learning about their system of physical education for girls. Martina Bergman-Österberg (1849–1915), the school's founder and headmaster, sought to improve the health of the feeble-bodied women in England by raising a general awareness of how to lead a healthy lifestyle.[56]

Nikaidō came to take a special interest in dance, learning new styles not only at the college but also at private ballet studios and the English Folk Dance Society.[57] Madame Österberg encouraged Nikaidō to found her own school of physical training for girls in Japan. While she thought this to be a good idea at the time, it was not until Ms Bergman-Österberg passed away shortly after Nikaidō's return to Japan in 1915 that she truly set out to make this dream a reality.[58] Having spent so many years since her childhood wandering about without a place to call 'home', Nikaidō also wrote in one of her memoirs that she felt particularly compelled to settle down and create her own legacy.

In 1922, her dream was realized as the *Nikaidō Taisō Juku* opened in Tokyo's Yoyogi district (now *Nihon Joshi Taiiku Daigaku* or Japan Women's College of Physical Education). Though the school got off to a 'shaky' start, with the Great Kantō Earthquake of 1923 striking the area only months after the school opened, Nikaidō worked hard to develop her school and to recruit young women from all over Japan. One of the young women who was an early recruit to Nikaidō's school, Hitomi Kinue, would go on to become the first Japanese woman to participate in the Olympic Games. While Hitomi Kinue would ultimately knock down many preconceived notions of what it meant to be a female athlete in Japan, the barriers she faced were significant. These barriers came not only from those outside the world of women's sport but also from within, as Nikaidō's academy was not geared towards competitive sport at the time Hitomi entered. Calisthenics, gymnastics and dance were the central disciplines of Nikaidō's academy. These activities were considered important for the purpose of improving Japanese girls' physiques and acceptable because they demonstrated feminine grace and did not deplete the body of too much energy.

That said, the moment at which Nikaidō opened her school was one ripe for change in Japanese society. This was, after all, over fifty years after the Meiji Restoration, meaning that many of the ideological changes that had seeped into Japan throughout the Meiji era were finally beginning to take hold by the 1920s. Since class barriers had disintegrated, ideals of feminine virtue cut through all levels of society, as there was an ongoing expectation that all women contribute equally to the modernization of Japan. By the 1920s, a desirable woman would be considered one who both came from a good family *and* one who could successfully run a household. According to anthropologist Laura Spielvogel, this meant that '[a] healthy woman with sinewy limbs and a tireless vigor would be valued over a frail beauty with a fair complexion and long, cumbersome hair. The feminine ideal portrayed women as selfless, efficient workhorses, laboring for their family and their nation … The Japanese state … de-emphasized beauty in the mother/wife ideal and played up productivity in an effort to expedite Japanese industrialization'.[59] So, while less attention was paid to beauty in the name of modernization, it is important to recognize that beauty was definitely *not* akin to frailty at this time. However, the strength and fortitude that was considered desirable in women of this time did not translate directly into successful female athletes, as this strength was to be directed at raising one's family, not at bettering one's self in the sporting arena.

Nikaidō's academy of physical education opened when Japan was at a crossroads: the government was still actively seeking to improve the overall strength of the population, influences from outside cultures were becoming ever stronger and many traditional pre-Meiji ideals still lingered in the society. Improved communications meant that more and more Japanese people were learning of what trends were taking hold in other parts of the world.

For example, women had begun taking part in the Olympic Games by 1900, and some Japanese had taken notice of this as another potential arena for showing off Japanese muscle, so to speak. While the three pioneers of women's physical education in Japan, Inokuchi Akuri, Fujimura Toyo and Nikaidō Tokuyo were in favour of strengthening the female population of Japan without compromising traditional feminine ideals, a fundamental shift came shortly after their programmes of physical training were established. Chapter 4 will begin with a close look at how Japanese society went from being contemptuous and mocking to being supportive and encouraging of women's sport in a matter of a few years. We will learn about several prominent sportswomen who, in the early Shōwa era (1926–89), pushed the boundaries of what activities were considered acceptable (even praiseworthy) for Japanese women.

4

From Calisthenics to Competition

Early participation in international sport

While the vast majority of Japanese girls and women knew little about competitive women's sport in the early 1920s, let alone competed in it, by the end of the decade there would be a Japanese woman making headlines for her amazing performance at the Olympic Games. Though we have seen that the seeds of women's physical education were planted and cultivated around the turn of the twentieth century, there was little connection between girls' physical education and competitive sport in the early 1920s. *Joshi taiiku* (women's physical education) embodied a specific type of learning that had health at its core and uniquely 'feminine' practices in its curriculum. These practices included modest strength-building activities such as calisthenics and dance, along with learning the skills needed to raise a family such as cooking, nutrition and child rearing. That is to say, the original establishment of physical education for women was symbiotic with the Meiji-era *ryōsai kenbo* ideal of promoting better wives and mothers.

In large part because of the increasing contact with the West and Japan's interest in becoming a more modern nation, competitive sport began to appear in primary schools in the Meiji era, though it was predominantly for boys. By the late nineteenth century, girls were permitted to play tennis, which was competitive but still considered feminine. Lawn tennis had been introduced to Japan in 1875 at the Yokohama Ladies Club and started being played at Dōshisha Women's college in 1879.[1] While girls' tennis was part of the physical education curriculum of some schools, sport was generally not part of girls' education. In the 1910s and 1920s, competitions in sports such as volleyball and girls' baseball started being sponsored by for-profit organizations such as newspaper companies.[2] Such competitions were still very rare for women, and there was little public interest in watching women compete, as it was considered unladylike and dangerous to women's well-being. Moreover, since competitive sport for women was still largely looked down upon in the West at this time as well, there was little outside pressure for Japan to begin promoting sports for women that were based on strength or speed.[3]

Things began to change by the mid-1920s, though, fuelled in part by the growing popularity of the Olympic Games – an international event that had been revived by Baron Pierre de Coubertin in 1896 and to which Japan began

sending representatives in 1912.[4] The precedent for competitive sport was certainly present in Japan at this time, as 'sports days' (*undōkai*) had been part of the Japanese school system since Minister of Education Mori Arinori began promoting them in the late 1880s. However, since less than five per cent of middle school students were girls at this time, very small numbers of females in the Meiji era had direct contact with competitive sport after leaving primary school.[5] As the numbers of girls continuing their education beyond primary school continued to climb in the early twentieth century, however, so too did their contact with such competitions.

In this chapter, we will be looking at this period of transition in women's sport in the 1920s and 1930s (the early Shōwa era). These two decades saw Japan turn from a nation that reluctantly accepted non-exertive physical education for girls to one that quite fully embraced women participating in competitive sport at the Olympic Games. I will be focusing in particular on shifts in discourse as Japanese women began to participate in sport, first on the local and national level and shortly thereafter on the international level. While many journalists maintained critical or even mocking views towards the earliest female athletes, as these women proved themselves to be increasingly valuable parts of Japan's delegation to the Olympics in the 1930s, these views tended more towards admiration and respect.

In constructing a history of this time period, I have endeavoured to use as many primary sources as possible (especially newspapers, biographies and magazines) in order to gain perspective on how competitions were viewed for and by Japanese women during this period. Further analysis is provided through the use of more recent scholarly materials discussing the earlier part of the twentieth century. In using both primary and secondary sources, we can gain an understanding of the sea change in attitudes towards competitive sport amongst both the general public and the athletes themselves in the early Shōwa era.

Women's sport in early Shōwa Japan

The world of sport was rapidly expanding in Japan in the 1920s. Western sports that had been introduced to Japan following the Meiji Restoration blossomed and took on lives of their own. For example, long-distance running was turned from an individual sport into a team sport, with *ekiden*, or long-distance relay races, taking place in Japan as early as the 1910s and 1920s.[6] Swim meets and boat races had been taking place in rivers and harbours from the end of the nineteenth century, and winter sports such as ice skating and skiing started being enjoyed around the same time.[7] The development of much of Western sport in Japan was more or less simultaneous to its development in

the West – tennis, for example, was introduced into Japan only four years after it was patented in England in 1874.[8]

This rapid diffusion of sport was directed but not bound by social and gender divisions within the Meiji and Taishō eras. That is to say, certain groups tended to take part in certain activities, but a wide range of choices was available to males and females of both higher and lower classes. The elite tended to favour those sports that required expensive equipment, a club membership and/or large expanses of space – for example golf and tennis. Citizens from lower classes tended towards sports that required little or no equipment, such as running and swimming, which was generally done in open bodies of water such as rivers and oceans. Student populations across all classes came to be exposed to a variety of sport in primary and middle schools, which is why the focus thus far has been on the development of physical education in schools. Even students in poor, rural areas would have access to otherwise 'elite' sports such as tennis, since government efforts to vamp up physical education meant that many schools were devoting more space, time and money to their gym facilities.

Terada Akira's *Joshi no kyōgi undō* (Women's competitive games) and Mihashi Yoshio's *Joshi kyōgi* (Women's competitions), two books published in the 1920s, discuss at length the state of women's competitive sport in 1923 and 1924, respectively. The first section of Terada's book is filled with photographs of Japanese girls and women competing in a variety of sports, including relay races, volleyball, baseball and tennis, along with competitive throwing (basketball throw, baseball throw etc.). The female athletes are shown wearing Western-style athletic clothing, including knee-length skirts for tennis, shorts with short-sleeved jerseys and headbands for runners, and short pants with knee-length socks and caps for baseball players.[9]

A preface in Terada's 1923 book by Tokyo's head of social education, Ōsako Motoshige, expresses an interest in sending Japanese women to the Olympic Games. During his travels through Europe, Ōsako had been impressed by the wide range of sports that European women were involved in and says that because Western nations have a deeper and more varied foundation for women's sport, they are certain to do better at the Olympic Games. Ōsako applauds Terada's efforts to discuss sports that can be enjoyed by both boys and girls, suggesting that he hopes that Japan, too, can send female athletes to the Olympic Games.[10] Terada's book is primarily pedagogical, with the first half devoted to explaining broad ideas of women in competitive sport ('women and sport', 'competition and nutrition', 'the female body') and the second half describing specific sports in detail, beginning with track and field, then swimming, racquet sports, baseball, football,[11] volleyball and basketball.

Mihashi's 1924 book on 'women's competitions' is similarly structured, discussing first the general notion of women competing in sport and then the specific sports themselves. In both Terada and Mihashi's earlier sections, that is, the parts describing ideas of women in competition, the rhetoric is highly

comparative, both authors discussing the current state of women's sport in Europe and the United States during the early twentieth century. For example, Mihashi notes that France was holding an International Women's Olympics[12] and that Vassar and Bryn Mawr Colleges in the United States had already had women's athletic teams for over twenty years.[13] Following his description of women's competitions in the West, Mihashi describes the current state of Japan's competitive sports for women. The first competition that was opened to women, he writes, was a track meet that took place in Osaka in the fall of 1917. Two years later, a newspaper company (*Hōchi Shimbun*) sponsored a competition for elementary school students in Tokyo in which ten girls competed. Every subsequent year the *Hōchi Shimbun* tournament took place, the number of girls competing increased. Thus the first competitions were relatively small-scale events that were primarily for men or boys, but they were opened to women and girls beginning in 1917. In 1922, the first all-girl's high school sports tournament took place in Tokyo, with eighty-five girls from eight area high schools competing in the fifty-yard dash, the running high jump, basketball throw, three-legged race and various relay races.[14] It is interesting to consider in retrospect how aptly these events captured the transition from 'fun and games' to 'competitive sport' that was happening at that time. While some of the events such as sprints and jumps were the exact same activities that their male counterparts were doing, many of the events such as the basketball throw or the 'potato relay' were not actual sports but rather games that had taken on a new competitive element.

Female-only sporting tournaments within Japan rapidly grew in size and popularity. Newspaper companies soon realized that there was money to be made in advertising and sponsoring such events. In June of 1924, the *Osaka Mainichi Shimbun* sponsored the first annual Japan Ladies' Olympic Games (*Nihon joshi orinpikku taikai*). A large headline in the 11 June 1924 edition of the *Osaka Mainichi Shimbun* reads, 'First Annual Ladies' Olympic Games: 1800 Athletes', and a smaller headline reads, 'Including sports union there will be 3600 people: The first time such a grand spectacle has been seen in Japan.'

The lengthy article that follows the headline discusses in detail the participating schools (which ranged from elementary schools to women's universities) and the events planned for the tournament. This includes not only a description of sporting events (ranging from track and field events to swimming races to baseball and tennis) but also a description of lectures that would be taking place in the days before the tournament. For example, talks were given by journalists and members of 'women's health' associations (*kenbokai*) with such titles as 'Impressions of the Progress in Women's Physical Education', 'Women's Competitive Sport', and 'A Talk About the Olympic Games'.[15]

Raita Kyōko, a leading contemporary scholar of sport and gender in modern Japan, has written an article about the significance of the 1924 Ladies' Olympic Games. She focuses on the significance of these lectures that took place before the tournament, saying that they were part of an 'enlightenment movement'

(*keimōteki katsudō*) for the promotion of women's sport in Japan.[16] While the tournament itself could be attributed to a mere money-making tactic of the newspaper company, the fact that it included these lectures to be open to the public suggests that there was an ideological component to the event's organization, that is, the sponsors endeavoured to show that sport for women was more than just a fad or spectacle. This notion is further supported by the fact that the profits raised from the sale of admission tickets to the event went into the Encouragement of Women's Physical Education Fund. This money was then used to help subsidize the costs of sending Japanese female athletes to international competitions.[17]

One of the athletes who benefited from this fund was a young woman from Okayama prefecture named Hitomi Kinue. The first female athlete to gain national (and eventually international) attention, Hitomi's rise to fame came at a time when physical education for young women was still geared towards producing healthy mothers. In looking at how she broke the moulds of both 'woman' and 'athlete' in the 1920s, along with subsequent media reactions, we can better understand the transition that occurred in women's 'sport' – from calisthenics to competition. There is a wealth of material from which to draw on the subject, as Hitomi received significant coverage in the media and also worked herself as a journalist and author.[18]

Hitomi Kinue

Hitomi was born in January of 1907 in a rural village in Okayama prefecture, western Japan.[19] She led an unexceptional childhood in the wake of the Russo-Japanese War, often playing outside in the fields and river in front of her house. Hitomi later documented her childhood in an autobiography titled *Supaiku no ato* (The impression of spikes),[20] often focusing on different events that seem to have affected her gender identity. For example, she writes, 'when I would cheerfully bring a fish that I caught from the river back to our house, my dad would scold me by saying, "What am I going to do about my daughter who likes to mess around in the river? You should go study your arithmetic. Girls need to know arithmetic too, you know".'[21] In fact, according to Hitomi, her parents were continually pushing her to excel, never telling her that she should work less hard because she was a girl. She worked hard through primary school, and at the age of thirteen was admitted to the top girls' higher school in the prefecture.[22] The only girl from her small village to make it into the school, Hitomi would walk with a girl from a neighbouring village six kilometres each way to go to her school every day.[23]

At her new school, Hitomi became interested in joining the tennis club after she went to watch a game to cheer on her school and noticed that many of

the girls playing were of larger-than-average size and apparently very strong. Hitomi herself being of larger-than-average size, she was impressed by the way the girls were praised for their strength and size (at least when it helped them win tennis victories). Her father thought that Hitomi should focus on schoolwork and refused to give her money to purchase a racquet. Her mother eventually gave Hitomi the one yen, thirty sen necessary for the racquet but told her daughter to leave it at school so as to not upset her father.[24] Hitomi hid the fact that she was participating in tennis from her father for some time, but when her teacher told her that after joining the club her arithmetic scores had in fact *improved*, Hitomi decided to tell her father about her involvement in tennis (and he reluctantly approved). From ages fourteen to fifteen, Hitomi was a passionate tennis player, travelling around western Japan with her team for girls-only tournaments, which had recently begun to gain popularity at this point in the early 1920s.[25]

In 1923, when Hitomi was in her fourth year of higher school, she went to play tennis in the Second Annual Prefectural Sports Tournament for Middle and Higher Schools. There were no girls from her school competing in track and field events at this tournament, and Hitomi felt that this was a disgrace. She asked her tennis coach if she could try competing in the running long jump and was given permission to take part in this one event. Motivated by the enthusiastic cheers of her fellow tennis teammates, Hitomi ran down the track, jumped with all her might and recorded an incredible jump of 4.67 metres.[26] When Hitomi graduated the next spring at age seventeen, her school principal told her about a brand new school of physical education in Tokyo – Nikaidō Taisō Juku. Though her father initially believed that a school for sport must be equivalent to a school for girls who could not excel in more academic fields, he was eventually convinced by Hitomi to change his thinking. Hitomi was extremely interested in moving up to Tokyo and attending Nikaidō's school, and Nikaidō was likewise interested in having the now relatively well-known athlete attend. Hitomi cried tears of gratitude towards her family as she departed on the train from Okayama to Tokyo.[27]

The education Hitomi received at Nikaidō's school was rigorous, as was her continued athletic training. Only a few months after arriving in Tokyo, Hitomi headed back to her hometown in order to take part in the Third Annual Okayama Prefectural Sports Tournament for Middle and Higher Schools (the same tournament where she had first discovered her love of jumping the year prior). Hitomi had switched over from tennis to track and field by this point, which is clearly outlined in a study by Misawa Mitsuo, one of the leading specialists on Hitomi Kinue's life and achievements. Misawa has catalogued all the tournaments attended and records broken by Hitomi, and in looking at this catalogue it becomes clear that Hitomi was involved only in track and field events after 1923. Misawa's compilation also makes clear that each year Hitomi not only got faster and stronger but also continued adding new

events to her repertoire – starting with the running long jump, then adding the triple jump, standing broad jump and javelin throw, then the 50-metre sprint, 100-metre sprint, discus throw, basketball and baseball throws, 200-metre sprint and 400-metre sprint.[28]

At the tournament in Okayama, Hitomi did exceptionally well in the triple jump, hop, step and jumping her way to a new world record with her 10.33-metre jump. Hitomi writes that she was especially moved and encouraged at this event because her family attended to cheer her on. 'The people who had to this point objected most to my playing tennis and competing, my father, older sister and brother-in-law, all came to the tournament to support me.'[29] When Hitomi exultantly returned to Tokyo to the Nikaidō Taisō Juku, Nikaidō Tokuyo shared in Hitomi's joy over her new world record. This moment marked a turning point in Hitomi's relationship with Nikaidō, as she seemed to acknowledge Hitomi's great potential and became more outward in expressing her support for the athlete.[30]

Hitomi had begun to receive a bit of attention in the press at this time, but little more than her winning times or distances were recorded in newspapers. It was not until after her graduation from the Nikaidō Taisō Juku in 1925 that the media began to really take interest in Hitomi Kinue.[31] Around the same time, Hitomi came to take an interest in the media as well. While she had taken a few odd jobs after graduation to make ends meet,[32] these jobs did not seem to satisfy her desire to both be an athlete and to help promote women's sport. In April 1926, however, she was offered a job at the *Osaka Mainichi Shimbun* – one of the newspaper companies that had sponsored several women's track and field tournaments and that had taken a special interest in the athletically gifted Hitomi. As it turned out, she was also a talented writer, having excelled in writing and composition while in school, and one of her hobbies was composing thirty-one syllable *tanka* poems.[33] Hitomi joined the sports section as the first female journalist in the company's fifty-four year history.[34]

Every afternoon after work, Hitomi would go to the public grounds to practice her track and field events. A few months after entering her new job, Hitomi received the exciting news that she would be travelling to Sweden to take part in the Second Annual International Women's Olympic Games. Hitomi writes, 'This was the biggest thing that had ever happened to me, and it hit me like a bolt from out of the blue.'[35]

The Women's Olympic Games were started in 1922 by a French proponent of women's sport named Alice Milliat. Pierre de Coubertin, the founder of the modern Olympic Games and first president of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), had originally conceived of the Olympic Games as a male-only event, but this idea was unable to withstand social changes in gender equity occurring at the turn of the century. Eleven women were invited to take part in a small number of events beginning in 1900 (the second Olympiad), and the number of female athletes grew slowly over the years. Female athletes

were limited to participating in a handful of 'feminine' sports, such as archery, skating, gymnastics and swimming.[36] Dismayed by the IOC's refusal to allow women's participation in track and field events (the most anticipated and popular events of the Games at the time), Alice Milliat created the Fédération Sportive Féminine Internationale (FSFI), which organized the first Women's Olympic Games in Paris in 1922.[37]

The Second Women's Olympic Games were held in 1926 in Gothenberg, Sweden, and were a much larger affair than the original one-day, eighteen-athlete event held four years prior in Paris. These second Women's Olympics had athletes from ten different countries, among them Hitomi Kinue as the sole representative of Japan. Sponsored by her workplace, the *Osaka Mainichi Shimbun*, and subsidized in part by the Encouragement of Women's Physical Education Fund raised through ticket sales at women's sporting events, Hitomi was able to take part in her first international track and field competition.[38] Though she knew that competing outside of Japan would be necessary in order to bring her the next level, Hitomi was concerned that she would let down her country and herself, based on the fact that she had only been competing in some of her events for a few months (and she knew that it took several years to reach peak conditioning in any given sport).[39] As she departed Japan on 8 July 1926, Hitomi was filled with nervous energy as she felt the weight of being 'Japan's Hitomi Kinue' (*Nihon no Hitomi Kinue*).[40]

Hitomi's journey took her around Korea by ferry boat and through China, Siberia and Russia by train. During a several week layover in Russia, Hitomi got to learn a bit about how sport in Soviet Russia differed from sport in Japan.[41] She writes in her autobiography that the Russians were more interested in team sports than individual sports, with such games as basketball, volleyball and football apparently much more popular than in Japan. Practicing with female members of a Russian running club, Hitomi also noticed that her large physique, so noteworthy and out of place back in Japan, seemed to be similar to that of the Russian women with whom she ran.[42]

In early August, the nineteen-year-old Hitomi arrived in Sweden. Before going to the town of Gothenberg where the Games were to take place, she met with the Japanese ambassador to Sweden in Stockholm and stayed there overnight at the lavish Grand Hotel.[43] She writes that she was happy to be able to stretch out her tall (1.68-metre) frame comfortably in the hotel bed and to receive an indulgent Swedish massage on her legs.[44] After arriving in Gothenburg on August seventh, Hitomi received a telegram of encouragement from Kinoshita Tōsaku, the president of the Japanese Women's Sport Federation (*Nihon joshi supōtsu renmei*).[45] While she enjoyed her rising fame, a kind of fame theretofore unheard of for any Japanese female athlete, she also felt the mounting pressure to succeed – not only for herself but also for the entire nation of Japan. Representing her country abroad in a field of all-Western opponents brought an entirely new dimension of competition to Hitomi's track and field events.

Hitomi did not buckle under the enormous pressure. While she was the only athlete serving as the sole representative of her country (all other nations had at least two competitors), Hitomi managed to score fifteen points from her exceptional performances in the running long jump (she broke the world record in this event), the standing broad jump, the discus throw and the 100-yard and 60- and 250-metre dashes.[46] She stunned people the entire world over as she was awarded the prize for outstanding overall athlete of the Women's Olympic Games. Alice Milliat, president of the Fédération Sportive Féminine Internationale and founder of the Women's Olympics, presented the award to Hitomi, who tearfully accepted the prize as she watched the *hi no maru* Japanese flag rise up the flagpole.[47] The fears that she would not be able to measure up to her international competitors melted away as Hitomi realized her potential for success on a grander scale than she had imagined possible.

The Women's Olympics represented the pinnacle of competition for women's track and field at the time, so it seemed that Hitomi had already reached the top. However, the highly publicized 1926 Games in Gothenberg had caught the attention of the IOC – a committee that had been staunchly against the inclusion of women's competitive sport in the Olympic Games. A series of events including the retirement of IOC founder and president Pierre de Coubertin (one of the most unwavering critics of competitive women's sport) led to the introduction of women's track and field events at the 1928 Olympic Games to be held in Amsterdam. These games were the logical next step for Hitomi Kinue, and after the announcement was made that five women's track and field events would be added to the programme in 1928, she set her sights on becoming the first woman to represent Japan at the Olympic Games.

After her success in Sweden, Hitomi was a veritable celebrity, who appeared regularly in the sports sections of Japan's major national newspapers as well as in other publications such as women's magazines. While a handful of articles had been written about Hitomi's performance on the field prior to the Women's Olympic Games, the articles written after 1926 tended to focus as much on her personal character as they did on her athletic performance. That is to say, with her rising success came a rise in public suspicion over why this woman had come apparently out of the blue to be one of the best athletes in the world. This was, after all, still a time when women's athletics were controversial, as they were thought to lead to sterility and premature aging, on top of the fact that they were considered extremely unfeminine.[48]

Perhaps it comes as no surprise, then, that one of the first things that came under attack as Hitomi's popularity rose was her gender identity. Many began to wonder how she could possibly be a 'real' woman and still such a successful athlete. From the time she began competing, the media had focused on her unusually tall stature, in sometimes subtly derogatory ways. For example, the

following article appeared in the *Asahi Shimbun* on 11 August 1924 when Hitomi was seventeen years old:

> **Huge Woman Hitomi: She Really is 170 Centimeters Tall**
>
> This spring, Miss Hitomi Kinue of Okayama Prefectural Girl's Higher School will be entering Nikaidō Tokuyo's Physical Education school. Miss Hitomi is 170 centimeters tall, and weighs about fifty-six kilograms, which would make her a tall athlete even if she were competing on the men's team. However, her physique seems to be well-suited for being a jumper.

The first word in the headline, *ōonna*, meaning 'huge woman' or 'giantess', sets the tone for the article, namely highlighting the fact that she was a comparatively big, heavy woman in a society that associated femininity with petite women. It even suggests that her size was large among men, which implicitly calls into question her gender identity.

This article from the beginning of her athletic career treats the subject fairly delicately, but subsequent attention paid to the issue of Hitomi's gender identity was far less implicit or tactful. The bulk of the media attention she received came after Hitomi's participation in the 1928 Amsterdam Olympics as Japan's first female representative. Before focusing on the often negative media attention she received, we will first look at the event that marked a major turning point in the history of women's sport in Japan and indeed in the entire world – the 1928 Amsterdam Olympics.

The Amsterdam Olympics

In the lead up to the 1928 Games in Amsterdam, there had been significant disaccord and turmoil among members of the IOC, following which many important decisions were made that would shape the future course of the Olympic Games. In the early 1920s, founder and president of the IOC, Pierre de Coubertin, announced that he would retire as president and that the 1924 Games would be held in his hometown of Paris to honour his nearly three-decade tenure as the committee's president. Around the same time, the decision was made to hold separate Summer and Winter Games.[49] A French cleric named Père Henri Didon suggested an Olympic motto of *Citius, Altius, Fortius* (Latin for 'faster, higher, stronger'), which was adopted in 1921 and remains to this day.[50] Debates over amateurism flared, and the official wording over who comprised 'amateur athletes' was clarified.[51] In the 1928 opening ceremony, the first team out in the Parade of Nations was Greece, and the last was the host nation of the Netherlands. The Olympic flame was lit for the first time in Amsterdam. These traditions also continue to this day. In other words, 1928 marked an important turning point in the history of international sport, as the

Olympic Games transitioned from being a relatively small, Euro-centric event, to becoming a much grander, global event resembling the present-day Games.

Significant changes were also made towards the end of including women in the Olympics, as resistance in the upper echelons of event management to this point had been overpowering.[52] Women did not take part in the first modern Olympic Games (organized by Coubertin) in Athens in 1896. Beginning four years later in 1900, women were allowed to compete on a provisional basis, that is to say the local organizing committee of the host country was given the authority to invite or prevent women from participating in any given event. In 1912, women were granted official status for a handful of sports, namely archery, skating, gymnastics and swimming. The number of female competitors was low in the early years of this official status, however – in Stockholm in 1912, only forty-eight of the 2,407 athletes were women (i.e. less than two per cent). The 1916 Games scheduled to take place in Berlin were cancelled due to the Second World War, but at the next Olympics in Antwerp in 1920 there were sixty-five female athletes (out of a total 2,626 – again about two per cent). This number more than doubled for the 1924 event in Coubertin's hometown of Paris and then doubled again by 1928 so that by the Amsterdam Olympics there were 277 women taking part.[53]

These rapid changes in women's participation at the Olympic Games were being fuelled largely by changes that were taking place for women in societies around the globe. From the turn of the century, the women's suffrage movement had been gaining momentum in Western nations, and by 1928 about forty nations had given women the right to vote. Moreover, the World's Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WWCTU) had begun to have major impacts on the women's suffrage movement in Asian nations by the 1920s (especially China, Japan, India, Korea and Burma).[54] As women fought to become more involved citizens of their respective nation states, they also felt a growing need to be represented in the international arena of sport.

In addition to this broad current towards increased and improved rights for women, changes were being made on a more micro-level by individual female athletes and by activists such as Alice Milliat, president of the Fédération Sportive Féminine Internationale. Thanks to Milliat's efforts, the Amsterdam Olympics included women's track and field events for the first time, and Hitomi Kinue took part in the first running race ever held for women at the Olympics. In 1928, Hitomi held world records in 200-metre sprint and the long jump, but since neither of these events was held for women in Amsterdam, she entered the 100-metre sprint instead.[55]

'July 30, 1928 (cloudy). The day has finally arrived when I am supposed to show the results of two years of hard work and strenuous efforts. It is the day of the qualifying race for the women's 100-meters!'[56] Hitomi's journal entry from the day of her first Olympic race captures her sentiments well – the excitement, the anticipation and an awareness of the weight of the historic

event in which she was about to take part. To the surprise of many, Hitomi was unable keep up with the one American and two Canadians who took the medals in the event. She had come in fourth in the semi-finals, meaning a fraction of a second separated her from the winners.

Hitomi could hardly cope with the unfavourable outcome of her race, as she cried herself to sleep that night feeling ashamed to return to Japan empty-handed.[57] As one of the top all-around athletes in the world of women's sports at the time, Hitomi felt that she had not had a chance to prove her abilities in the (roughly) twelve seconds she had run for the 100-metre race. Thinking about her other options, Hitomi knew that she could not win a medal in the high jump because she had not had much experience in that event. The discus throw had already taken place so she could not take part in that, and of course she could not race the 4 × 100m relay as the sole female athlete from Japan. The only other event left for women was the 800-metre race, but Hitomi had never raced this event since it had not been held at any of the other meets in which she had participated. Even so, Hitomi felt that because this race was relatively new to *all* the women racing it, perhaps she had a chance to win a medal.[58]

The next evening, Hitomi begged her coach to enter her into the 800-metre race, and he hesitantly agreed to let her run it if she followed his advice to not start the race too fast (like a sprinter).[59] On August first, Hitomi ran a qualifying race and made it into the finals of the 800-metre race, to be held the following day – a remarkable feat in itself considering she had never before raced or trained for that distance.[60]

At the finals on August second, Hitomi failed at first to follow her coach's advice to hold back during the first of the two laps that comprised the 800-metre race. A photo taken at the moment of the start gun shows Hitomi (in the innermost lane) bolting off like a sprinter, while most of the other runners seem to be holding back in preparation for a more endurance-based run. Hitomi should have paid more attention to her coach's advice. While she was ahead of all her competitors for the first 400-metres of the race, as soon as they passed the one-lap mark (i.e. with one lap to go), women began passing Hitomi. She quickly slipped from first place to seventh place, as six runners who had gone out more conservatively passed her by.

As Hitomi began to feel her dreams of becoming Japan's first female Olympic medallist slip away, she remembered something her coach had told her again and again – to use her arms when her legs were tired. In the grainy video footage of the race, one can actually see the moment at which Hitomi remembers this advice, as her arms suddenly gain power and she begins pumping them higher than eye level. Through her mental and physical exhaustion, Hitomi managed to regain the ground she had lost after the first lap, and in the final straightaway (the last 50-metres of the race) she pulled ahead of several runners to finish second overall in a time of 2 minutes, 17 seconds. This time broke the standing world record for that distance by nearly five seconds.[61]

After the race, several runners including Hitomi fell to the ground from a combination of physical and emotional fatigue. This incident – common today but yet unseen at the time – was so noteworthy to spectators that it warranted mention in *The New York Times* the following day. Below is this excerpt from the *Times*, previously mentioned with respect to the ways media coverage has changed over the past century:

> The final of the women's 800-meter run, in which Frau Lina Radke of Germany set a world's record, plainly demonstrated that even this distance makes too great a call on feminine strength. At the finish six out of the nine runners were completely exhausted and fell headlong on the ground. Several had to be carried off the track. The little American girl, Miss Florence MacDonald, who made a gallant try but was outclassed, was in a half faint for several minutes, while even the sturdy Miss Hitomi of Japan, who finished second, needed attention before she was able to leave the field.[62]

The tone of the article is indicative of the attitude held in many countries when it came to women's competitive sports – that they were somewhat deviant, borderline dangerous, and all together unladylike.

In Japan, the media first focused on the fact that Hitomi won a silver medal, as national pride tends to overshadow gender, racial or religious differences within each nation in the Olympic Games.[63] This was as true back in 1928 as it is today, and the headlines that followed her triumphant 800-metre race show an emphasis on national pride rather than on the fact that Hitomi was a female athlete. The *Osaka Mainichi Shimbun* (the company that sponsored Hitomi and for whom she worked as a journalist) ran the following article on 3 August 1928:

> **Miss Hitomi Places Second in the Women's 800-meters: Time of 2:17.4 Shatters World Record**
>
> In the finals of the women's 800-meter run, though Miss Hitomi Kinue came in second behind Germany's Ms. Radke, her time of two minutes, 17.4 seconds magnificently shattered the standing world record by American runner Thompson, whose record was two minutes, 21.2 seconds.

The Japanese press initially celebrated Hitomi's international success and achievement (while *The New York Times* took a more immediately critical standpoint), but soon the focus turned more to the gender than the nationality of the competitors. This was true both inside and outside Japan. The IOC, which had been opposed to women's track and field from the beginning but allowed it in exchange for Alice Milliat's changing the name of her Women's Olympics, was appalled by the 'unladylike fatigue' exhibited by the runners after the 800-metre race. Their embarrassment over having allowed such a display led the IOC to remove the event from the track and field programme after 1928, and it was not reinstated until 1960.[64]

The notion that two laps around the track was too much for a woman's body to handle is again reflective of the mindset of the early twentieth century. While the Japanese press at the outset focused on the mere fact that Japan had won a medal in the women's 800-metre race,[65] its focus soon changed to Hitomi's gender identity. National newspapers like the *Mainichi* and *Asahi Shimbun* continued to run relatively objective stories on Hitomi's achievements on the track at various national and international competitions, but other popular channels of media began to take critical views towards her participation and success in competitive sports. For example, a highly circulated women's magazine called *Fujin Sekai* ran a feature story about Hitomi in July 1929, and the (male) journalist's opinion towards the female athlete comes through quite explicitly. Below is an excerpt from the article, titled 'Miss Hitomi Kinue and the Question of "Womanhood"'[66]:

Part 1: A Physical Examination of Hitomi Kinue

Fujin Sekai: You have quite a magnificent physique – how tall are you?

Hitomi Kinue: I am five *shaku*, five *sun*, seven *bu* (almost 169 cm).

FS: That is awfully tall, isn't it? Around when did you start growing – was it around the same time you started doing sports?

HK: I can't really say when I started growing, as I've grown a little bit every year.

FS: There is a general sentiment that Japanese women are weak – when you were in Amsterdam for the Olympics, did you feel inferior to the foreign athletes?

HK: No, I don't think so. If you look around in Japan there are a lot of women with sturdy physiques. These days it is not uncommon to see female college students who are five *shaku* plus two or three *sun*. (between 157–160 cm)

FS: Yes, that is true – since women's sports have become popular I have noticed the average height of women has grown somewhat … And may I ask your weight?

HK: Fourteen *kan*, four or five hundred *monme* (about 53 or 54 kilograms).

FS: Well, that is a bit surprising! So, since that is about the same weight as most men, haven't people said that they are doubtful that you are really a woman?

HK: Well, when I was overseas nobody had such suspicions, but I heard about this rumor upon my return to Japan.

FS: Ha ha ha! Well wouldn't that be funny if you were really a man! It has a smack of mystery – this could be the main plot twist if I were to write a mystery novel. It might really baffle people, ha ha ha! …

HK: I'm embarrassed.

FS: The appearance of your body is not really that of a woman, not only are you so suntanned but …

HK: The physique of women in other countries is quite different from that of Japanese women.

FS: This may be a bit rude but the shape of your chest and hips really isn't like normal Japanese women, so it seems like you are more like a Western woman.

HK: Well, if you are too fat then you aren't really fit to do sports.

FS: But is it true that if you are just doing sports day in and day out that eventually you will come to be somewhat masculinized?

HK: No, that is not true. …

FS: So are you physically becoming more masculine?

HK: Since I exercise a lot, my body perhaps appears more masculine than that of a typical Japanese woman. …

FS: Please forgive me for being so rude, but there is one problem I have heard again and again about women's sports. Is it true that very intense physical activity can cause gynecological abnormalities for women?

HK: It does not cause abnormalities. My health is just fine. While there have been cases reported of women collapsing while playing sports because they were on their periods, it was really just because some team sports (like basketball) can get a bit rough at times. I am a track athlete, and have never noticed anything abnormal about my health.

FS: When you become a wife and have a family in the future, will you continue to do sports?

HK: Yes, I do not expect anything to change.

This is only a small sampling of a fifteen-page article about Hitomi, but it provides a good example of the tone of the reporter and of the attitude towards female athletes and women's competitive sport. The journalist seems to have little regard for her dignity, as he asks probing and often offensive questions. Hitomi responds to his snidely phrased questions with very straightforward answers, suggesting that she does not find his 'jokes' about her gender to be very funny. There is a cartoon drawing in the article with the title 'The Journalist as a Doctor' (*kisha dokutoru to natte*), depicting the male journalist with a stethoscope around his neck, feeling around Hitomi's chest, which happens to be about at his eye level. Hitomi, with her hands on her hips, is looking down at the 'doctor' with an expression of displeasure.[67]

Hitomi had good reason to seem annoyed (both in the image and in the tone of her responses) at the journalist questioning her femininity. After returning to Japan from the Amsterdam Olympics, Hitomi was increasingly in the public eye, as she travelled around the country giving lectures about her travels abroad to Sweden and the Netherlands and about women's sport in general.[68] She took some time off from training and competing during this time and grew to be somewhat depressed as it turned to winter and she began gaining weight.[69] Though not explicitly evident from her memoirs alone, it is clear from other sources that one factor contributing to her depression was the fact that the media had begun to scrutinize Hitomi's gender in a most invasive way.

From the time Hitomi began garnering honours in tennis and then track and field, the media had portrayed her as mannish and abnormal.[70] The fans soon followed suit, as they began to heckle her in person at track meets as well as in the press. A 1926 publication entitled 'Physical Education and

Competition' referred to Hitomi as one who 'stands like a telephone pole, and runs like a tank', which was a parody of a phrase commonly used to describe beautiful women.[71] In 1928, the *Asahi Graph* reported that when Hitomi raced against Terao Fumi and Kimi, sisters who were competing at the elite level with Hitomi and who happened to be significantly more petite than she, fans would yell, 'Beat Hitomi!' and 'Monster!'[72] In other forms of popular press Hitomi was rumoured as being a lesbian or biologically male.[73] The reasons for this jeering can only be speculated, but it likely came from some combination of apprehension, fear and ignorance among fans. While some taunting likely came from people who were threatened by the fact that a woman could be so fast and strong, it is also possible that some comments were more innocuous, as fans at any sporting event are apt to cheer for their favourites and boo for their least favourite competitors. The general consensus in the reports of these incidents, however, is that Hitomi was viewed as somehow superhuman and incapable of being beat as well as impervious to insulting remarks.

The comments that Hitomi had to deal with in the late 1920s and early 1930s are reflective of the mindset of the time when it came to gender. Like in the West, women were thought of largely in terms of their reproductive abilities and their relative inferiority to men. Hitomi's athletic performance threatened these accepted boundaries of womanhood, as she showed no interest in marriage or children and performed athletically at a level few men would be capable of. The brief surge of positive press that Hitomi received following her silver medal performance in Amsterdam had apparently been due more to her nationality than her gender. The negative commentary that followed (and that outweighed the positive) indicates the resistance to change felt by the Japanese public at the time. Even to this day, the literature that exists on Hitomi is polarized – one set of books and articles praises Hitomi for her role as a pioneer and remarkable athlete, the other set focuses more on her ambiguous gender identity, with articles from as recent as 2005 questioning whether she was biologically female.[74]

Hitomi continued training, working as a sports journalist and promoting women's competitive sport through several years of this mocking and critique in the public media. She published a number of autobiographical memoirs, as well as some critiques of her own, titled *Joshi no rikujō kyōgi* (Women's track and field competitions) in 1930 and *Joshi supōtsu o kataru* (Talking about women's sport) in 1931. In these critiques, Hitomi implies that based on her experiences abroad, Japan was lagging behind Western nations when it came to accepting women as athletes. She writes that in Japan, sport was seen as something geared towards girls and students, while in the West there were married women and even mothers competing at the elite level, making for a talent pool that was far deeper. For example, Lina Radke, the German runner who beat out Hitomi for the gold medal in the Olympic 800-metre race, was at

the time twenty-six years old and the mother of two children. Also, she wrote that there was more of a culture of leisure sport in Europe than in Japan, which meant more women were interested in participating in sport clubs. Moreover, Hitomi believed that there was not enough research to prove that competitive sport was harmful for women's bodies and insisted that physical activity did not cause women to become masculine or infertile.[75]

Her efforts to change the attitudes of the Japanese public towards women's sport were sadly cut short when Hitomi died while at the peak of her career. She contracted pneumonia on a boat trip back to Japan after competing at the Third Annual Women's World Games (formerly the Women's Olympics) in Prague in 1930 and was unable to regain her health for nearly a year thereafter. Hitomi had written in the introduction to one of her memoirs that her story was a 'history of struggle' (*tatakai no rekishi*), as she fought for so many years against society, competitors and her own inclination to give up fighting.[76] The last struggle she faced was for her life, as she passed away in an Osaka hospital bed on 2 August 1931 at the young age of twenty-four.

The obituary that appeared the next day in the *Asahi Shimbun* embodies the polarized public opinion of Hitomi both during her life and after:

> **Miss Hitomi Kinue Passes Away Yesterday: Internationally Acclaimed Women's Track Athlete**
>
> Miss Hitomi was a like a bright light shining in our nation's women's track and field circuit. Her sudden death came as surprisingly as a huge tree falling without notice. At 168 centimeters and fifty-eight kilograms, this magnificently muscular, swarthy giant was asked by one female reporter at the Women's Olympic Games in Sweden, 'Are you *really* a woman?' … Though her life was short, it was filled with achievement, as Hitomi was a literary talent and a public speaker. When Hitomi saw a younger teammate fall in love with a man and leave athletics to pursue life as a housewife, Hitomi reportedly said that she was firmly resolved against having any sort of romantic affairs – an interesting episode that shows a rather manly side of Hitomi.[77]

Though the media continued to pry into Hitomi's personal life even after her passing, perhaps it was, ironically, this sensationalized attention that made people within Japan notice women's sport at a level that would have been unheard of a mere decade earlier. While her life was short and filled with strife, the impact that Hitomi Kinue had on women's sport in Japan is immeasurable.

The next medallist: Maehata Hideko

One of the most immediate and obvious impacts that Hitomi had was that she opened the door for Japanese women to compete on the international level. Several Japanese teammates had travelled with Hitomi to the Women's

World Games in Prague in 1930,[78] and at the next Olympic Games in 1932 in Los Angeles, Japan fielded a team of 131 athletes, including sixteen women. At these Olympics, an eighteen-year-old swimmer named Maehata Hideko won a silver medal in the 200-metre breaststroke event, failing to beat out Australia's Clare Dennis by just a tenth of a second. Her disappointment in not winning gold and her sheer determination to continue swimming in the face of public disapproval led Maehata to continue training upon her return to Japan. What would happen four years later at the Berlin Olympics as a result of this determination would wind up putting Maehata in the spotlight for one of the most memorable moments in the history of Japanese sport.

5

From Antipathy to Applause

The emergence of female powerhouses on the international scene

Japan in the 1930s and 1940s was dealing with intense domestic and international political pressures. The Japanese empire grew to its largest extent during this time, encompassing almost all of East and South-East Asia by 1942. Japan was immersed in a bloody, total war with its neighbours for over a decade, creating a huge and steady drain on both human and economic resources. Perhaps in light of the severity of the situation in which Japan found itself by the mid-1930s, one would expect the world of sport to take a back seat to the war effort. On the contrary, however, Japan's intense and elevated sense of nationalism fed directly into the world of competitive sport in the 1930s. International sporting events served as the perfect platform on which Japan could quite literally flex its muscle to the rest of the world.

While women to this point had been only minimally involved in competitive sport, opportunities for female athletes began to blossom in the 1930s. The combination of intense nationalism and increased opportunity for women united at the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin, as Japan would witness one of its most memorable athletic performances of the twentieth century. Although they may not have even been born yet, many Japanese people today still know about Maehata Hideko's legendary swimming race at the 1936 Olympics. This chapter will look at the relationship between Japanese women and sport through the war and occupation years (1930s–50s). We will see that this was a pivotal time for Japanese women's sport, as it transitioned from an obscure and sometimes ridiculed activity to one worthy of intense praise and support.

An accidental hero: Maehata's upbringing

Maehata Hideko came from a village in Wakayama prefecture, not far from Osaka in Western Japan. Born into a family of tofu makers in 1914, she was in elementary school when women's competitive sport began to gain popularity in Japan in the early to mid-1920s. In one of her two autobiographical memoirs, Maehata discusses her childhood and how she came to be such an avid

swimmer.[1] The second chapter of her 1982 memoir, *Maehata ganbare*, is titled 'A Hometown with a River' and describes the rather coincidental path that led her into competitive swimming. Maehata lived in close proximity to a river (the Kinokawa river, flowing from Nara prefecture westward into Wakayama[2]) and was encouraged as child to swim in order to make her stronger. She suffered many illnesses in her early years, so it was thought that she had a weak body that needed to be strengthened through exercise. Her mother, a devout Buddhist, had climbed Mt Kōya (the holiest spot in Shingon Buddhism) to consult with a priest about how to restore her daughter's health, and the priest advised her to cut her daughter's hair off and raise her like a boy. Her mother did as she was told; she brought Hideko's sheared locks back up the mountain as an offering and encouraged her daughter to be active in sport like a boy.[3]

While the Kinokawa river was known for its strong currents, varying widths, large boulders and choppy surface, it just so happened that the section closest to Maehata's house was an inlet more than eighty-metres wide that usually had a perfectly smooth and clear surface for swimming.[4] Maehata began swimming with her parents in order to improve her health around the age of three and continued avidly swimming during the summer months through her elementary school years. She writes that neighbourhood ladies would often gossip about her, calling her a tomboy because of her short hair and enthusiasm for swimming.[5]

In fourth grade, Maehata became the youngest member of her primary school's swimming club, which was made up of fifteen boys and seventeen girls. The school did not have a pool, so the club practised in a nearby choppy section of the Kinokawa river against a strong current.[6] Relative to the other kids in the swimming club, Maehata was a fairly large and robust child, and in retrospect she believes that her muscular build was what enabled her to be so strong and fast.[7] Her school coach, Ishii Sōichi, saw promise in Maehata at a young age, as her times were off the charts for elementary school children.[8]

The first time she entered a formal swimming competition, Maehata took first place and continued to collect medals and trophies at local competitions throughout her elementary school years. Her parents, thrilled that she was no longer the feeble, sickly child she had been a few years earlier, encouraged their daughter to keep practising hard and taking part in competitions.[9] She continued to compete through her high school years, and as her accolades accrued, so too did the number of people supporting her in her swimming career. In addition to her family and coach, the principal at her school began to show interest in the school's star swimmer.[10]

When Maehata was fourteen years old, the Olympic Games took place in Amsterdam, and after witnessing the publicity and acclaim received by Hitomi Kinue, Maehata made it her goal to compete at the Olympics as well. While Japan had been sending athletes to the Olympic Games since 1912, they received little publicity in the press, due largely to the fact that Japan did not win any medals

until 1928. Looking at the major Japanese newspapers during the days of the Olympics from the years 1912 to 1924,[11] one will only see brief mention of the Games in the sports section (*undō bu*), but from 1928 onwards the coverage becomes increasingly more involved, with a given day's Olympic events often appearing on the front page of the paper. This is reflective of the changing nature of the Olympic Games in the early twentieth century; particularly after 1928, it grew from a relatively modest Euro-centric, androcentric gathering to more closely resemble the global, mega-event that it is today.

The radio was also becoming an increasingly popular means of disseminating news about the Olympics and other sporting events by the late 1920s. When considering the general public's awareness and appreciation of international sport in early twentieth-century Japan, the state of the media is important to keep in mind since this awareness has affected sport's role and impact on Japanese society. In 1928, the young Maehata recalls taking special notice of Hitomi's rising fame in the media as well as the successes of male Japanese swimmers at the Olympic Games. Maehata accordingly set her own goal as winning a gold medal at the next Olympic Games in Los Angeles in 1932.[12]

Going for gold: Maehata Hideko's Olympic dream

Maehata's dream started to become a reality as she qualified at age fifteen for her first international competition – the 1929 Pan-Pacific Women's Games held in Hawaii. In addition to Japan, the United States, Canada, New Zealand and Australia sent athletes to the event.[13] She returned to Japan with a gold and a silver medal in the 100- and 200-metre breaststroke races, respectively.[14] This experience in competing internationally only whet her appetite for more, as Maehata realized that her dream of competing at the Olympics was far closer than she had imagined.[15]

Maehata's success at the Pan-Pacific Women's Games represents one of a growing number of examples of Japanese women breaking into a world of international sporting events that had, to this point, been heavily or exclusively dominated by Western athletes. From the 1926 Women's Olympic Games to the 1928 Olympics to these Pan-Pacific Games in 1929, it was clear that Japan at this time had an active agenda of trying to get its athletes onto the international stage of sport. It is important to keep this in mind, as Japanese women in the late 1920s were making great strides not only in the nascent field of women's sport but also in international sport as a whole as they were repeatedly appearing as the first non-Western competitors at international events.

Her success in Hawaii in 1929 had made Maehata somewhat of a celebrity within Japan when she returned, and in part because of this she was invited to enrol in Sugiyama Women's Higher School in Nagoya by the school's

headmaster. The school had a new pool and an emphasis on physical education, and at the age of sixteen Maehata moved away from home to attend the school in Nagoya.[16] With the vision of the Japanese *hi no maru* flag being raised at the next Olympic Games fuelling her along, Maehata practised increasing her swimming speed more than ever in the pool at her new school. Shortly after enrolling at Sugiyama Women's Higher School, Maehata's mother became ill with rheumatism and passed away. As her mother had always been one of the most influential people urging Maehata to pursue her swimming career, she vowed to make it to the Olympic Games in honour of her mother.[17]

At a trial meet in the spring of 1932, Maehata qualified for that summer's Olympic Games in Los Angeles. The eighteen-year-old athlete took a two-week boat journey across the Pacific with the rest of the Japanese delegation, which included 115 men and fifteen other women.[18] At the Olympics, Maehata came in second place to Australia's Clare Dennis in the 200-metre breaststroke race. Although she was proud to see the *hi no maru* flag raised at the awards ceremony, she felt extremely disappointed in having been so close (one tenth of a second behind Dennis) but not having won a gold medal. The next day in Japan, the *Asahi Shimbun* ran a large article featuring a photo of Maehata and Dennis smiling and shaking hands, with the caption 'The Two Record-Breaking Ladies', as both women's times had broken the standing women's 200-metre breaststroke Olympic record.[19] She returned to Japan to much praise and acclaim, not only for having won a silver medal for Japan but also for being the first female swimmer to bring back a medal.

Maehata was eighteen years old in 1932, the typical age to marry and begin having children in Japan at that time. She writes in her memoir that, like the other girls who had recently graduated from higher school, she began to turn her thoughts towards marriage but also continued to feel an obligation to her deceased mother to carry on swimming.[20] She received piles of mail from strangers after her silver medal performance in Los Angeles, with some people telling her that she did well and should now move on to marriage and others urging her to try to go to the next Summer Olympics in Berlin. 'You only lost by a tenth of a second, so don't be disappointed!' 'Please, go for it in Berlin!'[21] In addition to the anonymous fan letters, Maehata felt torn by the advice she was given by those close to her. Her younger brothers encouraged her to try to get a gold medal in Berlin, while an influential teacher told her that 'even if you try your best in Berlin, you may not necessarily win. If you were to lose, your return to Japan would be full of disgrace. If you think about that, it's probably best if you retire now and get married'.[22] The wishes of her family and swimming teammates, along with her own conviction to win gold, ultimately won out over those people telling her to focus on marriage rather than swimming. Maehata decided to buck convention; rather than becoming a good wife and wise mother like most of her classmates, she instead set her goal at winning a gold medal at the 1936 Berlin Olympics.

Maehata claims in her memoir that she had decided from the beginning that she was not going to come back from Berlin without a victory in the 200-metre breaststroke. She knew that there were many critics of her decision to delay marriage and to compete at age twenty-two, and she felt it necessary to prove to them that the decision she made was worth it.[23] When it was too cold to swim, she stayed in shape by running around a track, and as soon as the water was warm enough to enter in April she would train rigorously three times a day.[24] Four years after her silver medal performance in Los Angeles, Maehata once again qualified for the Summer Olympics in Berlin in 1936.

The 1936 Olympic Games have been called 'the most controversial Olympics' and 'the Nazi Olympics',[25] as they were overseen by the German Nazi party at the height of its power. In Richard Mandell's book on these Games he writes that 'all the athletes who competed … at Berlin were made to feel that they were the corporeal manifestations of intellectual and political forces let loose to compete in other spheres later in that troubled decade'.[26] That is to say, the bigotry and intolerance that was voiced by the ruling Nazi party (particularly towards African-American and Jewish athletes) reflected the very real tensions that would erupt the world over in the coming decade. There has been debate over whether the Berlin Olympics were a triumph of the spirit of Olympism[27] (i.e. that they contributed to building a peaceful and better world), or whether they were a propaganda success for the Nazis,[28] but all agree that these were Games like none other.

The Berlin Olympics can be seen as the first example of the Games as a true 'mega-event'. Prior to 1936, the Olympics tended to take place in pre-existing sports facilities and received moderate (though growing) coverage in the media. For the Olympic Games in Berlin, however, a stadium that had been originally planned for the cancelled 1916 Games was expanded to accommodate 110,000 spectators, and a new aquatic sports complex was built with 20,000 seats for spectators. A spectacular Olympic village was built to house the athletes, and national cuisines from around the globe were served in thirty-eight separate dining halls. For the first time, a torch was lit in Olympia and carried by a relay of thousands of runners to Berlin, where it was used to light the Olympic flame. German film director Leni Riefenstahl made an extraordinary documentary of the entire event, entitled *Olympia*, in which she used cutting-edge recording techniques to capture the excitement and emotion of the Games.[29]

Conspicuously absent from Riefenstahl's documentary, however, is Maehata Hideko's 200-metre breaststroke race. After travelling via the Trans-Siberian Railway for fourteen days, Maehata arrived in Berlin eager as ever to prove to her nation and her family that she had made the right decision to try again for a gold medal.[30] In her trial heat, Maehata set an Olympic record of 3:01.9, which undoubtedly boosted her confidence for the final championship race.[31] Her toughest competition was going to be Martha Genenger[32] of Germany, and the fact that the vast majority of the spectators at the final race were Germans

cheering for their German swimmer did not help to ease Maehata's nerves. The absence of this particular race from Riefenstahl's documentary was almost certainly not an oversight – it was likely removed intentionally based on the racial outcome. In the debate between Olympic and Nazi values, the decision to edit out this particular race suggests that in this case the Nazi perspective won out, as *Olympia* is considered by many to be *the* definitive account of these Games.

Indeed, the German who was favoured to win this event was beat out by the indefatigable Maehata. Just before her race was to begin, Maehata turned away, quickly swallowed a small amulet and prayed, 'Mother, please help me'.[33] The pressure placed on Maehata by her nation and by herself was intense – pressure to honour the memory of her deceased mother, pressure to prove that her decision to delay marriage and children in order to return for a second Olympics was a good one and pressure to represent Japan as best she could by being the first women to bring home a gold medal. Maehata and her German competitor, Martha Genenger, were placed in adjacent lanes in the final heat of the 200-metre breaststroke – Maehata in Lane 6 and Genenger in Lane 7.[34]

In terms of Japanese sport history, this race marked a very significant moment as it was one of the first major events to be covered live via radio satellite. Japan's national broadcasting system, *Nihon hōsō kyōkai*, or NHK had become incorporated in November 1924, only a few years after the first commercial radio broadcasting organizations emerged in the United States.[35] Japanese radio broadcasts began with stations that could only cover local areas, but by 1926 there was national coverage available and much air time was devoted to covering sport, especially baseball at all different levels. Though the technology existed at the time of the Amsterdam Olympics in 1928, the radio was *not* used to transmit this event, and the first Olympic coverage in Japan was of the 1932 Los Angeles Games. However, the broadcast was not simultaneous with the events themselves – a telegraph would be sent to Japan after an event took place, and the report would be broadcast nationally with a several hour delay. By 1936, however, NHK had just perfected the technology to have simultaneous live broadcasts. For the first time, a number of Japanese radio announcers (many of whom were former newspaper reporters) were sent to Berlin to cover the events as they happened.[36]

One such reporter cum announcer was Kasai Sansei, who was sent to the aquatic sports complex to cover Maehata's 200-metre race. Screaming to be heard over the loud cheers from German fans rooting for their hometown hero Genenger, Kasai's enthusiastic broadcast made for a very memorable sound bite – one that many Japanese today are still familiar with. The live broadcast during the race went as follows:

> Maehata and Genenger are side by side. Ah, Maehata pulls ahead! She's in the lead! She's a little bit ahead. Fifty meters down. 100 meters down. Fifty meters left to go. Maehata is a little bit ahead! Ah, Genenger is coming. Come on, come on! Maehata is in danger, she's in danger! Go for it! Maehata go for it!

> They turned, the swimmers just now turned and Maehata holds onto a slight lead. C'mon Maehata. Go for it! [Repeated four times] Forty meters left to go. [Repeated four times] Maehata is ahead! Maehata is ahead! Genenger is coming, it's just a very small lead by Maehata. Go for it Maehata! [Repeated four times] Twenty-five meters left to go! Maehata's lead is small, it's very small! … Maehata! Go for it Maehata! [Repeated eleven times] Maehata is in the lead! [Repeated six times] Five meters left to go! Four meters left! Three meters, two meters. Maehata is ahead! Maehata has won! [Repeated eighteen times] By a small margin Maehata is the champion! Thank you Ms. Maehata, the Japanese flag will fly today. Thank you! For the first time in the history of women's swimming the Japanese flag will fly.[37]

It is clear from reading the transcript of the broadcast that far beyond simply announcing the events of the race, Kasai was himself cheering for Maehata to beat Genenger. The reaction by the listening public back in Japan was appropriately enthusiastic as well. In the following day's *Asahi Shimbun*, a large article appeared with the headline 'Banzai! The Queen of the Water!' and the top photo on the page shows a family of seven gathered around a radio, cheering with their hands in the air.[38] There are two more large headlines in the article, one that reads, 'She raised the best in the world – affection today for Maehata's deceased mother', and another that reads, 'Next comes marriage.' The enthusiasm shared by NHK announcer Kasai and the Japanese public alike was undoubtedly heartfelt, but their excitement appears to go beyond just her athletic prowess and into her personal life. The latter headline in the *Asahi Shimbun* article connotes an excitement over the fact that Maehata was now ready to put competitive swimming aside in order to become a bride. When asked for comment, the principal of her former school told the newspaper that he was very happy about the gold medal in Berlin, and now the only thing left to worry about was marrying off the almost twenty-three year old athlete.[39]

In one of her autobiographies, Hyōdō (*née* Maehata) titles the chapter immediately following her account of the Berlin Olympics 'The Chaotic Wedding Ceremony',[40] which captures the mayhem that Maehata found herself in after becoming Japan's first female gold medallist. After the closing ceremonies in Berlin, she took a forty-day boat trip back to Japan, during which time she gave a lot of thought to the direction she wanted her life to take. She felt a huge weight lifted from her shoulders after fulfilling her dream (and, it seemed to her, the dreams of her family and her nation), and she thought she was ready to 'live a bit more relaxed lifestyle'.[41]

In the early Showa era, it was common for parents or acquaintances to choose their children's marriage partners. This was exactly how Maehata wound up marrying Hyōdō Masahiko on 3 March 1937, about six months after her triumphant return from Berlin.[42] Maehata was concerned that she would have poor marriage prospects because of her age and her family lineage (she came from a family of tofu makers), but her fame in Berlin had made her desirable to many men. Twenty-nine-year-old Hyōdō was a surgical

assistant (in training to become a doctor) who came from a well-to-do family, as his father had served as an imperial court advisor (*kyōchō komonkan*) under the Taishō emperor.[43] Though she was apprehensive about becoming a doctor's wife, Maehata was taken by Hyōdō's good looks upon their first meeting, and as they got to know one another they found that they got along well. Their wedding was covered extensively by the Japanese media and more or less brought to an end the nearly one-year media frenzy surrounding the swimmer.

While sport and the Olympics had been gaining more and more media attention within Japan as broadcasting technology advanced, the Berlin Olympics were especially popular in Japan for a unique reason – Tokyo was due to host the next Summer Olympics in 1940. Beginning in 1932, when Tokyo had won support for being a bid city by IOC members, there were domestic and international campaigns aimed at promoting Japan as an ideal location to host the Games.[44] There were two specific objectives on which Japan predicated its bid: one was that they wanted to bring the Olympic Games to Asia (which was the world's most populous continent) in order to make it a truly universal event, as they had only been held in Europe and the United States up to this point; the other was that they wanted to commemorate the 2,600th anniversary of the ascension of Emperor Jimmu, which happened to fall in 1940.[45] Moreover, as Japan was facing growing international isolation as a result of its aggressive imperialist tactics throughout Asia, it became increasingly important to the nation state that it presented itself as a diplomatically sound and rapidly modernizing nation (not unlike the Nazi party did in Berlin).[46]

In a highly controversial move in 1935, two Japanese IOC delegates, Sugimura Yotaro and Soyeshima Michimasa, arranged to meet with Italian Prime Minister Benito Mussolini in order to plead that Rome (seen as Tokyo's biggest competition) be withdrawn from the running as a candidate city for the 1940 Games. Surprisingly, Mussolini agreed with the Japanese delegates that 'if the Olympics were held in Tokyo it would help to bind together in close bounds of amity the East and West, thus contributing to the peace of the world'.[47] Rome withdrew its candidature, and in the spring of 1936 IOC President Henri de Baillet-Latour visited Tokyo and announced his support for Tokyo hosting the 1940 Olympic Games.[48] Later that same year, just days before the Berlin Olympics began, Tokyo was chosen by the IOC to host the 1940 Games, beating out Rome, London and Helsinki.[49]

Beginning on 3 August 1936 – one week before Maehata was to capture her gold medal in the 200-metre breaststroke race – a three-day festival called 'the Celebration of the Decision to Award Tokyo the XIIth Olympic Games' took place in Tokyo. In total, 10,000 Japanese flags and flags with the Olympic rings on them were distributed throughout Tokyo, buses and streetcars carried commemorative Olympic tickets and Olympic posters and postage stamps

were issued. Each night of the three-day festival, thousands of fireworks were set off in central Tokyo landmarks, including Meiji Jinggu, Hibiya Park and Ueno Park.[50] Against this backdrop of celebration and amplified interest in the Olympic Games, Maehata's victory in Berlin takes on an added layer of significance, as it helped to herald in this important turning point in Japan's involvement in the massive international event.

While many wrongly believe that Japan was forced by the IOC to cancel the 1940 Games, the nation voluntarily relinquished them after a period of extended political debate.[51] Though Japan had, since 1895, forcefully colonized much of East Asia, including the seizure of Manchuria in 1931, Tokyo was still chosen in 1936 to host the Games. Even their subsequent invasion of China in 1937 (the notorious 'rape of Nanking') was not a major cause of concern to the IOC, as 'the peaceful diffusion of Olympism to Asian shores was far more important than the ruthless expansion of the Japanese empire'.[52] However, at a 1938 meeting of IOC delegates in Sydney, Australia, a vote was passed by several nations to boycott the 1940 Tokyo Olympics if Japan were still at war. Several other nations followed suit in similar meetings over the course of the year, and in July of 1938, knowing of the debates and boycotts that were taking place, the Japanese Olympic Committee (JOC) decided that the Olympics would be a costly distraction from the more important business of imperial expansion. The government renounced the Games, and Soyeshima Michimasa resigned from the IOC.[53]

Tokyo's renouncement of the 1940 Summer Olympics seemed to confirm what the Berlin Games had already shown the world – that politics and the Olympic Games had come to be indelibly linked to one another. Furthermore, as Richard Mandell notes in *The Nazi Olympics*, the 1936 Games highlighted a growing trend for athletes to be viewed as national assets, 'procurable like fighter planes, submarines, or synthetic-rubber factories'.[54] He suggests that in order for a country to gain national standing, it became more and more important for that country to have strong athletes. Of course, these trends towards athletes as important national assets were somewhat derailed by the Second World War, but this is not to say that the war led to a decrease in the significance of athletic competitions. On the contrary, the Olympic Games that took place after the Second World War are generally viewed as being *more* politically charged than their pre-war antecedents.[55] Much has been written about the political incidents that have plagued some of the later Olympics,[56] but to date little exists on the gender politics involved, particularly in the Japanese context. Before delving into perhaps the most significant moment in Japanese gender politics at the Olympic Games (to be looked at in Chapter 6), we will look briefly at women's sport in Japan in the years during and immediately following the Second World War. My main effort here is not to show a major break between pre- and post-war Japan, but rather to highlight the continuities that can be seen in women's sport before and after the war.

Japan, sport and the Second World War

Beginning largely with the 'Nazi Olympics' of 1936, international sport became more politically charged. As the world marched towards total war, the stage of sport became an increasingly important venue to humanely play out the international tensions that were building as a result of imperialist expansion and political alliances. Because the Olympic Games had risen to the status of mega-event by 1936, the history of sport is closely tied to Olympic history in the Second World War years, as nations sought to prove themselves on this now more than ever highly visible stage of sport.

After the fanfare of Berlin Olympics (from which Japan brought back six gold, four silver and ten bronze medals),[57] and the excitement over winning the bid for the 1940 Olympics, the Japanese media quickly turned its focus from athletic to military pursuits. With so much of the Japanese economy and manpower being devoted to the war, sport was put on the back burner in terms of media attention, but it continued throughout the war years nonetheless. This was true for men and women's sport alike, as state efforts to maintain a physically strong population did not abate during the war years. In fact, despite Japan's lack of involvement in the Olympic Games for sixteen years during and after the Second World War, they continued to take part in other national and international sporting events. Japanese athletes thus continued improving their performance during the interim in which Japan did not compete at the Olympics.

For women specifically, the war caused few setbacks to the progress being made in the quality and quantity of sports being practised by Japanese women – the 1940s saw plenty of improvements being made in this regard. In 1941, the Ministry of Health and Welfare established a mandatory national physical fitness test for women (*joshi tairyoku shōkentei*).[58] As more women gained more education (with growing numbers of women entering higher schools and universities), there was increased participation in organized sport, which called for further standardization and regulation of these activities.

Women were by no means physically passive with respect to the ongoing war effort in the 1940s, and this went for both competitive sport as well as for military training. A 1975 article by Thomas Havens titled 'Women and War in Japan, 1937–45' discusses the use of women in defensive fighting, particularly in the last two years of the war (1944–5). A photo in the article shows a long line of women wearing pants and cotton headbands receiving orders from a soldier with the caption, 'A Japanese army soldier training neighborhood women wielding bamboo spears in preparation for defending the homeland against American invasion, Spring 1945.'[59] In 1944, the female volunteer labour corps (*joshi rōdō teishintai*) was created, and unmarried women between the ages of twelve and thirty-nine were registered to join for one-year terms.[60] This work, which was primarily in factories, was often in addition to the physically

demanding agricultural work that many of these women carried out at their homes, meaning many women had become physically strong, though almost universally out of necessity.[61]

Following Japan's unconditional surrender on 15 August 1945, the situation for women in the country slowly began to change from its heavily patriarchal pre-war paradigm. On 17 December of the same year, women's suffrage was granted, and women went to the polls for the first time to vote for members of parliament.[62] Less than a year after Japan's surrender, women's sporting organizations, to which resources had been drastically cut during the war, began re-sprouting across the nation. In 1946, a female mountaineering party ascended Mt Ōmiye in Nara prefecture with the intention of opening up the mountain to female climbers, as it had previously been closed to them for religious reasons. On their way up, however, some devout Buddhists stopped the women from ascending.[63] This effort, while ultimately thwarted, drew attention to women's desire to participate in historically male physical pursuits, as it made it into the pages of the *Asahi Shimbun*.[64]

Thanks to other changes that were occurring for Japanese women immediately following the war, such as education reforms enabling more and older girls to attend school, the numbers of women in sport continued to grow in the 1940s. Regional, national and international competitions continued taking place, giving women venues in which to improve their athletic abilities during and immediately following the years of the Second World War.

The fact that the progress of women's sport remained relatively unaffected by the Second World War is highlighted in a three-part series published in 1988 titled 'Shōwa History through Bungeishunjū Sports' (*'Bungeishunjū' ni miru supōtsu Shōwa shi*), which uses articles from the popular monthly magazine *Bungeishunjū* to bring to light significant moments in sport history throughout the Shōwa period (1926–89). The first volume of the series, which covers the years 1926–54, does not make a pre- and post-war distinction in its discussion of sport, as articles in the magazine continued being written throughout the entire war.[65] While the war is certainly discussed in the context of sport (and vice versa), it is clear that athletes continued to train and compete in Japan during times of war.

A 1952 article included in the *Bungeishunjū* volume titled 'Olympic Heroes' (*'Orinpikku no eiyū tachi'*) interviews several Japanese participants of the 1952 Olympics, which was the first Games Japan took part in after the war (though not, as discussed above, the first major sporting event they had participated in since the war). The article discusses explicitly how some athletes continued training throughout the war years, while others took short breaks due to war-related circumstances. For example, when asked about how the war affected her training, discus thrower Yoshino Toyoko replied, 'Just before the end of the war, my elder brother died in action, and for a little while I was unable to focus on anything. Moreover, I was working as a dorm superintendent at my high

school in Yamanashi, was responsible for procuring food, and had nowhere to practise. That is why I did not start training again until 1946.'[66] Yoshino would go on to compete at the 1952 Olympic Games in Helsinki, placing fourth in the discus throw. In addition to the continuities brought out in stories from the *Bungeishunjū* volume on sport history, one only has to look through the major Japanese newspapers throughout the 1940s to recognize that the public interest in and support for sport was very rarely, if ever, completely overshadowed by the war effort. This was likely due to a combination of factors: for one, sport and politics had become highly connected by this point, so interest in the war in many ways fuelled interest in sport (and vice versa); second, sport (particularly domestic events) could provide a necessary distraction from an otherwise gloomy situation in which many Japanese found themselves in the entire decade of the 1940s.

While sport carried on, the Second World War did affect the Japan in one major way – due to wartime aggression, Japan and Germany were not invited to participate in the 1948 Olympiad in London (the first Games to take place after Berlin, after a twelve-year hiatus). Although Japan was not present at the 1948 Games, certain events that took place there would eventually impact Japanese women's involvement in sport. The most heavily publicized athlete of the 1948 Olympics was a Dutch woman by the name of Francina Blankers-Koen. She was one of a handful of athletes who had also competed at the Berlin Olympics twelve years earlier and then returned to compete in London. She had not done particularly well in Berlin, placing sixth in the women's high jump competition in 1936. In between the Berlin and London Olympics, Blankers-Koen had gotten married and had two children. In Japan, as in much of the world, there were particular biases against female athletes who were married and/or had children, as it was believed that sport was only for school children and that intense physical exertion was detrimental to the maternal health of women. However, Blankers-Koen's performance in London helped to shatter many of these stereotypes – not only did she win four gold medals (in the 100- and 200-metre sprints, the 80-metre hurdles and the 400-metre relay), but she likely would have won two more in the long jump and the high jump, as she held the world records at the time. The Olympic rules at the time limited the number of events in which an individual could compete to four.[67] Because her spectacular performance went against so many deeply held convictions about sport's relationship to gender, marital status, motherhood and age, Blankers-Koen received significant media attention.

A key way in which this singular athlete's achievements reverberated throughout the global athletic community was through the effect she had on Avery Brundage, vice-president of the IOC at the time of the London Olympics (Brundage's influence would grow, as he became IOC president in 1952). He wrote of Blankers-Koen's performance in his personal memoir, declaring that 'a new type of woman [was] appearing – lithe, supple, physically disciplined,

strong, slender and efficient, like the Goddesses of ancient Greece'.[68] During his twenty-year tenure as IOC president, significant advances were made in terms of the number of events open to women and the subsequent number of female athletes at the Olympic Games.[69]

The 1950s: Japan's reemergence on the global stage

Japan had much rebuilding to do after years of warfare, the two atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the nation's unconditional surrender in 1945. Not only did families need to reestablish themselves after being torn apart, but the entire nation went through a period of reinvention both domestically and internationally. Japan sought to repair its tarnished image after decades of foreign invasion, colonization and aggression. Much like in the early twentieth century, sport again became a key avenue through which Japan exposed to the world what it (believed that it) was doing successfully. Sixteen years after the nation's thrilling performance at the Berlin Olympics, another group of Japanese athletes returned to the 1952 Summer Games in Helsinki. The number of Japanese delegates declined – after having sent 162 men and seventeen women to Berlin, only sixty-one men and eleven women were able to go to Helsinki.[70] There are several reasons as to why the numbers dropped off so significantly, one being the strain on all resources in the immediate post-war period (e.g. the ability to pay for coaches, facilities and transportation). As mentioned above in Yoshino Toyoko's account of her brother's death during the war, many athletes and/or their families were also deeply affected by the years of fighting, explaining why some were slower to return to competitive international events.

Among the female Japanese athletes who did travel to Helsinki in 1952 were four track athletes and seven swimmers. Perhaps in part because of their sparse numbers, the Japanese women were not able to make much of a showing in Helsinki, with Yoshino Toyoko's fourth place finish in the discus throw being the best performance among all the female delegates. Most of the swimmers were not even able to make it past their preliminary round competitions into the final races.[71] This poor showing suggests that the local and regional competitions in which Japanese women had been competing during the 1940s had not pushed them to reach world-class levels.

More important than the medals they failed to win, though, was that the 1952 Helsinki Olympics served as a springboard for revitalizing interest and attention in women's competitive sport. Many individual women went on to compete in later Olympic Games (e.g. discus thrower Yoshino competed at the 1956 Games in Melbourne, and swimmer Miyabe Shizue, who had only been fourteen years old in 1952, went on to compete in Rome in 1960)[72] as well as

in other large, international events such as the Asian Games.[73] Moreover, as Japanese women competed in these international competitions, their eyes were progressively opened to the growing options for women to participate in sport. As they competed abroad, Japanese athletes learned of those sports that were popular abroad but had not yet caught on in Japan, such as diving, gymnastics, fencing and canoeing. These sports subsequently grew and gained a following in Japan. At the 1956 Olympic Games in Melbourne, Japan would send its first-ever women's gymnastics team.

The 1950s saw rapid changes taking place for Japanese women both inside and outside the realm of sport. In her article, 'From Feminisms to Femininities: *Fujin Kōron* and the Fifties', Beth Katzoff discusses how a popular women's magazine contained numerous articles focusing on women's responsibilities and roles in this period of rebuilding. While the content of the magazine would later shift to include more 'light reading' that focused mainly on entertainment, during the 1950s its focus was on such issues as politics, war, peace, working women and the general pursuit of happiness.[74] In giving a platform to feminists like Yamakawa Kikue, who argued for women's active participation in politics and for government-sanctioned equality for men and women, the publication helped disseminate new ways of conceptualizing women's role in society. Women were becoming increasingly aware of the broadening range of options available to them beyond just housewife and mother (some feminists like Yamakawa also argued that the value of women's unpaid work in the home should be more properly evaluated).[75] While it is debatable whether women's increasing participation in sport during the 1950s contributed to an increased liberalization of Japanese women or vice versa, it is certain that more women than ever were competing in a broader range of sports and at higher levels than ever before.

By the 1956 Olympic Games in Melbourne,[76] Japan's Olympic delegation had grown significantly, though it still had not reached the level it had in 1936, when 179 athletes had been sent to Berlin. However, relative to the previous Games in Helsinki, Japan fared well in 1956, sending 117 athletes (as compared to seventy-two in Helsinki) and taking home nineteen medals (compared to nine from Helsinki).[77] None of these medals were awarded to Japanese women athletes, but this is not to say that their performances had not improved greatly from previous Olympics. The women's gymnastics team was especially notable, taking sixth place overall in their first appearance at the Olympic Games.[78]

One of the members of the 1956 gymnastics team, Seki Suzuko, wrote an article titled 'Deep Emotions from the *Hi no Maru*', in which she describes in detail the sentiments she felt as she represented Japan in Melbourne.[79] Seki remembers the visceral sensations she felt when she saw fans waving the *hi no maru* flag during the opening ceremony as the Japanese delegation walked around the stadium's circumference.

> We were the thirty-sixth team to enter the grounds, and as we did, hearing the shouts of joy from the fans, I felt as if my blood had reversed direction for a moment. The thundering applause made me feel deeply emotional and very excited. Though I was trembling, I carried on through the parade as if I were floating. Here and there we saw small *hi no maru* flags, which made me emotional to the point of pain in my chest. Travelling for Japanese citizens had not yet been opened up back then, and it was rumored that the Japanese fans in the audience were mainly Japanese war brides.[80]

Seki (now Shintani) was affected by this Olympic experience on more than an emotional level, as her exposure to athletes from other nations made her interested in broadening her horizons further. After a herniated disk caused paralysis in her right leg, Seki was unable to try out for the Olympic team that was to go to Rome in 1960, so instead she decided to study abroad in the United States. She earned a masters degree from Northwestern State University in Louisiana, later writing a *tanka* poem recalling her feelings the day of her graduation: 'Wearing my mortarboard and gown, the applause and happy feelings are also vivid today.'[81] Drawing a parallel to the sentiments she had as a representative of Japan at the 1956 Olympics, Seki's poem suggests a direct link between her participation in the Olympic Games and her later pursuits abroad. While many women athletes have perhaps been less articulate about how their experiences at the Olympics affected their futures, Seki's experiences and sentiments are far from unique. During the middle part of the twentieth century, sport became a significant avenue through which Japanese women could explore and broaden their understandings of the world beyond Japan's borders.

Japanese women and winter sports

To this point, I have discussed primarily sports that appear at the Summer Olympic Games, the reason being that Japanese women had very little involvement in winter sport until after 1960. In fact, only one Japanese woman participated in the Winter Olympic Games from the time of their inception in 1924 until 1960.[82] After Japan hosted the Winter Games in Sapporo in 1972, winter sport for women did gain popularity, but relative to its summer counterpart, winter sport has always been somewhat marginalized. The reasons for this are quite straightforward – fewer nations have geographies that are amenable to sports like skiing and skating, thus events like the Winter Olympics have primarily been Euro-American competitions rather than truly global events. Moreover, winter sport tends to require more costly equipment and spaces that have long been unattainable to all but the wealthiest of athletes. In the case of Japan, this is highlighted by the fact that, in spite of having a climate suitable to winter sport, it did not begin to gain popularity

until the post-war economic boom. In the 1960s, more wintertime leisure areas began to open, and more people could afford both the time and money to enjoy them. While the number of Japanese women competing in winter sport remained extremely low until after the 1970s, we will briefly look at the history of the Winter Olympics because of its increased popularity and significance to Japanese sportswomen in the latter part of the twentieth century.

In the early 1900s, the IOC was divided when it came to the question of winter sport. The 1908 Olympic Games in London had included ice skating, and the 1920 Games in Antwerp had ice hockey on the programme, but there was debate over whether there should be a separate event for just winter sport. IOC members from several Scandinavian nations were arguing for a separate event as early as 1911, while the Americans repeatedly opposed the idea, claiming that there were too few nations with the right climatic conditions to justify making a separate Olympics for winter sport.[83] However, the British and French members of the IOC were strongly in favour of a Winter Games, and their voices ultimately won out. The first Winter Olympics were held in Charmonix, France, in January and February of 1924. To few people's surprise, athletes from Norway and Finland came away with nearly all the medals.[84]

While Japanese athletes did not participate in the first Winter Olympics, as emerging players on the international sporting circuit (after the increasingly successful delegations sent to Summer Games in Stockholm (1912), Antwerp (1920) and Paris (1924)), they did begin to take part from the second Winter Games, held in St Moritz in 1928. Six male skiers were sent to these games in Switzerland, though none returned with a distinction better than twenty-fourth place.[85] In 1932, the delegation grew slightly to include seventeen men at the Lake Placid Winter Games, and in addition to skiers there were speed skaters and figure skaters representing Japan. While their performances were slightly better than they had been four years prior, there would still be no medals for Japan.

In 1936, Japan sent its first female delegate to the Winter Olympics in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany, along with thirty-three male delegates. Thirteen-year-old Inada Etsuko had come in first place in the Junior and National Japanese Figure Skating Championships the two years prior, and as such she was selected to represent Japan in Germany. Women's figure skating had been a part of the Olympic Games since before the Winter Games were separated from those in the summer, with the first women taking part in 1908 in London.[86] In Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Inada Etsuko was in a competition that placed her against arguably the most famous female athlete of the time, Norwegian Sonja Henie, who would win her third gold medal in these games in 1936.[87] At just 127 centimetres (4 feet 2 inches), Inada appeared much smaller and younger than her competition, but she came in a respectable tenth out of twenty-three skaters in the free-skating performance.[88] She skated in a costume that had been given to her by the Japanese Women's Association in Berlin,

which was white with a red carnation pinned to it to represent the Japanese *hi no maru* flag.[89]

As with the Summer Olympics, the Winter Olympics were suspended during the Second World War, and like in the summer of the same year, Japan was not invited to participate in the 1948 Winter Olympics in St Moritz. The Japanese delegation remained very small in the immediate post-war years, with thirteen men representing the country at the 1952 Oslo Games and ten men at Cortina d'Ampezzo in 1956. This can clearly be attributed to the conditions mentioned above, namely a lack of facilities and money to support athletes in costly winter sports. The 1956 Winter Games were the first to be shown on Japanese television, and slalom skier Igaya Chiharu won the silver medal in his event. This would be the first medal won by a Japanese citizen in the Winter Olympics, and it would be the only one for another sixteen years.[90]

Perhaps in part because of the excitement over Igaya's medal, though also certainly fuelled by the nation's ever improving economic conditions, by the 1960s there was a clear jump in the number of winter athletes. Japan sent a delegation of forty-one athletes, more than four times the size of its previous delegation, to the Winter Games in 1960 in Squaw Valley, California. This delegation included five women – three speed skaters and two figure skaters. Though no medals were brought back to Japan, and in fact a Japanese woman would not bring home a medal from the Winter Games until the 1990s, it was clear that at this time there was a rising interest in winter sport by Japanese women. Much like the Olympic fever felt in Japan in 1936, it certainly helped that in the early 1960s the nation was again preparing itself to host an Olympic Games in the near future. Moreover, televisions were beginning to bring previously little-known sports into more and more people's living rooms.

Rome 1960: Anticipating the Tokyo Olympics (again)

In 1959, the IOC chose Tokyo as the host city for the 1964 Olympics. Tokyo had beat out Detroit, Brussels and Vienna by a large margin. The next year, at the 1960 Rome Olympics, Japan appeared to have made a full-fledged comeback after the war, as their delegation and performances were nearly back up to the pre-war level they had been at in Berlin.[91] Several similarities can be seen between the Berlin and Rome Olympics, due in no small part to the fact that they immediately preceded a scheduled Tokyo Olympics. As had been the case over two decades earlier, this meant that during the Rome Games, there was great attention paid and anticipation by Japanese fans.

Newspaper coverage of the event was extensive, and with Japan's growing economic prosperity, more and more families were becoming able to own television sets to watch the Games as well. In 1960, more than nine million

Japanese households contained television sets, while only six million had washing machines and two million had refrigerators. According to Simon Partner, who has chronicled the history of Japan's electrical goods industry, 'Japanese television buyers [in the 1950s and 1960s] seem to have been motivated … out of love for popular pastimes, particularly sports. Almost universally, Japanese television owners mentioned sports as the key reason for their purchase.'[92] Like the live radio broadcasting that had just been developed at the time of the Berlin Olympics, the television technology served as an extremely effective conduit for getting the action of sport and the Olympic Games right into Japanese people's homes.

One of the most memorable events of the Rome Olympics was the performance by the Japanese men's gymnastics team, who came away with the gold medal overall for the team as well as three gold, two silver and three bronze medals for individual events. This would begin a gold-winning streak for the Japanese men's team that would continue for five consecutive Olympics until 1976.[93] As for female athletes from the Japanese delegation, the performances were generally not as memorable as those of the men; yet they showed a significant improvement over their previous appearance in Helsinki. The women's gymnastics team moved up from sixth to fourth place overall and several female gymnasts placed fifth or sixth in individual events.

The only medal awarded to a Japanese woman in Rome went to swimmer Tanaka Satoko, who won a bronze in the 100-metre backstroke. The previous year, Tanaka had broken the world record for women in the 200-metre backstroke with a time of 2 minutes, 37.1 seconds.[94] Since Tanaka was the first female medal winner from Japan since Maehata's momentous victory in 1936, the connection between the two swimmers was immediately drawn out in the media. The headline from the *Asahi Shimbun* on the evening of 9 September 1960 read, 'Teary-eyed Satoko – "I thought I had lost …" – but the Japanese flag flies again, for the first time in twenty-four years.'[95]

The article frequently uses diminutive language to describe Tanaka's victory, suggesting that women's sport was still viewed as something quite different from men's sport at this time. For example, all-male athletes were referred to in the media by their last names followed by the word for 'athlete' or 'representative' (e.g. Yamanaka *senshu*, Takemoto *senshu*), while Tanaka is referred to by her first name, Satoko, written in katakana. Referencing individuals by their first name in Japan is a convention usually reserved to family and extremely close friends. Moreover, the *Asahi Shimbun* article illustrates the scene of Tanaka receiving her bronze medal as such, 'Walking over to the winner's podium, Satoko looked so small compared to the officials and the champion, American Lynn Burke. She really looked cute.'[96] This diminutive referencing of female athletes was not limited to this case, as many female stars over the years have and continue to be given 'cute' names in the media.[97] This phenomenon will be looked at in more detail later, but it is important to note here that in spite of

the rapid gains made by Japanese women athletes over the mid-to-latter part of the twentieth century, these advances were often couched in very different terms from those of their male counterparts.[98]

Conclusion

While only one Japanese woman ultimately came back from the Rome Olympics with a medal, there was an undeniable growing interest in women's sport by 1960 in Japan. Sport in general was becoming increasingly globalized (e.g. the Rome Olympics saw the first medal awarded to an African citizen), and Japan had become a major player in the international arena of sport. With rising technology and increased economic stability in Japan, more and more citizens were able to bring live-action sport into their living rooms through television sets, which led to an inevitable rise in sport's relevance to people's daily lives. The growing diversity of sports in which women could participate was covered in the media, and Japanese women took notice, as the 1964 Olympics in Tokyo would see Japanese women competing in such recently popularized sports as fencing, volleyball, equestrian events and canoeing.

While women still faced barriers like patronizing media coverage and less financial resources than their male counterparts, a sea change had occurred in the treatment of women athletes from the time of Hitomi Kinue in the 1920s. While girls and women in Hitomi's generation were encouraged to strengthen their bodies in order to become healthy mothers, they were discouraged from participating in competitive sport, as they were considered unfeminine, unsightly and dangerous. The cancellation of the women's 800-metre race in 1928 after Hitomi and her competitors fell to the ground from exhaustion is indicative of this mindset, that women should not be encouraged to exert themselves physically. In 1960, however, the women's 800-metre race was reinstated into the Olympics. There was a general understanding by this point that competitive sport would not lead to infertility, that marriage did not have to mean the end of a competitive career and that women could be valuable assets to a nation's athletic delegations if only given the chance to compete. With this shifted mindset in place, Japan was on the brink of another major crossroads in women's competitive sport, which will be explored in depth in Chapter 6.

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6

Progress and Potential

Sportswomen in the 1960s and 1970s

On 10 October 1964, Sakai Yoshinori, a university student who had been born in Hiroshima just an hour and a half after the dropping of the atomic bomb, was the final torchbearer and lighter of the Olympic flame at the Tokyo Games' opening ceremony. This symbolic gesture of revival and rebirth would set the stage for a momentous event that would have a resounding impact on Japanese society in general and on women's sport in Japan in particular. This chapter will begin with an exploration of some of the impacts of the Tokyo Olympic Games and will continue looking at the development of Japanese women's sport during the period of high economic growth in post-war Japan. The Olympic Games will play a prominent role in this narrative, as the Games became the main stage for the advancement of women's sport and the venue at which many competitive female athletes aspired to compete. Other events such as the Asian Games and World Championships continued to play important roles, but these regional or single-sport events increasingly came to be seen as events *en route* to or in between the *real* competition at the Olympic Games. Japanese women also took part in more and more non-Olympic sports such as boxing, mountaineering and ultra-marathon running as the twentieth century progressed, though these events tended to get less recognition in the media and thus would have less of an impact on society at large.

The year 1964 saw the first Olympic Games held outside of the Western world. Lauded for having hosted a grand and smoothly executed event, Tokyo is often credited for having opened the door for sporting mega-events to be held in non-Western nations. The Tokyo Olympics took place on the heels of major changes in the world of women's sport, including a growing number of events becoming available to women, better facilities and coaches, and a more accurate understanding of the impact of sport on the female physique. Of course, many more changes were soon to come in a rapid and dramatic fashion in the latter part of the twentieth century. In 1964, women were competing in about a third of the number of sports as men at the Olympics, but over the next several decades this imbalance would be significantly levelled out.[1] This chapter will explore the changes that occurred in the world of competitive sport in the 1960s and 1970s in an effort to highlight a trend towards greater gender equality that has continued into the contemporary era.

The 1964 Tokyo Olympics

Ichikawa Kon's famous documentary *Tokyo Olympiad* begins with a dusty scene showing the demolition of old buildings in Tokyo – wrecking balls slamming into concrete pillars and huge brick walls being reduced to piles of rubble. It then cuts to a shot of the empty grounds of Komazawa Olympic Stadium, the pristine lines of its cutting-edge architecture standing in stark contrast to the gritty destruction scene that it follows. As the title screen appears, the film cuts back to a bustling scene of downtown Tokyo, with crowds of people weaving through streetcars, busses and cars. Ichikawa's film is filled with such juxtapositions – loud cheers from the fans will cut right to a silent, slow-motion shot of a runner or a bustling dining room scene will cut straight to the silence before the starting gun of a swimming event. Bringing attention to these contrasts has the effect of presenting an amazingly animate event – one with highs and lows, one filled with emotion and one the likes of which had never before been witnessed in Japan.

Considered to be one of the two masterpieces of commemorative Olympic films (Leni Riefenstahl's *Olympia* being the other), *Tokyo Olympiad* also brings great clarity to the transformatory power of the Olympic Games on their host nations.[2] In the case of Tokyo, the Games are considered a defining event in the post-war transition from developing to developed nation. This transition was not only in the physical sense showed so vividly in Ichikawa's opening scenes but it was also in an ideological sense, as Japan sought to present a new image of itself to the world following the war and the US occupation. In her essay, 'The Past in the Present', historian Carol Gluck repeatedly references the Tokyo Olympics as being a pivotal moment in post-war Japanese historical memory. She writes that the event enabled Japan to show the rest of the world how much progress had been made since the war.[3] In his discussion of mega-events and modernity, sociologist Maurice Roche points to the Tokyo Olympics as having had a major impact on Japan's infrastructure as well as on its overall 'sport heritage', meaning that the relationship between sport and society was forever changed following Tokyo's hosting of the Olympic Games.[4]

Tokyo had been selected to host the 1964 Olympics at a 1959 IOC session in Munich, beating out Detroit, Brussels and Vienna by a large margin.[5] Several ruling bodies made key contributions in hosting the event, most notably the Ministry of Education (*Mombusho*), the Japanese Amateur Sports Association (*Nihon taiiku kyōkai*) and the Tokyo Metropolitan Government (*Tōkyō tosei*). Public works projects were managed by the Bureau of Olympic Preparations (*Orinpikku soshiki iinkai*), which was formed in 1959, and the police and fire departments created new branches to deal with matters of law, order and emergencies in Tokyo before and during the Olympic Games.[6]

The Tokyo Olympics' impact on post-war Japan could be elaborated on at great length, and work has been done by several scholars on the political,

economic and social effects of the Games. In English, scholarship focusing solely on the Tokyo Olympics is fairly scant, but works written in Japanese are plentiful.[7] As with most Olympic Games, several athletic heroes emerged from Tokyo 1964, including Abebe Bikila, the Ethiopian marathon runner who had won the same event running barefoot in Rome in 1960 and who recaptured the gold in Tokyo only five weeks after undergoing stomach surgery; Dawn Fraser, the 22-year-old Australian sprint swimmer who set her third consecutive Olympic record in the 100-metre freestyle race; and American discus thrower Al Oerter, who also won his third Olympic gold medal in spite of a slipped disk and a seriously injured rib during the event in Tokyo.[8]

A group of athletic standouts from the Tokyo Olympics who received significant publicity within Japan but less in the West was the Japanese women's volleyball team. These women were dubbed the 'witches of the Orient' (*tōyō no majo*) after their dramatic success at international volleyball tournaments and ultimately at the Tokyo Games. After discussing the women's volleyball team, we will look briefly at one athlete who did *not* come away from Tokyo with a medal, as her story sheds light on some of the mounting pressures that sportswomen began to face in Japan as they came to be seen as more as 'athletes' and less as 'female athletes'.

Tōyō no majo

The American edition of *Time* magazine ran the following story on 30 October 1964, one week after the Japanese women's volleyball victory in Tokyo:

> [For the first time, volleyball was on the] Olympic program last week, and it's a good thing Japan did not send her women off to war. Led by Captain Masae Kasai, 31, who broke her engagement to train for the Olympics, punctuating every shot with banzai choruses of 'Hai! Hai!' the Japanese women's team beat Russia so badly in the finals that the Muscovite ladies shut themselves in the locker room for a good cry.
>
> The Japanese girls learned their volleyball under Coach Hirobumi Daimatsu of the national-champion Nichibō Spinning Co. team. He cheerfully suggests that his training methods are 'savage'. Billeted in dormitories at the Nichibō plant, the girls do clerical work from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., practise daily from 4:30 right through until midnight with only one 15-min. break. A typical practice exercise: the 'receive', a tumbling acrobatic maneuver in which the girls hurl themselves to the floor to retrieve the ball – until they are so exhausted that they cannot get up any more. At that point, Coach Daimatsu usually snarls: 'Why don't you quit?'[9]

It is clear from this article that the connection between the Second World War and the Tokyo Olympics was at the forefront of people's minds as they watched this match. This connection was glaring to the Japanese public as well, as numerous Japanese articles and books focus on the link between the match and the war.

This link is apparent in two main ways: one is in the theme of 'beating the Soviets' (the Soviet Union was an especially detested nation in post-war Japan due to its detention of Japanese prisoners of war in Siberia) and the other is in the team's merciless Coach Daimatsu Hirobumi. Coach Daimatsu had been involved in intense fighting in South-East Asia during the Second World War as a member of the Japanese army, and he often applied his military training and mental toughness to his volleyball players. For example, he would tell the women, 'Sports today are either kill or be killed … second place means nothing. Unless you are number one, your efforts are meaningless.'[10] Even the very popularity of the sport of volleyball was directly related to the Second World War, as it had become very popular in Japan in the immediate post-war years due to the fact that it was inexpensive and could be enjoyed with just a ball and a small amount of space.[11]

Because of all these levels of symbolism enveloping the Japan versus Soviet Union match-up in Tokyo, it is not surprising that the Japanese victory made a strong and lasting impression on post-war Japanese society. Igarashi has discussed ways that the match helped in the mending of the collective psyche of a defeated country, and his analysis is useful in understanding the Tokyo Olympics in the context of historical memory. The issue of gender does not play a role in his discussion, however. While it is important to keep in mind the national significance of the Japanese women's victory in Tokyo, the following section will delve more deeply into the dynamics of gender that were at play as the 'witches of the Orient' rose to fame.

Daimatsu Kantoku: coach/player relationships

The Olympic team was comprised primarily of players from the Dai Nihon Bōseki (shortened to Nichibō) textile factory's company team, of which Daimatsu was the coach.[12] Just as male supervisors supervised female production line workers in the textile factory, Daimatsu had the ultimate authority over the women's volleyball team. Sport sociologist Arata Masafumi has written an article titled 'The Witches of the Orient: Their "Female-ness" and Memories of the Factory' in which he discusses the Olympic volleyball team in the specific context of female factory workers turned Olympic heroes.[13] Relying heavily on newspaper and journal articles along with biographical works by Coach Daimatsu and the female players, Arata's research sheds light on specific ways that gender played into this significant moment in post-war Japanese history.

For example, Arata discusses Coach Daimatsu's 1963 book, *Ore ni tsuite koi! – watashi no shōbu konjō* (Follow me! – my fighting spirit in victory or defeat). In it, Daimatsu writes,

> There is going to be a time in the future when my players are married with one or two kids, and then they will look back nostalgically on this youthful time.

> Those who can look back on this time and have a lot of memories will be filled with happiness. Those who know not of mental strain and of the hardships of discipline, and those who sing songs of praise for the playful days of youth, are ill-trained for homemaking and wind up spending their days idling about. They also have no profound memories to look back upon and be flooded with happiness.[14]

Daimatsu suggests that the harsh training through which he put his athletes was not merely to train them for an Olympic victory but indeed to make them better and happier people. Perhaps he draws upon his own experience of having endured hardship in the military, which ultimately made him (in his eyes at least) a better person than if he had not been through such an experience. Interestingly, though, Daimatsu specifically notes that his female athletes would inevitably go on to be wives and mothers – they would just be happier, more focused wives and mothers than if they had not been athletes who trained hard in their youth.

Daimatsu was known for his brutal training regimens, and he made no apologies for pushing his players to their limits. The media picked up on Daimatsu's merciless treatment of his team members and used it as a means of building more hype about the team before, during and after the round-robin Olympic tournament (which lasted for thirteen days, from 11 to 23 October 1964). A photo spread in the *Asahi Shimbun* on 12 October (Day 2 of the tournament) shows a slightly sneering Coach Daimatsu and his team huddled at the sideline of the court, with the caption reading 'The Devil's Smile'.[15] An interview with Coach Daimatsu that appeared in the *Bungeishunjū* journal a few weeks after the team's Olympic gold medal was titled 'Guts/Fighting Spirit/ Leadership Qualities'.[16] A 1984 article in the weekly magazine, *Asahi Journal*, was titled 'Postwar Women's History #56: The Witches of the Orient – Those Who Earnestly Withstood the Hard Training'.[17]

All of these articles focus heavily on the coach's strictness with his players but generally paint him in a positive light. For example, when asked if his players were expected to sacrifice having a family for the sake of volleyball, Daimatsu replies, 'I am not asking the players to sacrifice anything for me personally, nor am I asking them to sacrifice anything for society. These players want to be number one in Japan, and number one in the world. No matter how much they have to endure, in the end they will experience great satisfaction from having accomplished their goals'.[18] This tone is generally adopted throughout all the articles on Daimatsu – that his harsh training was ultimately for the good of the women on the team.

A question that arises from Daimatsu's relentless treatment of his players is whether the coach/player relationship was because of or in spite of the gender relations in Japanese society at large at the time. Certainly it seems that the male coach bossing around the female players was an obvious extension of the male supervisors ordering around the female line workers at the textile factory (from which all but two of the Olympic team members came).[19] Economic

historian Janet Hunter has written about the gendered division of labour in the textile industry in twentieth-century Japan. She looks specifically at the 'increasing divergence in men's and women's experience[s] of textile work' by focusing on the interwar period (1920–40) and the gendered systems that emerged thereafter.[20] She concludes that women began to populate textile factories in the late-nineteenth to early-twentieth century based on an economic demand for more low-cost workers – a move that was fostered by previously established patterns of women in textile work from the Tokugawa period. There was a deeply ingrained perception that women were more docile and easier to manage than men and that they were far less likely to cause labour unrest or riots.[21] Moreover, women were believed to have better, more nimble fingers for certain textile factory jobs than men because of their smaller size and the fact that they were often trained as young girls to carry out delicate tasks at home, such as sewing.[22] So, for various profit-driven reasons, the gendered division of labour in twentieth-century Japan came to be young, unmarried women workers supervised by male management.

In the case of Daimatsu's volleyball team, the gender dynamics from the factory floor played directly into the dynamics on the volleyball court.[23] The phenomenon of male coaches rearing female athletes is not an uncommon one and indeed remains the norm in Japan as in the rest of the world. In a recent article about women's football in Japan, anthropologist Elise Edwards notes that a belief by coaches in the reality of biological differences between men and women has translated into immediate assumptions about female inferiority in sports and a consequent unequal treatment of female athletes in terms of training opportunities.[24] Edwards writes that 'stories of strong male coaches managing and guiding talented but unfocused and overly emotional female players support and justify gendered hierarchies in worlds far away from the fields and courts of sport', highlighting the link between coach/player relationships and Japanese society at large.[25] While I will explore some of the theoretical issues of the male coach/female athlete dynamic in more depth in Chapter 8 of this book, I would briefly like to consider some of the ways that this dynamic has manifested itself and become ingrained in contemporary Japanese society.

A popular medium for spreading an image of male superiority or dominance in the realm of sport in Japan is that of books written by or about male coaches who train female Olympic stars. For example, in 1996 sports writer Okuda Masuya published a book called *Coach – The Men Who Nurtured the Female Olympic Marathon Runners*,[26] and in 2004 marathon coach Koide Yoshio published a book titled *Don't Give Up*.[27] Coach Daimatsu himself also became a somewhat prolific writer after his team began its winning streak in international competitions in the late 1950s. Between 1963 and 1971, Daimatsu wrote nine books with such titles as *You Can Succeed!* (1964), *My Beliefs* (1966) and *Who Are You Living For?* (1971).[28] In all the aforementioned books, the male authors discuss everything from their views on professional versus amateur

sport (Koide) to their opinions on the public fascination with male coaches (Okuda).[29] In recent years as more and more women in Japan have come to be world-class athletes, the number of books by women, about women's sport has increased, but to my knowledge there exists only one book specifically by and about female coaches, as the coaching world is still heavily dominated by men.[30]

Coach Daimatsu's 'witches of the Orient' were arguably the most famous Japanese athletes to emerge from the Tokyo Olympics,[31] and the team continued its international dominance until the late 1970s.[32] Daimatsu was also one of the most famous coaches in the country, as evidenced by both his mass publicity as well as his election to the upper house of the Japanese parliament, where he served from 1968 to 1974.[33] Daimatsu served in the parliament as part of the first wave of individuals who parlayed their fame in sport into successful political careers. As the twentieth century progressed, more and more women would transition from sport to politics, and the trend continues to this day. One pioneering female athlete in the political arena was gymnast Ono Kiyoko, who also rose to fame at the 1964 Tokyo Olympics.

Ono Kiyoko was coached by her husband Takashi, who competed at the same time he coached his wife. Ono Takashi began his Olympic career in 1952, where he earned a bronze medal in the men's vault event in Helsinki and went on to compete at three more Summer Games (Melbourne, Rome and Tokyo), earning a total of five gold, four silver and four bronze medals.[34] Kiyoko competed in Rome (where the team came in fourth place) and in Tokyo, where the Japanese women won the bronze.

Not only were the couple medal-winning spouses but they also were the parents of young children. In 1964, the couple had a three-year-old girl and a one-year-old boy, and they would go on to have three more children in the coming years. Dubbed an 'athlete mommy' (*mama san senshu*), Kiyoko and her husband received significant media attention for both their athletic achievements and for their ability to balance a family with their athletic careers. The timing of Ono Kiyoko's rise to fame corresponded with the rise of television in people's homes, which meant that the positive media coverage on this 'athlete mommy' would impact a larger number of young women than ever possible before. Ono Kiyoko can be credited with having opened the door for both married women and mothers in Japan who wanted to continue taking part in competitive sport.[35] Although sport had been steadily gaining acceptance for young women in Japan from the time of Maehata Hideko in the 1930s, there remained a strong notion that it existed in the realm of school girls and unmarried women.

Ono Kiyoko's ability to simultaneously be a wife, raise two children and earn an Olympic medal showed the Japanese public that an athletic career beyond one's teenage years was acceptable and even praiseworthy. Like it had done for volleyball Coach Daimatsu, the significant positive media attention

that Ono Kiyoko received through her athletic career eventually translated into voter popularity at the polls. Ono served as a member of the upper house of parliament for over twenty years, from 1986 to 2007.

From the time women began competing in competitive sport in Japan, their male coaches have received a significant share of the media limelight, but over the years there has been a shift towards increased recognition for the athletes themselves. Whether this has been because of an erosion of latent sexism or because certain women have simply proven to have the charisma necessary to hold the media spotlight, the trend towards less focus on male coaches has continued to the present day. When it came to athletes with charisma in the 1960s, one woman stood out to Japanese fans. In spite of the fact that 80-metre hurdler Yoda Ikuko did not come away from the Tokyo Olympics with a medal, her quirky manner and impressive record of competition made her a hometown favourite among Japanese fans.

Yoda Ikuko: The heavy weight of no medal

Yoda Ikuko hailed from Nagano prefecture, where she began running track as a high school student. Following high school graduation, she began working at the Ricker Sewing Machine factory, where she became a member of their company track team. Because of her success with both her high school and her company teams, Yoda began to train with a famous coach, Yoshioka Takayoshi, who had competed in the 100-metre sprint in 1932 at the Los Angeles Olympics.[36] With Yoshioka's guidance, Yoda competed on the international circuit and qualified for the Olympic Games in Tokyo at the age of twenty-seven.

Yoda was the first Japanese women to compete on the track in the Olympic Games since Hitomi Kinue's 800-metre race in 1928. As the hometown favourite, all eyes were on her before the start of the 80-metre hurdles final. This included director Ichikawa Kon's film crew, who focused in on the sprinter's unique pre-race rituals. Yoda would bring a broom to every race, sweeping her lane meticulously from the starting block up until the first hurdle. She put on a white headband and did several headstands. Then, she put white mentholated cream on both temples (called Salomethyl, similar to Tiger Balm or Icy Hot) and rubbed them vigorously.[37]

Unfortunately, Yoda's race wound up very similar to that of her coach in 1932 – she led the race until the third hurdle, when her competitors pulled ahead and left Yoda to finish in fifth place.[38] Her coach asserted in a *Bungeishunjū* article one month after the Olympics that Yoda was in peak physical condition on the day of her race and that the only reason he could think of for her not winning a medal was a lack of sleep.

In spite of the paper-thin difference separating Yoda's finishing time from those of the three medal winners, she had an incredibly difficult time handling

the fact that she had trained so hard and did not come away with a medal. She was frequently described as a perfectionist (*kanzenshugisha, kanpekishugisha*) who could not bear when things did not go exactly as she planned.[39] At a press conference immediately following the conclusion of the Tokyo Olympics, Yoda caused quite a stir when she reported that 'I do not want to go through the pain of racing a second time. I will be retiring now. I do not even want to look at a track again'.[40] Shortly thereafter, she married a professor at the Tokyo University of Education (now Tsukuba University) and fully devoted herself to being a good housewife and later a caring mother to her children. According to her husband, she was as much a perfectionist when it came to running the household as she had been during her running career.[41]

Tragically, Yoda Ikuko never seemed to recover mentally from the devastation she felt after falling to her competitors at the Olympic Games. After being hospitalized several times in 1983 for knee injuries and heart problems, she showed signs of extreme depression, perhaps because her health problems inhibited her from having complete control over her life. On 14 October 1983, at the age of forty-five, Yoda took her own life by hanging herself in her home.[42]

Tabloids picked up on the news of Yoda's suicide and immediately made comparisons to another athlete who had taken his life after 'failing' at the Tokyo Olympics – marathon runner Tsuburaya Kōkichi. Tsuburaya had positioned himself well to come in second place in the marathon, and as he entered the Olympic stadium for the final lap of the marathon in 1964, he had brought the throngs of Japanese fans to their feet as they cheered him on. However, on the final curve of the track, British runner Basil Heatley passed Tsuburaya and wound up beating the Japanese runner by only three seconds. While he still came away from the Olympics with a bronze medal, Tsuburaya was unable to get past the disappointment and shame of being passed in the last stretch of the race in front of so many adoring Japanese fans. He had discussed his intentions of trying for the gold medal at the next Olympics in Mexico City, but before those Games came around, on 9 January 1968 he committed suicide by cutting the carotid artery on the left side of his neck.[43]

It is hardly surprising that the media highlighted the connection between Yoda and Tsuburaya's suicides, as both were Japanese runners who apparently felt they had let down their country at the Tokyo Olympics. Much could, and has been, said about trends of suicide in Japanese society and the parallels brought to light by the tragic endings of Yoda and Tsuburaya. For the sake of the present study, however, I simply want to point out how these two athletes' suicides underscore the importance and lasting impact of sport and the Olympic Games on Japanese society. While their two examples are extreme, they clearly demonstrate that the Olympics are more than just 'games', as they can (and often do) have life-changing impacts on both those who take part in them and those who watch them. The Tokyo Olympics had a particularly deep impact on Japan, from the micro- (i.e. individual's lives) to the macro-level (i.e. Japan's

economy, infrastructure and geopolitical significance). As we will see in the coming sections, it also had a considerable impact on women's sport in Japan. The changes that would occur in women's sports in subsequent decades of the twentieth century were due in large part to the global current towards increased inclusion of women in sport, along with improved and expanded media outlets through which young women could learn about sport. That being said, 1964 was a pivotal moment in which the rapidly expanding possibilities for female athletes were brought to light in a more dramatic fashion than ever before.

The growth of women's sport after 1964

While the late 1960s and early 1970s saw political scandal that would rock the very foundation of the sporting world and the Olympic Games, they were fairly unspectacular in terms of Japanese women's participation. As is the case for almost all Olympic host nations, the number of national (Japanese) athletes that participated in the Tokyo Games was significantly greater than the number who took part in the Games immediately preceding and following it.[44] While there were few major breakthroughs when it came to progress being made in Japanese women's participation in sport, there was a slow and steady advance being made by these women in the international arena. Moreover, the IOC continued to open more and more sports for women, which would lead to higher numbers of female participants in the coming decades.[45]

The 1968 Mexico City Olympics, to which Japan sent 183 athletes (thirty of whom were women), were plagued by a number of problems, most notably racial tensions.[46] Also, many athletes competing in endurance sports complained that the relatively high altitude of Mexico City (7,400 feet above sea level) would make it difficult or even dangerous to compete.[47] Debates over amateurism and commercialization were brought to light in 1968, as the Olympics were becoming bigger revenue-building events and companies offering large sums of money for product endorsements were increasingly approaching Olympic athletes. The Mexico City Olympics took place in the middle of the Cold War, and issues surrounding communism loomed large as well. IOC members from non-communist nations were insisting that countries like the Soviet Union and East Germany be barred from participating in the Games.[48]

Debates surrounding communism in the late 1960s were linked to those surrounding gender. In the majority of countries around the world, there was still a fear of masculinization linked with women's sport, but in Eastern bloc nations the women were training in the same way with the same intensity as their male counterparts. This raised questions about performance-enhancing drugs and to sex-verification testing, as the exceptional performances by some of the women from these countries led officials to doubt their physiological makeup as women.

The year 1968 saw the first official sex-verification tests at the Olympic Games, which involved a degrading test in which women had to display their genitalia to doctors in order to obtain eligibility for the Olympics.[49] This was soon replaced by the buccal smear for sex chromatin, in which a sample of cells taken from inside the lining of the athlete's cheek was tested for chromosomal abnormalities. While the methods varied over the years, many female athletes felt that this kind of testing was extremely invasive and unfair, as certain chromosomal abnormalities can cause a blurring of the line between 'female' and 'male' (e.g. XX gonadal dysgenesis, in which women have very low levels of oestrogen and non-functioning ovaries but appear physiologically female).

As Haley Olsen-Acre asserts in her 2007 *Michigan Journal of Gender & Law* article, 'while the International Olympic Committee defends its [sex-testing policies] under a rhetoric of fair play and equality, the current anti-doping rules police not only drug use, but also sex and gender, through centering their prohibitions around hormones and misinformed conceptions of the "natural", and therefore ostensibly fair, body'.[50] That is to say, the various tests for both drugs and gender that the IOC have employed since 1968 are limited in their definitions of what a natural and therefore 'fair' competitive body ought to be.[51] Even though ongoing debates throughout the 1980s and 1990s ultimately led to the IOC's abolition of mandatory sex testing in the year 2000, there remain loopholes through which the committee *can* still test individual athletes who they believe do not fit into a sex/gender ideal.[52]

While these various debates were converging at the 1968 Mexico City Olympics, they ultimately had little impact on the Japanese athletes who went over to represent their nation. The only sports in which the thirty female delegates competed were swimming, volleyball and gymnastics. The 'witches of the Orient' failed to beat the Soviet team this time around but still wound up taking home the silver medal.[53] The female gymnasts came in fourth place overall, and a few swimmers were able to place fifth or sixth in their final heats. Relative to the impressive and exciting performances by Japanese sportswomen at the previous Olympics in Tokyo, Mexico City provided little fodder for the Japanese media, though the event itself did garner front-page headlines nearly every day.[54]

While there may not have been many national newsworthy stories generated by the Japanese women in Mexico City, there were of course many significant experiences that took place for the individuals who experienced the Games. One female Japanese delegate, gymnast Hanyū Kazunaga, has recounted her experiences with coming into contact with athletes from other nations while taking part in the Olympics in Mexico City.

> Everything was new to me – I had never met people from other countries, and I remember something that happened to me at the athletes' gathering spot just before the opening ceremonies. I had asked a friend if she would take a photo of me, and just as she was about to, a big, black man suddenly appeared to my side

> and smiled. He was joking around and probably just wanted to be in the photo with me. But I was so startled that I suddenly turned and ran away from him. Thinking back on it, I realize that this was probably a really rude thing to do.[55]

This encounter highlights the fact that many Japanese citizens in the 1960s had not only never left Japan but often times had never come into contact with foreigners. This situation was quickly changing, however, as more and more Japanese citizens had the means to travel abroad and as international tourism to Japan continued to improve. As the 1960s drew to a close in Japan, the pending Winter Olympics in Sapporo in 1972 gave a further boost to the nation's travel and leisure industries.

As previously mentioned, Japanese women had long excelled more in summer sport than in winter sport for a variety of reasons. However, the combination of an accelerated economy, the increased exposure of new and varied sports through home televisions and the sport 'boom' that occurred following the 1964 Games meant an overall increase in the number of participants as well as a diversification of the sports being practised in Japan. Moreover, when it was announced in April of 1966 that Sapporo would be hosting the 1972 Winter Games, there was again an impetus for more Japanese citizens to take notice of winter sport. The Tokyo Games were still fresh on their minds, and the opportunity to host another mega-event within their borders led to a big buzz surrounding the Sapporo Games.

Officials in Hokkaido hoped that the 1972 Games would provide an economic boost and increased tourism in the same way that the 1964 Games had done in Tokyo. Takeda Tsuneyoshi, then president of the Japanese Olympic Committee, announced that the Games would take place in February to coincide with Sapporo's annual snow festival. US$25 million worth of new facilities were constructed for the event, and another US$500 million was spent constructing new roads, a new state house and a subway system.[56] The Games went smoothly and without major incident – while no Japanese sportswoman came away with a medal, the Japanese men swept the 70-metre hill ski jump event, winning the gold, silver and bronze medals in the event – this was the first time in sixteen years that medals were to be won by Japanese men in the Winter Olympics.[57]

While the number of athletes participating in the Olympics from the host nation is always higher than delegations sent abroad, there was a particular jump in 1972 in the number of Japanese women competing at the Winter Olympics. For the four Winter Games in which Japanese women had participated, there were never more than nine women on the Japanese team.[58] However, in Sapporo this number jumped to twenty women, more than double the previous delegation sent to Grenoble in 1968.[59] This is especially notable when compared to their male teammates, as there was only about a twenty per cent increase in the number of men who participated in Sapporo (seventy men) when compared to the Grenoble delegation (fifty-three men).[60]

This marked increase in Japanese women's participation reflects the rapidly opening doors for women in the global sporting arena in the 1970s. In the United States in 1972, the landmark Title IX legislation was passed, which banned sex discrimination in any educational programme or activity receiving federal aid. While the legislation directly applied only to institutions within the United States, it undoubtedly had a global impact. This is due in part to the fact that important decision-makers, such as American members of the IOC, were being influenced by the changing attitudes that were taking place towards women in the years surrounding the passing of Title IX. While changes in women's sport were only beginning to be felt at this time, the coming decades would see vastly increased opportunities for female athletes because of changes that were set in motion in the early seventies.

Munich and Montréal

In much the same ways that the Tokyo and Sapporo Olympics showed the world how far Japan had come in its post-war rebuilding efforts, the 1972 Summer Olympics in Munich were meant to do the same for West Germany. The nation saw the event as an opportunity to show how its economy had rebounded and how stable the new government was after the war. The German president at the time, Gustav Heinemann, said that he welcomed the Olympics in Munich as 'a milestone on the road to a new way of life with the aim of realizing peaceful coexistence among peoples'.[61]

Unfortunately, this peaceful coexistence was far from realized at the Munich Games, with one of the most notorious acts of political terrorism occurring on the eleventh day of the Games.[62] While terrorism ultimately overshadowed much of what would happen before and after September fifth in Munich, there were many notable athletic achievements that took place, especially for the Japanese delegation. They returned to Japan with twenty-nine medals, which was the same number they had garnered on their home turf in Tokyo.[63] Japanese men continued their winning streak in the gymnastics competition, taking home their fourth gold medal in the overall team competition along with several more gold, silver and bronze medals for individual performances.[64] Several jūdō and freestyle wrestlers won gold and silver medals, and for the first time the men's volleyball team outshone the women's team. The men's team beat out East Germany and the Soviet Union to take the gold medal, while the women were again beaten by the Soviet Union and came away with the silver medal.

One heavily publicized gold medal win was that of nineteen-year-old swimmer Aoki Mayumi, who not only won the gold medal in the women's 100-metre butterfly event but also set a new world record while doing so. An article covered half the front page of *The Japan Times* two days after her victory, with the headline under the large photo of Aoki reading, 'Miss Aoki

Cracks World Record in 100-M. Butterfly'.[65] Aoki was the first female swimmer from Japan to win a medal since Maehata Hideko's memorable victory in Germany thirty-six years prior. Aoki beat out East German Roswitha Beier and Hungarian Andréa Gyarmati for the medal, and another Japanese swimmer, Asano Noriko, finished less than a second (albeit seven places) behind Aoki. A 2002 'Where Are They Now' article about Aoki in the monthly magazine, *Ushio*, recalls how emotional Aoki was when she won, stating, 'After her race finished, Aoki returned to the poolside and cried as she was embraced by her Japanese teammates. Then, as she saw the *hi no maru* flag being hoisted when she stood on the medal podium, Aoki's face glistened with tears. It was a moment that was felt throughout Japan.'[66]

A *Bungeishunjū* article from March 1984 gives a detailed biographical account of Aoki and her rise to the top and places her in the ranks of other female pioneers in the Japanese sporting world. The author writes that '[t]here have only been four female champions from Japan in all Olympic history. 200-metre breaststroke swimmer Maehata Hideko from the 1936 Berlin Olympics, the volleyball team from the 1964 Tokyo Olympics, and the third was Aoki Mayumi. Then came the volleyball team at the 1976 Games in Montréal'.[67] Indeed, at the time of the article's writing there had only been four gold medal performances by Japanese women, but this was to change shortly thereafter, as the number of women athletes and their subsequent successes would surge in the 1980s and 1990s.

The Montréal Summer Games in 1976, much like the Winter Games in Sapporo in 1972, saw a jump in the number of Japanese women competing. Just as the number of women had doubled in Sapporo, the number of women who took part in Montréal jumped from thirty-eight (in Munich) to sixty-one, while Japanese male athletes had only eight more athletes in Montréal than in Munich (from 144 to 152). Unlike at their Winter counterpart, however, the number of female participants from Japan would not see a precipitous drop at the following Games, as the number of women continued to increase throughout the 1980s and 1990s, until it actually overtook the number of male athletes at the Athens Games in 2004.[68] In Montréal this can be largely attributed to the addition of two team sports for women: handball and basketball. Teams were sent in both sports, and the Japanese women came in fifth place in both.[69]

Of course, when it came to women's team sports, the team that received the most attention in Montréal was the gold medal-winning volleyball team. As mentioned in the 1984 *Bungeishunjū* article above, this marked only the fourth time in history that Japanese women won gold, and the win was reminiscent to many of their victory in 1964. Just like in Tokyo, the 'witches of the Orient' beat out their long-standing rival, the Soviet Union, although in Montréal the Japanese team was so dominant that there was little question throughout the tournament that they would be the champions (whereas in Tokyo, the final match with the Soviet Union was extremely close). The Japanese team was so

strong, in fact, that only one time in the whole tournament did one of their opponents (South Korea) reach double digits in a single set.[70]

Twenty-four-year-old Okamoto Mariko (now Nakano Mariko) was the captain of the team in Montréal, and she had been a member of the silver-winning team in Munich as well. In an essay about her experiences in Montréal, she focuses on how devoted and driven the women on the team were to winning a gold medal in 1976. She writes, 'Even through the painful and difficult strength training, we continued because we were so driven by our goal of making it to the final round. When we won our first match against Hungary, we thought that the uniforms we wore must have somehow been auspicious, so we wore the same uniforms until the end of the tournament.'[71] She discusses the trials and tribulations that she personally faced in order to make it to the Olympic Games, including the seemingly common theme among female athletes of having grown up weak and sickly, with sport being her saviour by giving her strength and confidence she never thought she could have. In writing about the moment the Japanese flag was raised in Montréal, Nakano says that the experience awakened within her a sense of euphoria that she had never known possible until that day.[72]

As with many other Olympic medallists, the sense of accomplishment and exhilaration that came with winning the gold stayed with Nakano her entire life and had a significant impact on her future endeavours. She went around the country giving lectures and wrote two books about her experiences at the Olympic Games. She used her relative celebrity status to begin philanthropic organizations aimed at helping orphaned and handicapped children.[73] Moreover, when she was diagnosed with cancer in 1995, she claims to have drawn upon the fighting spirit and mental fortitude gained through her athletic training in order to get her through the ordeal. Remembering both the supportive cheers of fans yelling, 'Mariko, Fight! Mariko, Fight!' and the years of enduring gruelling practices led Nakano to have a bravery that she believes may not have otherwise been possible.[74]

Nakano's story is not unique – countless female Olympians from Hitomi Kinue's time onwards made careers out of publishing books, public speaking engagements and various philanthropic activities.[75] These activities, which rely on both the women's pre-existing popularity and further spread of their celebrity, have played a major part in the growth of women's competitive sport in Japan. The intersection of globalization and sport had also become apparent in Japan by the late 1970s, as travel abroad, television and movies led sport to have an impact on more and more Japanese women. Just as Hitomi had travelled to Europe in the 1920s and reported back that sport was not limited to schoolyard activities in other parts of the world, women were travelling abroad in much greater numbers by the 1970s and seeing the depth of talent among female athletes in other parts of the world. The IOC would also make some changes in the 1980s that would greatly affect the number and variety of sports in which Japanese women could compete at the elite level.

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Female Athletes in Contemporary Japan

In December 1979, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. Within a week, US President Jimmy Carter suggested the possibility of a boycott of the 1980 Olympics, which were slated to take place in Moscow, if the Soviet Union did not withdraw its troops from Afghanistan, and eventually an official boycott was declared.[1] British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher followed suit shortly thereafter, speaking with the British Olympic Association (BOA) officials and urging them to 'approach the IOC urgently and propose that the Summer Games be moved from the Soviet Union'.[2] While the British government supported the US-led boycott of the Games, the BOA ultimately voted to defy the boycott, as did eighty-four other nations.[3]

While the Games did go on, over sixty nations boycotted the 1980 Olympics, with Japan considered one of the five most significant because of both the number of athletes they sent and the number of medals they usually won at the Summer Games (the other four 'significant' boycotting nations were the United States, West Germany, Norway and Kenya).[4] In October of 1980 (three months after the close of the Moscow Olympics), Kiyokawa Masaji, who served as vice-president of the IOC from 1979 to 1983 (the first Japanese citizen to do so), wrote an article in the academic journal *Taiiku no kagaku* (*Science of Physical Education*) titled 'Retrospective on the Moscow Olympic Games'.[5] In it, Kiyokawa emphasizes the importance of Japan's solidarity with other nations throughout the world (which he believes to be more important than solidarity with other Asian nations). He acknowledges the disappointment felt by the athletes who could not participate but urges citizens to consider the larger picture and the stain that would have remained on Japan's otherwise splendid history of sport if the nation had decided to go against the boycott.[6] In retrospect, we now know that the boycott did not necessarily achieve its goals of solidarity and resistance. In fact, according to James Riordan, Russian Studies scholar and expert on the 1980 Games, 'the Moscow boycott was an abject failure. The Games went on, scarcely diminished, and Olympism gained in moral stature, while the boycott's protagonists soon disappeared from the historical stage'.[7]

Of course, as Kiyokawa's words anticipated, athletes from the boycotting nations were generally not in favour of their governments' decisions to withdraw from the Games. An article from an April 1980 edition of *Running Times* magazine contained the voices of several elite distance runners from the United States, most of whom opposed the decision to boycott the Games.

Craig Virgin, the American record holder for the 10,000-metre run said, 'I think an Olympic boycott would only be effective if fifty percent or more of the countries participated in it', while marathon runner Ron Tabb stated, 'I think it should be left completely up to the athletes. The athletes are the ones who've worked their asses off and I think it should be left up to them whether they should go or shouldn't go'.[8] The sentiments felt in Japan were no doubt similar, as athletes generally tended to feel that politics and sport should not mix and that it was unfair to shatter the dreams of those who had worked so hard towards this goal in order to make a political statement.

One such Japanese athlete was gymnast Kanō Yayoi (now Sasada Yayoi), whose article 'The Moscow Olympics, Where My Dreams Were Extinguished' poignantly illustrates her disappointment over the boycott.[9] Her article begins, '"To Participate in the Olympics". This was the title of the essay I wrote for my elementary school's graduation collection of compositions, "Dreams for the Future"'.[10] Kanō was the top-ranked gymnast in Japan from 1979 to 1982 and had been training for the 1980 Olympics since 1976, when she was selected for the national team.[11] After the boycott was announced in 1980, she felt that she had been robbed of her childhood dream but decided to try again for the 1984 Olympics. At the Olympic trials, she was one of the oldest competitors there and finished in ninth place, which was not good enough to secure her a spot at the Olympics. While Kanō initially felt that the years of sacrifice and hard work invested in her Olympic dream had gone to waste, she eventually came to appreciate the time she spent working towards her goal. She writes that the experience gave her a sense of self-awareness and self-reliance that she otherwise may have never fully realized and that she can look back happily on all the experiences she had and friends she made as she was aiming for the top.[12]

While Kanō's and many other athletes' Olympic dreams would never come to be realized because of the 1980 boycott, it is important to keep in mind the many changes that were taking place for women's sport in Japan in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The trends towards increased participation and more funding being channelled towards women's sport that had been set in motion in the early 1970s were now being felt around the world, and Japanese women were at the forefront of these changes. For example, the Boston Marathon, arguably the world's most celebrated running event, was officially opened to women in 1972 (when eight women competed in the race). While Japanese men had been competing in (and occasionally winning) the event since the 1950s, Japanese women began taking part almost immediately after the field was opened up to them. A Japanese woman residing in California named Michiko Gorman was the winner of the Boston Marathon in 1974 and 1976.[13] By 1981, there was a movie about her life story released in Japan called *Ritoru Chanpion* (English title: *My Champion*). In 1979, the first annual Tokyo International Women's Marathon (*Tokyo kokusai joshi marason*) was held, and while foreign runners took first place the first few years, by 1983 a Japanese woman named

Sasaki Nanae came through the finish line first, with four more Japanese women behind her in the top ten places.[14] Sasaki would go on to compete in the 1984 Olympic Games (which was the first time women took part in the marathon at the Olympics) and marked the start of a trend of highly successful female Japanese marathon runners that has continued to this day.

Women's marathon running was not the only sport that would take off in Japan during this time period. In 1979, Watanabe Emi became the first Japanese figure skater to win a medal at the World Figure Skating Championships, coming away from that year's event in Vienna with a bronze medal.[15] Later that year, the Women's Football League (*Nihon joshi sakkā renmei*) was established. Also in 1979, Japan held its first national women's jūdō tournament, which was won by fourteen-year-old Yamaguchi Kaori. The next year saw the first World Championships of women's jūdō, from which Yamaguchi came away with a bronze medal.[16] From 1978 to 1981, speed skater Katō Miyoshi won medals at the World Short-Track Championships, taking home the gold medal in both 1980 and 1981. In 1982, a West German scout recruited a female handball player from Japan to play on his club team in Germany.[17] Japanese women continued to perform well at the World Championships of synchronized swimming, which began in 1973, and in which Japanese women would win medals at every single competition.[18] In 1983, Japanese women took the bronze medal in the World Table Tennis Championships.[19]

Throughout the late 1970s and early 1980s, Japanese women also began to excel in tennis and golf. National Tennis Championships were held in Japan, and player Okagawa Emiko gained press and popularity in 1982, when she won the All-Japan Tennis Tournament as a seventeen-year-old high school student.[20] Golfer Okamoto Ayako won numerous high-profile professional golfing events from 1982 to 1984, including the 1984 Ladies British Open.[21] The list could continue, as the number of events and the level of competition were mushrooming at an alarming pace by the early 1980s. These few examples provide evidence of the advancements being made by Japanese female athletes, even at a time when the Olympic Games were unavailable venues at which they could compete. Moreover, in 1981, the first women were elected to be members of the IOC, which would help to globally spur greater change for female athletes in the 1980s.[22] In 1982, former Olympic gymnast Ono Kiyoko became the first female member of the JOC, showing again that Japan was keeping pace with the changes that were taking place for women in the global arena of sports.[23]

Performance, publicity, and profit: Athletes of the 1980s

While the Summer Games of 1980 were not an option for Japanese athletes, they did take part in the Winter Games of both 1980 in Lake Placid and 1984

in Sarajevo. The number of women who travelled to these Games remained very small as it had in previous Winter Games (with the exception of Sapporo 1972), but some significant figures arose nonetheless.[24] One notable athlete who first competed at the Sarajevo Games in 1984 was speed skater Hashimoto Seiko, who would go on to become one of the most well-known competitors in contemporary Japan.

Hashimoto Seiko was born on 5 October 1964, just as the Tokyo Olympics were getting underway.[25] In a 1996 essay, she wrote, 'My name was given to me by my father, who was so moved by the beauty of the *seika*, the Olympic flame, that he gave me the name "Seiko" (using the same Chinese character for "sei"). Being given this name, it was always my dream to become an Olympic athlete.'[26] Growing up on the northern island of Hokkaido, Hashimoto participated in various winter sports and came to be a competitive athlete in speed skating. She made it onto Japan's national delegation to compete in the Sarajevo Olympics in 1984 and felt completely overwhelmed the first time she saw the Olympic flame from which her name originated. She writes that the moment she saw this flame was perhaps the moment when she decided that sport would be the central focus of her life.[27] Although her eleventh-place finish in the women's 500-metre speed skating event would be the best performance of all the Japanese women who competed in Sarajevo, she felt very disappointed by her results.[28] She writes, 'As I stared at the Olympic flame blazing in the sky, I swore to myself, "I must not be an athlete who disgraces the Olympic flame – I have to return to the Games again".'[29]

Hashimoto did indeed return to the Olympics – not once but six more times. After Sarajevo, she took part as a speed skater in the Winter Games in Calgary in 1988, Albertville in 1992 and Lillehammer in 1994. During the off-season, Hashimoto stayed in shape through biking and came to ride at the professional level through this training. In 1988, only seven months after competing in five events at the Calgary Winter Olympics, Hashimoto competed in the bicycle sprint-racing event at the Summer Games in Seoul. She competed as a biker at the Summer Games in Barcelona in 1992 and in Atlanta in 1996 as well.[30] In her 1994 autobiography titled *Seika ni koishite* (*Longing for the Olympic flame*), Hashimoto writes that she caused quite a furore when it was announced that she would be competing for Summer Games, as people viewed it as somehow unfair that one athlete should be given so many opportunities to compete. 'Hashimoto Seiko is just entering the Olympic Games whenever she wants. She should think about all the other athletes who are trying their very best but can not go to the Olympics even once.'[31] Undeterred, Hashimoto continued to train and beat out many other talented bikers for the one seat open to women bikers from Japan at the Summer Olympics.[32] In her seven appearances at the Olympic Games (to date, the most by any athlete from any nation), she came away with one medal – a bronze in the 1,500-metre speed skating event in Albertville in 1992.

While Hashimoto's accomplishments of being one of the first Japanese women to win an Olympic medal at the Winter Games (figure skater Itō Midori won a silver medal at the same Olympics in Albertville) and the most seasoned Olympic athlete in the world were certainly impressive, she came to have several other significant achievements to her name. In 1995 she was elected to the House of Councillors, the Upper House of Japan's national parliament (the Diet), as a member of the Liberal Democratic Party. Recalling that her Olympic career spanned from 1984 to 1996, this means that she trained for and competed at the Summer Games in Atlanta at the same time she was serving as a member of the Diet. She has served on numerous committees within the House of Councillors, including committees that deal with the environment, with issues of disputed land on the northern and southern ends of the Japanese archipelago, and educational policy. She also serves as a member, advisor or chairwoman of numerous other national organizations, such as the JOC, the Japan Skating Federation and the Association of Physical Education Instructors.[33]

Hashimoto continues to serve in the Upper House, now in her sixteenth year of service, and because of both her athletic and political achievements, she has gained significant name recognition within Japan. She has used this recognition to lobby for change in Japanese society. For example, in the year 2000, she wrote an article in a popular women's magazine, *Fujin Kōron*, titled 'Appealing the Need for Childcare Support from the Daycare-Less Nagatachō District'.[34] In it, she discusses that in spite of recent efforts to expand day care options for the children of working women, the Nagatachō district, where the nation's main bureaucratic and political offices are located, has been extremely slow to follow the lead of the rest of the country. While Hashimoto's achievements in the Olympic Games and as a member of parliament are exceptional by any account, her story exemplifies the growing possibilities that were opened for and by sportswomen in Japan in the 1980s. While previous decades had witnessed a fair number of female athletes or teams cause waves throughout society that often resulted in eventual shifts in perception or treatment of women, by the 1980s these changes were being felt in a far more direct and measurable way.

One of the major factors affecting the ways that female athletes affected Japanese society in the 1980s had to do with the increasingly close relationship between sport, media and capitalism. From advertising endorsements to growing numbers of women's professional teams, sport in the 1980s was no longer just about being a good athlete. Rather, sport began to see such issues as marketability and audience approval as serious considerations when airing events on the television, which by the 1980s was more or less ubiquitous in people's homes.

One of the clearest examples of how commercialism and sport had become entwined by the early 1980s was seen in the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles. In discussing the event, sport sociologist Richard Gruneau has

suggested that those Games are 'best understood as a more fully developed expression of the incorporation of sporting practice into the ever-expanding marketplace of international capitalism'.[35] Indeed, the 1984 Summer Games are usually remembered for two reasons: the Soviet-led boycott that occurred and the Games' huge financial success due to the heavy commercialization of the event. Shortly before the Los Angeles Olympics were to begin, the Soviet Union's national Olympic committee issued a statement declaring, 'Chauvinistic sentiments and an anti-Soviet hysteria are being whipped up in the United States … In these conditions, the National Olympic Committee of the USSR is compelled to declare that the participation of Soviet sportsmen in the Games is impossible.'[36] Though not explicitly a retaliatory move, the president of the Soviet National Olympic Committee (NOC), Marat Gramov, had previously served as propaganda chief in the Communist Party, and his appointment to NOC president was clearly a political move. While the large and historically very successful Soviet team, along with fourteen other national teams, was absent from the Games, a record of 140 nations participated in the event.[37] Japan sent its largest delegation (231 athletes) since the Tokyo Games in 1964.[38]

Financially speaking, 'The LA 1984 Olympics was a symbolic moment in the history of the modern Olympic Games, embodying its transformation in terms of media profile, marketing opportunity and potential source of profit and personal aggrandizement for those purporting to live by the ideals of the Olympic movement.'[39] The 1976 Olympics in Montréal had been a financial disaster for that city, leaving a debt of over Can$1 billion that had to be paid off over nearly three decades by that city's taxpayers.[40] In the wake of this disaster, when the 1984 host city was being chosen at the IOC session in 1978, Los Angeles ran unopposed, as no other city wanted to risk bearing the financial weight that seemed to be getting heavier and heavier with each passing Games.[41] The Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee (LAOOC), however, took more than enough precautions to protect against financial ruin, and in doing so they changed the face of the Olympic Games forever.

First, the LAOOC sold television rights to American Broadcasting Company (ABC) for US$225 million, while European and Japanese networks paid US$22 and US$11 million, respectively. Corporate sponsors such as Coca-Cola, American Express, Anheuser-Busch and Snickers contributed another US$130 million. Forty-three companies were also licensed to sell 'official' Olympic products. For example, McDonalds sold the official hamburger of the Games, and the Mars Bar was the official snack bar.[42] In a controversial move, the LAOOC also decided to sell miles along the route of the Olympic torch relay, meaning companies or individuals could only run in the relay if they paid a US$3,000 participation fee. Greek politicians and sports officials were appalled by what they saw as the defilement of a sacred Greek symbol, and the mayor of Olympia said that he would not allow a torch to be lit in his city

(as was the tradition) if the relay continued. The LAOOC thus froze the sale of torch relay miles but not before US$11 million had already been raised.[43] For the first time since 1932, the Games generated a profit. The United States Olympic Committee received forty per cent of the US$225 million surplus, national governing bodies of Olympic sports in the United States got twenty per cent, the Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles received nearly forty per cent and the director of the LAOOC, Peter Ueberroth, awarded himself nearly half a million dollars.[44] After witnessing the effects of unbridled capitalism on the Olympic Games, after 1984, the IOC added rules to the Olympic Charter that defined the nature of financing and organizing the Games in much greater detail.[45]

The issues of corporate sponsorship and product endorsement that emerged in 1984 would have a lasting effect on Japanese female athletes (and vice versa). There were few exceptional performances by Japanese women at the 1984 Summer Games, but as more and more events opened up to women, the Japanese delegation included women competing in more different sports than ever before. Japanese women competed in virtually every event that opened up to women in 1984, including synchronized swimming, rhythmic gymnastics, the marathon, long-distance cycling and rifle shooting.

The women's volleyball team won the bronze medal, which would cap off their five-time consecutive medal-winning streak. After 1984, the 'witches of the Orient' lost their status as a volleyball superpower, as they failed to make it into the top three positions in any subsequent Games (after 1984, the Chinese and Cuban women's teams rose to superpower status). However, in its debut appearance at the Olympics in Los Angeles, Japanese women did rise to the top of the sport of synchronized swimming and have remained there since 1984. In Los Angeles, synchronized swimmers Kimura Saeko and Motoyoshi Miwako won the bronze medal in the duet event, and Motoyoshi won the bronze in the solo event as well.[46] Japanese synchronized swimmers have come away from every subsequent Summer Olympics since 1984 with medals.

The 1988 Olympics in Calgary (Winter) and Seoul (Summer) were less impressive than Los Angeles in terms of Japanese women's performances, but that is not to say that progress was not being made. In 1988, Japanese women competed for the first time in such Olympic events as the 10,000-metre track race, tennis, sailing, canoeing, tennis and table tennis. Perhaps it was precisely because there were so many options opening up to sportswomen so quickly that Japan was unable to perform well in the 1980s. That is to say, while women in other parts of the world may have been involved in their respective sports for years or decades before their involvement with the Olympic Games, many Japanese women had only a few years experience participating in their sports. Moreover, many did not realize or expect that they would be able to participate in the Olympics, and therefore they were not working towards this goal until just a short time before trials would begin. Several of the

contributors to the Total Olympic Ladies' essay collection begin their pieces with a statement like '[a]s a child, I never really dreamed about going to the Olympics'.[47] While certain sports such as swimming and track and field events had been open to Japanese women for decades by the 1980s, many sports were only just beginning to gain recognition and popularity and therefore still had a very shallow talent pool in Japan. However, the trend towards corporate sponsorship and sport for profit would ultimately get taken on by Japanese sportswomen in a major way by the late 1980s.

Women athletes were gaining more fame and status through their on-air time on the television and radio. Just as Hashimoto Seiko gained recognition through her multiple Olympic appearances that eventually translated to a successful political career, other female athletes began to use fame garnered through sport to their advantage during and after their athletic careers. For example, distance runner Masuda Akemi won several medals in track events at the Asian Championships in the early 1980s and went on to take part in the first-ever women's marathon at the 1984 Olympics.[48] Though her athletic career was short and not particularly outstanding, she went on to gain great fame through publicity. She became a sports journalist, authored several books about running and became radio and television commentator for marathon races.[49] Her charismatic personality on the air kept her in the public eye for over two decades, and Masuda remains quite well known to this day.[50] Masuda exemplifies a type of female athlete who was becoming evermore prominent in the late 1980s and into the 1990s – one whose marketability and charisma were just as important, if not more so, than their athletic achievements.

Going for the gold: success and celebrity in the 1990s

By the 1990s, women had begun to make a serious mark on the previously heavily male-dominated domain of sports. For nearly every men's team, there was a female counterpart, and some women's-only sports such as synchronized swimming had come to gain a huge following in Japan. The number of women competing in the Olympics continued to increase gradually (from seventy-one women in Seoul 1988 to eighty-two women in Barcelona 1992), but the number of medals these women brought home skyrocketed in the 1990s. Japanese women had won three medals in Seoul (two bronzes in synchronized swimming and a silver in shooting), and in 1992 this number had tripled, with Japanese women winning nine medals – one gold (swimming), four silver (jūdō and marathon) and four bronze (synchronized swimming and jūdō). By the end of the 1990s, the number of Japanese women taking part in the Olympics had nearly caught up with that of the men. In looking closely at a few of the stars that emerged from Olympic Games in the 1990s, we can see how this shift from the background to the foreground occurred.

As previously discussed, Olympic stars do not usually emerge from Olympic Games alone – national, regional and global competitions are always taking place during the Olympic interim years, and these other large events receive significant media attention within Japan. In January 1990, for example, marathon runner Arimori Yūko caught the media's eye when she broke the Japanese 'debut record' (i.e. the fastest time for one's first-ever marathon) at the Osaka International Women's Marathon and then proceeded to break the Japanese record at the same event the following year.[51] The same year, in 1991, she came in fourth place in the marathon at the Track and Field World Championships held in Tokyo. Relatively unknown before these races, Arimori had been a high school and college distance runner who joined one of Japan's top running clubs, Recruit, after graduating from the National College of Physical Education (*Nihon taiiku daigaku*).[52] It was there that she came under the guidance of Coach Koide Yoshio, who was also a relatively unknown figure at that time. It would not be long, however, until they would both be thrust into the spotlight, first with Arimori's impressive performances domestically and then with her silver medal performance at the 1992 Summer Olympics in Barcelona.[53] As Arimori was the first Japanese woman to win a medal in an Olympic running event since Hitomi Kinue's heroic 800-metre run in 1928, parallels were immediately drawn between the two athletes. Both women hailed from south-western Okayama prefecture, and both had faced similar societal discrimination for participating in their respective events.[54]

Significantly, Arimori was also the first Japanese female 'professional' athlete. That is to say, she was the first woman to declare herself independently responsible for her earnings, which would come from endorsements she garnered herself and from the cash winnings of races in which she competed. In order to fully appreciate the significance of 'turning professional', it is important that one understands the distinction between amateur and professional athletes in the Japanese context. In Japan, elite-level athletes are often 'corporate amateurs' (*kigyō amachua*), which is similar to the 'state amateur' status granted to athletes in the former Soviet Union and East Germany.[55] In the 'corporate amateur' structure, the athletes will often work in the company that sponsors them (e.g. at a desk job) for a few hours in the morning and then will practise all afternoon. This structure is most common among team sports such as volleyball, basketball and baseball. The players tend to identify themselves as employees of the company, and the 'work' that they do on the playing field serves as valuable PR that can often turn lucrative profits for their company. For individual sports such as marathon running, figure skating, tennis, golf or skiing, there is no professional league *per se*, so the route to professionalism in these sports is somewhat different from that of the 'corporate amateur'.[56]

Arimori made her 'professionalization declaration' in 1996, following her second and final appearance at the Olympic Games in Atlanta, where she again finished less than a minute behind rival Valentina Yegorova, though this time

for the bronze medal.[57] Arimori had entered the Recruit Running Club directly from college, which perhaps laid the groundwork for her eventual professional career. In a 2003 interview with sport sociologists Shimizu Satoshi and Tomozoe Hidenori, Arimori says she believed that joining Recruit's running team would give her a better chance of joining the national team for the Barcelona Olympic Games, which was her goal at that time.[58] In the same interview, Arimori discusses the various challenges that came with her transition from amateur to professional status.[59] She notes that while her training methods remained more or less the same, the mood changed greatly when she went professional. While vying for a spot on the Olympic team, Arimori was far more cognizant of what the public's opinion of her was, but once she went professional, she cared less what people thought and more about the fact that she was being compensated for her performance.[60]

Arimori's position on becoming professional is fairly ambivalent, but there were ultimately many positive outcomes for both Arimori and for the athletes who would follow her lead in turning professional. For one, the level of performance improved, likely from a combination of increased pressure and scrutiny (from fans, media etc.), better training facilities and global trends towards 'faster, higher and stronger' performances by female athletes. According to sport historian Machiko Kimura, the line between amateur and professional athletes in Japan has become increasingly blurred over the past couple of decades, as has also been the case in many other industrialized nations. She writes,

> Top amateur athletes who perform at high level [sic] are less well known by the public than a professional with regard to opportunities of meetings, rewards, incentives, evaluation, sponsorship or promotion. [However,] the right to an athlete's portrait is owned by the Japanese Olympic Committee (JOC) in Japan, and any money earned was pooled in the JOC and used as a fund for training other athletes. Therefore the earnings and expenses of the individual athlete are completely unknown when accounts of the organization are made public.[61]

Most elite-level athletes in Japan are thus managed by the JOC and are only permitted to appear in advertisements for those companies that are official partners of the JOC. For example, Kodak, Coca-Cola, McDonalds and Panasonic are all official Japanese Olympic partners and frequently use Olympic athletes in their commercials or images of Olympians in their advertising campaigns. Arimori Yuko criticized this practice, as she thought it was ridiculous that an individual not have the rights to his or her own image.[62] When she made her unprecedented declaration in 1996 (no male or female track and field athlete had ever gone professional), she broke off her partnership with the JOC and was therefore banned from using the Olympic rings or the official JOC slogan (*Ganbare Nippon!*) in any of her own product endorsements.[63] Kimura asserts that 'the "Professionalization Declaration" of Yuko Arimori, a marathon athlete, was sensational in the JOC and the Japanese Amateur Sports Federation'.[64]

While it would take some time for the effects of Arimori's 'declaration' to fully come to light, it goes without question that she was a pioneer in the world of professional female athletes and that she had a major impact on female athletes who were to come after.[65] It is likely that her popularity as an Olympic athlete led to her professionalization, but her professionalization also no doubt boosted her popularity. Not only were her marathon times world class and her two Olympic medals matters of great national pride but also Arimori was a prime candidate for product endorsements because of her good looks and infectious smile. According to a 'Village Voice' article that was published shortly before Arimori came to the United States to take part in the New York City Marathon, 'In American terms, the slim 5–5 Arimori is frequently referred to as the Michael Jordan of Japan.'[66]

When the *Village Voice* reporter asked Arimori why she decided to take part in the marathon that year, she replied, 'The New York City Marathon is a wonderful race for charity.'[67] Indeed, Arimori's most enduring legacies have not been through her commercial endorsements (which have included the sporting goods company Asics, cosmetics company Stefany and the popular sports drink Vaam) but rather through the charities that she actively supports. In 1998, Arimori established a non-profit, non-governmental organization called Hearts of Gold (*hāto obu gōrudo*), which was initially created to help Cambodian children who had lost limbs in landmine accidents. As the organization grew, its mission grew to include educating children in developing nations about HIV and AIDS, encouraging hope through sport for handicapped victims of wars around the world and various other initiatives promoting global understanding and peace on a grass-roots level.[68] Arimori remains a highly visible public figure to this day, speaking on behalf of her charities at United Nations events (she was named a Goodwill Ambassador in 2002) and appearing at numerous sport events around Japan (including her participation in the inaugural Tokyo Marathon in February 2007).

While Arimori was undoubtedly one of the most visible and influential athletes (male or female) to emerge in Japan in the 1990s, she was by no means the only one. Moreover, her declaration of professionalization proved to be the starting off point for more and more female athletes benefiting financially from the increasingly profit-driven world of sport. Arimori's two Olympic medals would be the first of four consecutive medals won by Japanese female marathon runners, the last two of which were gold medals won in 2000 and 2004. The sport of figure skating also became very popular in Japan through the Olympics of the 1990s. The increasingly close relationship between sport and capitalism manifested itself especially noticeably in these two sports – marathon running and figure skating. The stars that emerged from these sports from the 1990s onwards came to be known almost as much for the commercial products they endorsed as for their athletic prowess. In the next and final section of this chapter, I will look at some of the female athletes (and their respective sports)

who began riding this wave of celebrity in the 1990s and have continued to have resounding impacts on present-day Japanese society.

A level playing field? Women's sport in the twenty-first century

Many of the sports in which Japanese women began to excel during the 1990s are now considered to be Japan's strongest events in international competitions (for both men and women). These sports include softball, figure skating, marathon and jūdō. These sports have ushered in a new era of women's sport in contemporary Japan, as the off-the-charts popularity of some athletes has meant that some individual women and teams have come to have larger followings than their male counterparts.

Softball has been an Olympic sport since 1996, and the Japanese women took part in the event from the start, one of only eight teams to do so. After placing a disappointing fourth at the 1996 Games in Atlanta, they won medals at every subsequent Olympics.[69] The Japanese women took home the gold medal from the Asian Games in Doha in 2006 (beating Chinese Taipei and China), and in 2008, they beat out their long-time rivals, the United States, for the gold medal in a heavily publicized game. The publicity was in part because it was the last softball tournament scheduled to be in the Olympics – the sport was dropped, along with baseball, from the Olympic programme for the 2012 London Games.[70] However, in spite of the fact that the event appeared only four times at the Olympic Games, because of the Japanese women's international success the team received significant media attention.

Charismatic coach Utsugi Taeko led the national team for over twenty years, after being a player herself for over thirteen years. In a book about female coaches she co-authored with synchronized swimming coach Imura Masayo and rhythmic gymnastics coach Gomei Masako, Utsugi discusses topics ranging from her coaching philosophy to her views on females as athletic competitors. About the latter, she writes that in the male-dominated Japanese society, women have had to fight harder than men in order to get ahead, which should ultimately translate to tougher competitors. Currently, with nearly as many women in the workplace as men, women have to work double-duty in order to make an income and to keep the household in order (a task Utsugi suggests is *not* considered to be a male responsibility), which she argues has made women that much stronger.[71] She also writes that in her own experience, winning at major softball tournaments has gained her the respect of male coaches and that the more her team wins, the more people will pay attention and the more likely equality of the sexes will be achieved. Utsugi's strong views on the social pressures surrounding female athletes have, in part, led to her unrelenting coaching philosophy and her team's great success in both Asia and the world. Star pitcher Ueno Yukiko joined the ranks of other highly

publicized female athletes after she pitched the first perfect game in Olympic softball history against China at the 2004 Summer Games.

The popularity and visibility of the women's softball team is interesting in that the women on the team do not tend to comport with traditional standards of beauty in Japanese society. Most female athletes in Japan, as elsewhere, have historically had their physical attributes scrutinized by the public in the form of media and tabloid discussions that tend to revolve around the athletes' femininity or lack thereof.[72] Many popular athletes such as marathon runners Arimori and Takahashi Naoko (Q-chan) or table tennis star Fukuhara Ai (Ai-chan) are seen in photos or advertisements bearing huge smiles and looking decidedly *kawaii*, while figure skaters and synchronized swimmers are usually portrayed wearing make-up and embodying the feminine ideals of grace and beauty. The members of the women's softball team, by contrast, tend to keep their hair cut short, are rarely seen in make-up and wear baggy uniforms that in no way accentuate their female figures. While issues of femininity and the sexualization of female athletes will be examined in more depth in Chapter 8 of this book, I simply want to note at this point that the popularity of the softball team goes beyond the mere fact that Japanese fans immensely enjoy the sports of baseball and softball. It is representative of a growing acceptance and appreciation of sportswomen who deliver exceptional athletic performances, regardless of whether they conform to the feminine ideals of Japanese society.

Of course, athletes who do embody feminine ideals are also extremely popular, especially when they perform well internationally. Beginning in the late 1980s, women's figure skating started to gain popularity in Japan with the success of Itō Midori in both the Olympics and the World Championships.[73] One of Itō's claims to fame was her successful execution of a triple axel jump (a spinning jump with a forward take-off), as she was the first female figure skater to ever complete this jump in competition. She had first completed the jump at a regional competition in 1988 and was able to repeat it at the World Championships in 1989 (at which she won the gold medal). However, it was very important to Itō that she be able to perform the jump at the Olympic Games, as she believed it to be the most significant and important stage upon which one could showcase her talents.[74] After her successful completion of the jump at the 1992 Winter Games in Albertville, France, she won the silver medal, failing to beat Japanese-American competitor Kristi Yamaguchi.[75] With this win at one of the Winter Olympics' most popular events, Itō's celebrity grew significantly, which in turn would have a major impact on generations of young Japanese girls to come.

While Itō was the first Japanese woman to win a medal in figure skating, she was not the last. She has been credited for having launched a 'boom' in figure skating in Japan, which consequently produced several of the world's top figure skaters. In the 2006 Olympic Games in Torino, Italy, Japan's Arakawa Shizuka brought home the gold medal. On top of being one of the most widely watched

events of the Winter Games, Arakawa was the only Japanese athlete to win a medal at the Torino Games, which made the spotlight on her that much brighter within Japan. Moreover, in the entire history of the Winter Olympics, Arakawa became the first Asian figure skater (male or female) to win a gold medal.[76]

Arakawa's win in Torino set into motion a flood of commercial goods and services related to her specifically and figure skating generally. Ice skating rinks were routinely filled beyond capacity, and the sales of figure skates increased by over twenty per cent following the Olympics. In addition to figure skating as a sport, merchandise related to Arakawa became hugely popular. For example, CDs of the music she skated to in her gold medal performance and the three-stone diamond earrings she wore became hot items. Products endorsed by Arakawa, such as *kinmemai* or 'golden bud' brand rice, became so popular that the company producing it had to expand its distribution to the entire country when it had previously been sold only in the Tokyo region.[77] The summer following the Olympic Games, Arakawa tried her hand at both acting and modelling, and she announced that she was retiring from her amateur career and would be continuing on in the world of professional ice shows.[78] Two books were published in short succession about Arakawa: one by the national broadcasting corporation, NHK, containing an interview and snippets about her training before the Olympics and one diary-like memoir written by Arakawa herself – the advertising slip on the cover proclaiming 'Arakawa Shizuka's first essay!'[79] The steady flow of Arakawa and Arakawa-endorsed products that stemmed from the 2006 Olympic Games is representative of the contemporary commercialized state of sport in Japanese society. While athletes have spurred sales in commercial products, the sale of commercial products has also affected athletes, in that more money means better facilities and resources, which generally translates to higher success rates in international competition.

The close interconnection between capitalism and sport that has developed in contemporary Japan will be explored in further depth in Chapter 8, but suffice it to say that female figure skaters have been closely involved with the merging of the two for many years. Perhaps in part because of the subsequent influx of money to the figure skating world, Japanese women are still consistently ranked highly in the international arena of figure skating.

From the huge number of international competitions in which to let their talents shine to the product endorsements that have become *de rigueur* for Japanese sportswomen, there are more opportunities for athletes in the twenty-first century to reach celebrity status than ever before. One athlete who has exemplified the ways that both athletic success and proper marketing can launch an athlete into the rank of top celebrity is marathon runner Takahashi Naoko. Often referred to by her cute nickname, Q-chan, Takahashi's success followed a similar trajectory to that of Arimori Yūko, with Takahashi being somewhat more publicized and commercialized than her *sempai* Arimori

(the two runners were part of the same running club (Recruit) and both had Koide Yoshio as their coach).[80]

Takahashi's popularity began with a win at the Nagoya International Women's Marathon in 1998, where she also set a new Japanese record with her time of 2:25.48. Later that same year, she lowered her time by more than four minutes and broke her own record when she took the gold medal at the Asian Games in Bangkok. These successes in the late 1990s made the runner a gold medal contender at the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney. Takahashi did win the Olympic marathon in Sydney with her time of 2:23.14, setting an Olympic record in the process. She followed up this momentous event by taking first place and breaking the world record a year later at the Berlin Marathon with her time of 2:19.46. At that time, the 2-hour, 20-minute barrier in the women's marathon event was not unlike the 4-minute mile barrier that men were trying to break in the 1950s, so as the first woman to run under 2:20 Takahashi's international celebrity grew even greater.

In the spring of 2001, Takahashi signed a contract with the International Management Group (IMG), one of the world's largest sports, entertainment and media companies, which manages other major stars such as the tennis-playing Williams sisters and golfer Tiger Woods. Though she had begun appearing in advertisements while still an 'amateur' athlete and under the jurisdiction of the JOC, her move to the status of professional athlete when she signed on with IMG enabled her to profit far more from her athletic success. Since going professional, Takahashi has appeared in advertisements for a wide array of products, including Xylitol chewing gum, the *Tokyo Shimbun*, Ghana chocolate and Daiwa Securities.

Perhaps her most famous product endorsement has been for Vaam, a sports drink made by the Meiji company, which Takahashi and her coach Koide have claimed is responsible for her sustaining stamina and energy in her training and races.[81] A 2001 *New York Times* article about the product said, 'Miss Takahashi, like many Japanese long-distance runners, is a devotee of [this] little-known drink that its proponents believe may revolutionize sports requiring endurance and rigorous training. … The concoction contains a synthetic version of the juice that gives Japan's giant hornets the strength to fly distances of about sixty miles a day at speeds of almost twenty-five miles an hour.'[82] As the article mentions, Takahashi was a proponent of the drink but at that time had not yet become the commercial face of the product. Arimori Yūko had in fact been endorsing Vaam for some time, but Takahashi's fame in 2001 eclipsed that of Arimori's, and when she went professional in April, she quickly took over as the main endorser of the product.

Takahashi discusses her move from amateur to professional athlete in the second to last chapter of her autobiography, *Yume wa kanau* (*Dreams come true*). Though the chapter is called 'Professional and Amateur' (*Puro to ama*), she focuses more on the fame that came with her Olympic gold medal than with

her actual move away from amateur athletics. She writes that the fame was difficult to deal with at first, as she was unable to ride the train or go shopping without being bombarded by fans, but that this initial hassle was balanced out by the fact that she was making a positive impact on so many Japanese children (who told her that she made them want to be marathon runners). In discussing her transition to the world of professional marathon running, she says that the move was made in order to make running the central focus of her life, rather than for financial gains. She notes that she was already more or less living the life of a professional athlete, so the move felt like a natural one to make at the time.[83] With the growing commercialization of athletes, and the all but forgotten rules about amateurism and the Olympics, it is likely that more and more Japanese athletes will make this 'natural' move to professionalism.[84]

Another twenty-first century 'power sport' for Japanese women has been jūdō. Though it was not included as an Olympic sport for women until the Barcelona Summer Games in 1992, Japanese women have been taking part in it since the sport's inception. As was brought to light by American writer H. Irving Hancock's turn-of-the-century *Physical Training for Women by Japanese Methods* (1904), jūdō and other martial arts are perhaps the oldest form of modern contact sports that Japanese women have been involved with. Kanō Jigoro founded the first school of jūdō in the early 1880s, after having developed his techniques and theories from earlier forms of jujitsu.[85] One of the major changes that occurred with Kanō's 'modernization' of jujitsu was the acceptance of women. Kanō's first school, the Kōdōkan, allowed women to compete, setting the stage for women's active and equal participation in the sport of jūdō.[86] While it would take over a century for the IOC to recognize women's jūdō as an Olympic sport, it comes as little surprise that Japanese women have consistently ranked at the top of the sport internationally.

One Japanese woman in particular emerged as a star from the first women's jūdō competition at the 1992 Games in Barcelona – sixteen-year-old Tamura Ryōko. In 1990, Tamura had become a star when, at just fourteen years of age, she won the International Women's Jūdō Championships in her hometown of Fukuoka.[87] In 1986, a popular manga series by Urasawa Naoki emerged titled *Yawara!*, which chronicled the life of a young jūdō star named Inokuma Yawara who aspired to win a medal at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics. When the teenaged Tamura won the silver medal in the extra lightweight division in Barcelona, she instantly garnered the nickname 'Yawara-chan', after the fictional character she so resembled (by 1992, the series had also been made into a popular animated television show).

For the next four years, Tamura went undefeated in all major international jūdō tournaments and was favoured to win another medal when she went to the 1996 Summer Games in Atlanta. She had become such a popular figure by that time that she was chosen to be the country's flag bearer at the opening ceremonies in Atlanta. Tamura and her throngs of fans were shocked when she

lost in the final round of the tournament to an unknown North Korean athlete, sixteen-year-old Kye Sun-hi.[88] Tamura would have to settle for a silver medal again, but her failure to bring home the gold medal did not seem to diminish her popularity at all. She continued to receive intense media attention as she again went undefeated in the major competitions in the four-year Olympic interim between 1996 and 2000.

By the time the Sydney Olympics arrived, 'Yawara-chan' bore an enormous weight to bring home a gold medal – especially after being quoted as saying that her goal in Sydney was 'at best a gold, at worst a gold' (*Saikō demo kin, saitei demo kin*).[89] This quote would follow Tamura around for more than a decade, though it morphed over the years as her personal situation changed. After winning the much anticipated gold medal in Sydney, she continued to train and compete, and in 2003 she married professional baseball player Tani Yoshitomo (changing her surname in the process). After qualifying for the 2004 Athens Olympics, the quote changed to 'As Tamura a gold, as Tani a gold' (*Tamura demo kin, Tani demo kin*).[90] In December of 2005, the Tanis welcomed their first child into the world, as the public seemed anxious to find out whether Tani Ryōko would return to competition following the birth of her son, Yoshiaki.[91] Tani's old adage now became 'As a mommy, a gold' (*Mama demo kin*).[92] At the World Championships in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in September 2007, Tani showed that she was back in top form, winning an unprecedented seventh gold medal at the event and proving that she was ready to compete at her fifth Olympic Games in Beijing in 2008.

Tani came away from Bejing with a bronze medal, and although she made public her intention to try for a gold again at the London 2012 Olympics, in the spring of 2010 she turned her focus to politics. In April 2010, Tani announced her candidacy for the proportional representation section of Japan's ruling Democratic Party, and in July of the same year she was elected to the Upper House of the Diet.[93] When she joined the realm of politics, she was met with some criticism for trying to continue her athletic career while simultaneously balancing a political career and her now two children. Though it had been done before by speed skater/biker Hashimoto Seiko, Tani made the decision to end her athletic career in order to focus on politics. In October 2010, the thirty-five year old officially announced her resignation from competitive jūdō. According to the *Asahi Shimbun*, Tani's announcement was met with empathy from other female members of parliament, as they criticized the government for making it difficult for members to pursue outside interests (especially raising their children) while still faithfully serving their parties.[94]

While the ultimate impact of Tani Ryōko on the realm of politics has yet to be seen, her impact on the world of women's sport in Japan is obvious. Her long career brought issues of age, marital status and parental status to the forefront of discussions of women's sport. As a heavily publicized seven-time world champion, five-time Olympic medallist, mother of two and member

of the highest vehicle of Japanese government, Tani is redefining the limits of what is possible and acceptable for Japanese women. She has been widely lauded for her efforts and successes in very public forums.

For example, an article about her return to competition following the birth of her first child in the magazine *Yomiuri Weekly* from January 2007 reads,

> Tani's return does not only hold great significance in the jūdō world, but in Japan's sporting world as well. To date, there have been athletes who continue competing after getting married, but no top athletes who have come back after giving birth to a child. Moreover, if Tani proves to be successful in her comeback, the impact will go beyond that of rapid progress for female athletes – the social impact could also be great, as it will show that 'returning to work after childbirth' is a viable option for Japan's women today.[95]

That a 'return to work' after childbirth has come to be praised in the media shows evidence of a dramatic break from past notions of what it meant to be a 'good wife and wise mother'. Importantly, the heavily publicized nature of female athletes in the twenty-first century has enabled their reach to go increasingly beyond the world of sport and to have an impact on women's role in society at large. In Chapter 8, we will consider the specific ways that female athletes over the past century have contributed to the redefinition of femininity, womanhood, choice and success in contemporary Japan.

8

Theoretical Concerns Surrounding Japanese Women in Sport

> [S]port has become a firmly established and significant part of everyday life in modern society. In Western and Eastern European countries, in the USSR, Australia, Japan, and particularly in the United States, the indications are evident: the huge investments of time, energy, and wealth; the continuing and interrelated growth of participation and spectatorship; the spread of sport themes in high, middle, and mass culture; the rapid increase of sport as an international activity with its own techniques, jargon, and values which ignore national boundaries. Thus sport has emerged as a major social institution of worldwide scale, which directly or indirectly affects the lives of all of us.
> Talamini and Page 1973

The importance of sport to society has long been recognized, as is made clear in the above quote by sport sociologist Charles H. Page. Since the time Page wrote that in 1973, sport has grown to take on an arguably greater role in all societies around the globe. Whether or not one is personally involved in sport, images of iconic athletes are ubiquitous; sport appears daily in all forms of media; sport metaphors have permeated our language and physical education and sport are entrenched in our children's education systems. Mega-events such as the Olympics and the World Cup have become global phenomena and can be seen among the few forums that regularly bring together people from around the world and garner mass media attention. Such events are far from static, however, and have seen major changes over the past century as a result of modernization, globalization and commercialization. In spite of the fact that sport embodies so many noteworthy components of contemporary global society, relatively few sports or athletes have received rigorous scholarly attention.

In particular, little attention been given to Japan's role in global sport, in spite of the fact that the nation has pioneered breakthroughs in race and gender in international competitions since the early twentieth century.[1] Japan was the first Asian nation to send athletes to the Olympics and to have a representative on the International Olympic Committee; they sent a woman to participate in the first ever women's Olympic track and field event and they hosted the first Olympic Games (both Summer and Winter) outside of the Western world. In this sense, sport can be read as one of several sites where Japan began to

truly integrate with the global community after so many years of isolation prior to the Meiji Restoration. In the currency of international sport – bronze, silver and gold medals – Japan began to show its wealth early on, bringing home medals from every Summer Olympics that they took part in from 1920 onwards. While sport in Japan, as in the rest of the world, has always had a dominant male presence, it is important to recognize that Japanese women were an integral part of Japan's sporting movement since the 1920s. At a time when the majority of nations were still strongly opposed to women's participation in competitive sport, Japan joined the few Western nations that allowed female representation in international competitions beginning in the 1920s.[2]

While Japan's progress towards increased female representation in international sport more or less mirrors that of other industrialized nations, Japan today continues to be regarded as a nation lagging behind in terms of gender equity. In exploring some of the major themes that have developed over the course of Japanese women's participation in sport, my hope for the conclusion of this book is to shed light on how and why images of powerlessness and frailty have persisted throughout the decades. While my objective is not to diminish the significance of the very real inequalities that still exist between the genders in contemporary Japan (as in many nations), I do hope to provide an alternative reading of these inequalities. The primary goal of this book as a whole has been to chronicle Japanese women's participation in sport, so I have relied thus far on written materials marshalled into a comprehensive historical account. With the understanding that there are multiple ways to interpret history, and that the takeaway message from learning about what these women have done will differ from person to person, I believe that a consideration of some recurring and overarching themes will be useful for better understanding the complexity and the significance of the historical account.

In order to do so, I will be looking in more depth at some of the 'master metaphors' touched on throughout the historical narrative of Japanese women's participation in sport.[3] These metaphors include modernity, globalization, commercialization, spectacle/performance and femininity. Scholars have explored many of these themes in the context of sport, so several theoretical frameworks exist and will be drawn upon in my consideration of how these themes intersect with the history of female athletes in Japan. While these themes will be used to synthesize issues that have been raised over the past century, I have taken caution to try to avoid making blanket statements about how women in sport have affected Japanese society. I offer instead a holistic reading of the phenomenon – one that enables readers to recognize the depth of a seemingly simple subject, and to question pre-existing notions of sport, of Japanese women and of modern Japan.[4] To this end, I have not endeavoured to investigate the very foundations of the theoretical frameworks with which I work. My objective is both to initiate a discussion of Japanese women and sport that starts to go beyond the superficial treatment they have received in the (particularly English language) literature thus

far and to consider the possibilities that these discussions can open up for future research.

Modernity

While all of the themes raised by women's sport are fundamentally interconnected, modernity is perhaps the most all-encompassing. To use Marilyn Ivy's definition,

> [Modernity] indicates not only the urban energies, capitalist structures of life, and mechanical and electrical forms of reproduction that came into sharpest relief in the Japan of the 1920s. It indicates the problem of the nation-state and its correlation with a capitalist colonialism that ensured Japan would be pulled into a global geopolitical matrix from the mid-nineteenth century on. It indicates as well … novel forms of image representation, mass media, scientific disciplines.[5]

From this definition alone, it is clear that capitalism and globalization are core components to be considered when looking at modernity within the context of the sport. New forms of image representation and media are also extremely important to sport, as it has long relied on some form of media in order to spread its popularity. Moreover, as Maurice Roche asserts in his book on mega-events and modernity, 'Mega-events … were important and influential forces in the history of modern international culture in general.'[6] So how can we see modernity being played out in the history of Japanese women in sport, and how can these women's participation help us better understand modernity in Japan?

Japanese women began participating in competitive and international sport at a time in which Japan was going through a concentrated period of modernization. Having developed from the physical education courses that were introduced into girls' classrooms at the end of the nineteenth century, competitive sport was representative of state efforts to bring Japan into the modern, global community.

While modern Japanese history scholars have long debated Japan's path to modernity (with some like Masao Miyoshi sidestepping the issue by simply contending that modernity is 'a regional term peculiar to the West'),[7] few would argue the fact that Japan did experience a unique form of 'modernization' (as we in the West have conceptualized the term) following the Meiji Restoration. Their experience was unique because, while it took place at the same time many other nations were modernizing, it occurred on the heels of several centuries of near complete isolation from the rest of the world. In part because of this unique juxtaposition of isolationism and modernization, studies of Japan's path towards modernity have been varied and deep. However, work that seriously considers the role of gender has been relatively neglected from the canon of

modernization studies of Japan, as pointed out in the introduction to Molony and Uno's volume, *Gendering Modern Japanese History*.[8] Moreover, given the nascent state of sport studies of Japan, few scholars have considered the role of sport in Japan's modernization or the role of modernization in Japan's sport history.

Sport historian Allen Guttmann has explored some of the reasons for the 'undeniable fact that the Japanese were more receptive to modern sports than other Asians were'.[9] Guttmann posits several reasons for Japan's unique receptivity of Western/modern sport. For example, three of the key components of modern sport – rationalization, quantification and the goal of breaking records – can be found in some of Japan's earliest sport-like activities, like *kyūdō*, Japanese archery.[10] While it would be too simple to suggest that modern sport spread so quickly in Japan *because of* these earlier traditions of rationalized, quantified activities in pre-modern Japan, it is fair to say that certain characteristics of modern sports *were* present in Japan before Western sport was introduced to the country and gained rapid popularity in the late nineteenth century. This is true not only for the more widely studied sports such as baseball but also for women's sport as well. For example, we have seen that women practiced certain forms of martial arts in the eighteenth century and were thus potentially more receptive to Western sport when it arrived.

Moreover, as Guttmann has also asserted, Japan's modernization (in general) can be somewhat more easily understood when one considers these precursors of modern sport that were present before Western influences took hold.[11] Scholars have pointed this out in the context of Japan's modernization in general – it is thought that certain precursors of modernity were present in pre-modern Japanese culture, enabling the country to modernize so rapidly after the Meiji Restoration.[12] With respect to gender, I would argue that the activities that Japanese women were engaged in prior to the modernization efforts of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries similarly help us understand the rapid changes (i.e. the influx of modernity) that occurred for women from the 1920s onwards.

As we saw in the case of physical education pioneer Toyoda Fuyu, some young women from higher social strata were practising martial arts prior to the Meiji Restoration and the ensuing modernization of Japan. Toyoda was trained and skilled in the use of the *naginata*, or long pole sword, in the 1850s, and one can reasonably assume that other women were trained in this skill at that time as well.[13] The formalization of physical education in girls' and young women's education after the Meiji Restoration occurred more or less simultaneously with that of their male counterparts, with certain restrictions in place with respect to which activities were considered both safe and appropriate for young women. Relative to boys and young men, females were expected to dress more demurely and to avoid those activities that might put undue strain on their bodies (which is why sports like tennis, golf, dancing, gymnastics and

swimming were popular for girls and women in the Meiji era). This practice does not suggest that Japan was in any way 'behind' with respect to modernization, as women in the West were practising these same sports at the same time. On the contrary, it suggests that from the moment Japan opened its ports to the West and began incorporating new educational and leisure activities into its society, 'progress' was being made at a similar rate as the West. This parallel progression is exemplified by Hitomi Kinue's appearance at the 1928 Olympics in Amsterdam – not only did she take part in the first women's track and field events but also her silver medal performance indicates that she was performing at a level the same as or above her Western counterparts.

In a more concrete sense, Hitomi and her successors can also be seen as embodying the 'novel forms of image representation, mass media' laid out in Ivy's definition of modernity. International sport has long represented one of the few venues where Japanese citizens were able to see where they stood in relation to men and women from other parts of the world. While the actual number of Japanese people travelling abroad for events like the Olympics started off small, the media coverage of the event enabled many Japanese citizens to experience the event with their own ears and eyes. In the early years of Japanese women's participation, printed media was the most popular means of disseminating information, and it just so happened that the heavily publicized female athlete Hitomi was a newspaper journalist and avid writer. As early as 1925, Hitomi's athletic achievements were gaining her sizeable newspaper coverage. For example, an article in the *Tokyo Asahi Shimbun* from March 1925 shows a photograph of an eighteen-year-old Hitomi about to release a javelin, with the headline 'A Transition Time in the World of Women's Competitions'.[14] Many articles both by and about her would follow in the coming years, slowly changing the public's idea of who should appear in the 'Sports' section of the newspaper.

As technology progressed, the public could not only see but also hear the sports in their own living rooms. As exemplified by NHK announcer Kasai Sansei's live broadcast from Maehata's gold medal race in Berlin in 1936, these broadcasts proved to be extremely memorable and would make lasting impressions on the Japanese public. By the 1950s, the television had been introduced to Japan, with the ability to watch sporting events serving as a major selling point for the luxury commodity.[15] By 1960, more than nine million Japanese households had television sets, meaning more than nine million families were able to see live-action Olympic events from Rome that year, all in the comfort of their own homes.[16]

The rapid Japanese progress in technology, in other words modernizing forms of image representation, had a significant impact on Japanese women's participation and success in sport. When Hitomi returned from her competitions abroad, she was able to tell the public what she had seen – for example, that competitive sport was not just an activity for school-aged children in Europe

and that even married women and mothers were able to safely take part. When Maehata won her gold medal in Berlin, people in Japan were able to palpably feel the excitement of a women's sporting event as never before, as is made clear by the photographs of people sitting by their radios, arms raised in the air, shouting *banzai!* as they heard the live broadcast.[17] As more and more people came to be able to watch the events on television, the notion that women were becoming an integral part of the sporting world was cemented in people's minds.

In this sense, the impact of modernization on Japanese women's participation and success in sport becomes quite evident. The image of a rapidly modernization Japan is often placed in contrast to a stagnant image of the Japanese woman whose rights remain limited and whose way of life remains more or less unchanged over the years (i.e. still the good wife, wise mother). However, the historical narrative of Japanese women in sport provides proof that this has not always been the case. Rather than always representing the 'traditional' to which the 'modern' can be compared, a handful of influential Japanese women were not only *part of* the changes that were occurring from the 1920s onwards but indeed *propelled* these changes by their very actions.

Globalization and commercialization

Of all the changes fuelled by modernization in the twentieth century, perhaps two of the most pervasive have been globalization and commercialization. While these two themes have their own complex histories and tendencies, I believe that in the context of sport they can logically be considered in tandem. We have seen in the historical narrative the ways that sport has come to be increasingly commercialized (e.g. the case of the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles). While the rather sudden change towards corporate sponsorship in the Olympics can be traced back to 1984, this change was fostered by much larger transformations in the global community that were being brought on by a combination of political, cultural and technological factors.

The end of the Cold War marked a period of increased openness, as people, ideas and products flowed much more freely across national borders. Simultaneously, technology such as satellite broadcasting enabled images and ideologies to instantly reach more and farther-reaching locales. Before focusing on the ways in which Japanese female athletes have both embodied and made an impact on our conceptions of globalization and commercialization, I will briefly look at the way these two processes have interacted with the sporting industry in contemporary Japan.

According to Takayuki Yamashita, who researches how Japanese sport has changed with the tides of globalization, the sharp rise in the value of the Japanese yen in the mid-1980s corresponded with a sudden shift of Japanese

production from domestic to overseas, which ultimately led to significant changes within the Japanese sporting industry.[18] One such important change was the move towards privatization, which, as anyone who follows the political economy of Japan knows, is a trend that has happened or is in the process of happening across many different industries in the country, from the railways to primary education to the enormous postal savings system, all currently or recently having undergone privatization.

Leisure activities and sport in Japan were heavily influenced by the privatization efforts from the mid-1980s onwards, as government support for such activities began to wane and business enterprises began to take over. For example, sport sociologist Shimizu Satoshi has observed the influx of privately owned sports clubs in both rural and urban areas over the past several decades. These clubs, which generally have steep membership fees, are pushing out publicly funded gymnasiums that can no longer afford to operate as their clientele dwindles. Similarly, some primary and secondary schools' sport clubs are suffering from the growing popularity of privately owned sport 'camps' or training centres that attract talented student athletes who have the funds to pay for the higher level coaching that these centres afford.[19] Unfortunately, this means that corporate interests in the sporting industry have contributed to the disintegration of communities and the growth of the gap between rich and poor. These are examples of the ways that globalization and commercialization have manifested themselves in Japan's sporting world and have had a resounding effect on a society that has long recognized itself as being populated predominantly by middle-class citizens.

As sport in Japan began taking more market-oriented approaches, the symbolic meaning of sport came to be linked more and more with aesthetics over discipline. Interestingly, the advertising campaigns that emerged from this new trend in commercializing sports tended to target women over men. Yamashita writes that the sport industry has 'emphasized feminine traits, rather than traditional masculinity in their advertisements in order to attract women to sport'.[20] The reasons for this shift in gender focus are multifaceted, but they ultimately tie into certain neoliberal ideologies that were stemming from globalization, namely the trend towards individual success and perceived equal opportunity regardless of gender, class or other such markers that had previously inhibited certain participants from certain sports.[21] A milieu of endless possibility for women's participation in sport arose from the socio-economic changes of the mid-1980s and remains to this day.

The ease with which images and information can cross borders and subsequently be marketed has certainly made Japanese women increasingly aware of the myriad opportunities available to them. However, the current neoliberal climate as it relates to athletes also has the tendency to create some skewed perceptions with respect to gender equity. Over the past several years, an Adidas advertising slogan that reads 'Impossible Is Nothing' has appeared

in many popular Japanese magazines and been plastered across Japanese billboards and buildings.[22] Advertisements and endorsements may give the impression that the opportunities for women to excel in sport are boundless, but the reality is that both gender and class *are* still limiting factors when it comes to participation and acceptance in sport. Sociologist T.R. Young has criticized sport for this reason, among others, stating that commercialized sport promotes false solidarity, when it really exists primarily for profit.

The intense feelings of solidarity generated by an entire nation cheering and rejoicing for the same player or team is a limited kind of togetherness, Young argues, and because it is confined to the world of make believe (sport), it masks real disharmonies that exist in a society. He posits that 'class antagonisms and … gender … hostilities with real conflicting interests can be assimilated to the harmless competition of sports. The structures of privilege, inequality, and oppression are left intact by such use of solidarity moments in sports'.[23] Indeed, winning athletes will return home to fanfare no matter if they are rich or poor, male or female. Nationality trumps everything when it comes to international competitions, and it is too simplistic to suggest that cheering for a female athlete connotes or translates to actual support for women getting ahead in Japanese society. However, because of the commercialization of the industry, there undoubtedly exists this new kind of fictitious solidarity that can alternately be read as negative (for the inequalities it masks) or positive (for the support it garners female athletes).

Looking at Olympic gold medal figure skater Arakawa Shizuka, we can see examples of both these positive and negative outcomes. While the togetherness of celebration and the outpouring of national and commercial support that occurred immediately following her victory might be viewed as Young's fictitious solidarity, Arakawa definitely made an impact on a generation of young girls who now see figure skating (and perhaps other sports) as a means of success. Because of the current highly commercialized state of sport in Japan, Arakawa's win lasted far beyond the moment she got her medal in Torino – she continues to endorse numerous products, and her face can be seen on advertisements in some of Tokyo's busiest train stations. She shares the spotlight with numerous other female athletes whose success on the playing field (or ice rink or golf course) is being used to a commercial end.

There are two sides to this coin as well. The profit-driven sporting industry tends to benefit greatly from these athletes' feminine allure and marketability, as advertisements frequently show athletes donning make-up and attractive, revealing clothing. However, as evidenced by the popularity and commercialization of athletes who do *not* necessarily embody traditional feminine traits, such as Tani Ryōko, wrestler Hamaguchi Kyōko or the national softball team, the commercialized sporting industry does more than just mask inequalities and promote idealized notions of femininity.[24] The following two sections on spectacle and femininity will explore this issue in more depth.

As is highlighted by these examples of women across diverse sports receiving a seemingly similar share of the spotlight, the question of whether athletes in different sports play different roles in the national imagination bears consideration. Because they may be used to an equal degree to endorse products or raise public awareness, does this mean that they are equally representative of femininity and national progress? It could be argued that the popularity of female athletes (particularly at the most visible, elite level) is dependent on their apparent determination and devotion to the Japanese nation. This is perhaps highlighted most clearly by the first female superstar, Hitomi Kinue, whose devotion to the nation at the 1928 Olympics led her to sign up for the 800-metre run after failing to win a medal for Japan in the 100-metre dash. As a reporter for the *Ōsaka Mainichi* newspaper noted, 'If this isn't a manifestation of the Japanese Spirit [*yamatodamashii*], then I don't know what is'.[25] Nationalism is inextricably tied to sport at international events and arguably at the popular level as well. Whether striving to be the best in one's school, prefecture or nation, the rhetoric of the Japanese spirit is ubiquitous across different levels of sport and across different sports themselves. Because the most visible and popular athletes (those being used to endorse products, for example) have all exhibited an unusual degree of *yamatodamashii*, and thus a complete devotion to the nation, it would appear that the sport they partake in is of secondary importance to their success itself.

In the world of women's sport, globalization and commercialization have indeed overlapped with long-standing sentiments of nationalism to create a large body of highly successful and visible sportswomen. Negative by-products of these processes have included a growth in the gap between rich and poor, and a masking of the social inequalities that may well inhibit young women from getting involved in sport (in spite of what certain neoliberal slogans might suggest).[26] In considering the historical narrative of female athletes in this context, it should be clear of the ways in which Japan's sporting industry has been deeply affected by current trends in the global marketplace.

While Olympic founder and proponent of amateurism Pierre de Coubertin would have cringed to see the current state of the professionalization of athletes, the outcome for Japanese women has been far from negative. Rather than showing that the shift from amateurism to professionalism is indicative of a degeneration of the purity of sports (as Coubertin might have predicted), I believe that the narrative of Japanese women's increased participation over the past few decades has shown that it indicates growth and progress. After all, no female athletes at all took part in the first Olympic Games in Athens, and now women make up a sizable percentage of both athletes and administrators of the event. The world has changed greatly since the late nineteenth century when women's sport began to emerge, with the processes of globalization and commercialization serving as both a major cause and effect of this change.

Spectacle/performance

Sporting events are often referred to as a spectacle, both in an academic and in a colloquial sense. French neo-Marxist Guy Debord uses the term 'spectacle' to mean 'not a collection of images; rather, it is a social relationship between people that is mediated by images'.[27] As Olympic scholar John MacAloon has further elaborated, the term must 'be treated carefully as a performative genre in its own right, engaged in complex dialectical and functional dynamics … and not just as a loose, imperial trope for everything dubious about the contemporary world'.[28] In the academic context, then, it is clear that the term 'spectacle' embodies more than its colloquial counterpart would suggest. It is used as a metaphor to describe a specific dynamic of power in today's world, much in the same way that modernity, globalization and commercialization suggest power configurations that have been ever changing over the past century.

Sport is a useful site to consider spectacle, as it combines ritual, festival, performance and aesthetics, while simultaneously bringing together cultures from around the world. With Debord's definition in mind, this means that one could use the images generated through sport in order to analyse social relationships. Looking at how female athletes in Japan have been represented, we can gain better insight into Japanese society and our conceptions of spectacle and performance.

The public image of female athletes in Japan (as in the West) has revolved primarily around three main factors: the sport they play, their physical appearance and the success of the athlete. Sometimes one of these factors outweighs the others, making an athlete either very popular or very unpopular, but more often than not the three work together to sway popularity in one direction or the other. That is to say, an athlete who may not embody traditional ideals of beauty may gain sudden popularity from a winning performance at a major sporting event.[29] A popular and/or attractive athlete is similarly likely to lose her recognition and product endorsements after a weak performance. Appearance can also factor into male athletes' popularity, but it goes without saying that female athletes have long been judged on their physical appearance to a more critical degree than their male counterparts.

Gender conventions confined women to a small number of 'lady-like' sports at the turn of the twentieth century, and though these conventions have significantly loosened and shifted, there are still sports that are considered more or less appropriate for women. Swimming, gymnastics and figure skating have long been considered 'appropriate' sports for women, while those sports involving muscles, physical contact and aggressiveness (such as track and field, football and wrestling) have generally been considered less acceptable.

This is exemplified by the different treatment in the press of two of Japan's earliest female Olympians – track and field athlete Hitomi Kinue and figure

skater Inada Etsuko. Hitomi was frequently portrayed *in action*, with the most common image of her being one where she is running the 100-metre race in Amsterdam, leg muscles bulging with a pained expression on her face.[30] In contrast, the most widely published image of Inada shows the young athlete standing in a white dress and fitted jacket, with a cheerful smile across her face. The aggressive and competitive nature of Hitomi's sport (along with her unusually large stature) contributed to her portrayal as burly and masculine. Inada's highly aestheticized sport of figure skating, however, allowed the public to be more immediately accepting of the athlete. However, following her silver medal-winning performance at the Olympic Games, Hitomi became and remained extremely popular, while Inada more or less faded into obscurity.[31] I believe that this speaks to the power of athletic success in changing the public's view towards women. Preconceived notions about the appropriateness or acceptability of a certain sport or athlete seem to melt away – at least for a while – when that athlete represents Japan well against international competition. Over time, I believe that this phenomenon has helped to slowly chip away at firmly entrenched notions of what is or is not acceptable for Japanese women – in both the sporting world as well as in a more general context as exemplified by the case of jūdō star Tani Ryōko.

Being a strong athlete casts a favourable light on a female athlete, no matter what she looks like or what sport she participates in. If the athlete also happens to be marketable in some way (generally by being considered 'cute' or attractive), her popularity will surge all the more, as was seen in the case of gold medal figure skater Arakawa Shizuka. Her combination of perceived feminine grace, athletic strength and Olympic success in Torino made her one of the most publicized athletes, male or female, that Japan had ever seen. The success of female athletes relative to their male counterparts over the past several decades has made this phenomenon all the more visible, with athletes like Arimori, Takahashi and Tani gracing just as many if not more advertisement posters than popular male baseball or football stars. The growing use of visual phenomena that has helped spread positive – if not sometimes hyper-sexualized – images of female athletes throughout Japan has contributed to this gradual shift in focus from male to female athletes over the past century.

Returning to Debord's definition of spectacle as 'a social relationship between people that is mediated by images', we can thus see some of the ways that images of female athletes have affected social relationships in modern and contemporary Japan. While the Japanese public was initially opposed to women's participation in competitive sport, the strength of the athletes and their ability to represent Japan well abroad led to a gradual acceptance of a growing number of athletes and a wider variety of sports. Perhaps one of the main critiques of the quickly growing 'spectacle' of women's sport is the *way* that these athletes have been portrayed. The following section will explore this issue in more detail.

Femininity

Any 'spectacle' must be considered in conjunction with a 'gaze'. Those watching the images of women competing, winning and endorsing are the ones who greatly outnumber the athletes themselves and who ultimately have the greatest power to alter the views of society. Feminist sport scholars have long grappled with issues of *how* female athletes are represented, and it appears that over the years – particularly in the West – a fine line has been toed between a hyper-sexualized feminine and an over-masculine, lesbian image.[32]

These feminist scholars have focused almost exclusively on Western subjects, however, with many discussions revolving around pre/post–Title IX changes in attitudes towards female athletes in the United States. For this reason, I believe it is important to consider a discussion of femininity and sport in the Japanese context, where no such legislation was ever implemented, yet extreme changes in attitude towards athletic women have been evident over the past century.[33] In considering the issue of femininity among Japanese sportswomen, we can both broaden notions of femininity within Japan and differently consider femininity in a more universal sense. While looking at the issues of femininity and sport in Japan can be a useful tool for broadening our understanding, it is also important to be careful not to essentialize Japanese women and/or athletes in the process. That is to say, in discussing portrayals of female athletes, caution must be taken to avoid assumptions that there exists any kind of 'essential femaleness' that is naturally expressed by women through their bodies.[34]

The issue of femininity has been at the core of discussions over Japanese women participating in sport from the time physical education was introduced into schools in the late nineteenth century. The pioneers of women's physical education and sport in Japan, particularly Inokuchi Akuri, Fujimura Toyo and Nikaidō Tokuyo, were conscious of the fact that physical education for girls and women was to be carried out to a different end than was the same sort of training for boys and men. That is to say, while the goals of physical education for boys were largely military based, the goals for women centred primarily around the development of 'good wives and wise mothers'. During the Meiji period, limitations were placed on the activities girls could engage in both because of an assumed fragility and a lack of understanding of the effect of sport on the female body (particularly the reproductive system).[35] This presumed fragility lasted well into the post-War period, as evidenced by the fact that the women's 800-metre race was scratched from the Olympic programme until 1960 after Hitomi and the other women running that race in 1928 had fallen exhausted to the ground at the finish line.

The year 1960 marked not only the reinstitution of the women's 800-metre race at the Olympics but also broader change towards inclusion and acceptance of women in a larger variety of sports. More and more Japanese women continued to be on the front lines of new sports, representing their nation

abroad in virtually every new sport that opened up to women.[36] The broad and varied representation of Japanese women in sport speaks not only to the quick response on the part of the athletes to global changes in the sporting world but also to the Japanese public's openness in supporting women in a broad range of events. For example, when women's wrestling was introduced to the Olympic programme in 2004, Japanese women came away with four medals in the event – more than any other nation.[37] This isolated example provides clear evidence against several deeply-seated notions of Japanese women: that they are weak, that they feel compelled to conform to traditional notions of femininity and that they have continuously been 'behind' their male counterparts (Japanese men came away with two bronze medals in wrestling from those Olympics). Moreover, it is one of many examples highlighting that Japanese women are not lagging behind their Western counterparts in the world of competitive sport.

Of course, this is only one example (though many similar examples exist), and one could argue at length whether the highly publicized image of a triumphant female wrestler actually has an impact on the public's way of thinking. As Susan Cahn has elucidated, 'By looking at how athletes … have clashed and compromised over gender issues in sport, we can learn something about how ordinary and influential people create society's gender and sexual arrangements and how their actions are conditioned by the circumstances of their time.'[38] The actions of and reactions to individual athletes indeed tell us volumes about Japanese society throughout the twentieth century, especially with regard to gender dynamics and the ideals of femininity.

In looking at the historical narrative outlined in the preceding chapters, it should be clear that these ideals have shifted markedly over the past century – a female marathon runner endorsing sports drink on a poster would have been inconceivable to the Japanese public of the 1920s, but today it is considered completely mainstream. Posters of athletes from an endless variety of sports can be seen in subway stations and on billboards across Japan – female table tennis stars, wrestlers, figure skaters, golfers, snowboarders and swimmers are just as common in these advertisements as are their male counterparts. While Japanese women are competing in a wider variety of sports that require an ever-increasing amount of speed, strength and stamina, however, certain ideals of femininity and prejudices are still very present in Japanese society.

For one, when it comes to product endorsements, it is often unclear whether women are being used because of their marketability as an athlete or because of their marketability as a woman. A large part of Arakawa Shizuka's success in the public eye (as well as with product endorsements) has undoubtedly revolved around the fact that she is attractive in a very traditional, 'feminine' sense. The photos that are most widely circulated and advertised show Arakawa during her gold medal performance in Torino, for which she wore jewellery, make-up and a purple and blue dress with a transparent opening from the diamond

choker at her neck all the way down to her navel.[39] Figure skating, along with such sports as gymnastics, synchronized swimming and diving, is considered to be an 'aesthetic sport', for beauty and/or feminine grace tend to factor largely into whether an athlete is successful.

There are inherent problems with the way the aesthetic nature of these so-called 'feminine' sports is capitalized upon in contemporary society. Cahn writes that '[t]he belief that femininity is an aesthetic disguises the fact that not just beauty but passivity, submissiveness, frailty, and service – signal features of women's subordination – have also characterized femininity'.[40] That is to say, the idea that women should excel most at these aesthetic sports reinforces the notion that muscles, competitiveness and aggression are neither feminine nor desirable in a woman. The historic exclusion of women from such strength-based contact sports as sumo wrestling, boxing and American football highlights a certain expectation of female frailty and submissiveness.

However, in Japan as in many Western nations, these notions of athletic femininity are rapidly becoming antiquated as women excel in sports that were not considered acceptable just a few decades ago.[41] For example, a May 2002 article in the magazine *Asahi Shimbun Weekly* highlighted Japan's national women's rugby team, which had at that time competed twice in the Women's Rugby World Cup since the event's inception in 1991.[42] The article contains a brief history of the sport in Japan, and it focuses on the goal of the team to someday compete at the Olympic Games, if and when women's rugby becomes an Olympic event (which it thus far has not).[43] The large photo in the middle of the article shows the Japanese team in competition in New Zealand, and the uniforms, headgear, mouth guards and muscular physiques of the players suggest anything but a traditional 'feminine' image. The Japanese media is not hesitant to run stories about all different women's sports, whether they may be aesthetically appealing or not. As previously mentioned, the attention garnered and endorsements earned by jūdō wrester Tani Ryōko, the women's national softball team and wrestler Hamaguchi Kyōko are proof that sport has provided an outlet for Japanese women where traditional notions of femininity are not considered to be paramount.

However, the media does not always portray female athletes in a positive light, nor does the media necessarily serve as an engine for change in society. Often times, women's sport still receives significantly less media coverage than men's, and when covered it is sometimes done so in a subtly demeaning manner. Journalist Yamanaka Toshiko wrote an article for the weekly magazine *Shūkan Kinyōbi* in October 2000 (immediately following the Sydney Olympics) in which she criticized the diminutive tone so often taken by media writers and commentators when it comes to reporting in Japan about women's efforts in sport.[44] She mentions the cute nicknames so often given to female athletes (like 'Q-chan', 'Yawara-chan' and 'Ai-chan') as well as the unnecessarily flowery language used by newspaper reporters when writing about these athletes.[45]

Yamanaka carefully surveyed Japan's three major newspapers (*Asahi, Mainichi* and *Yomiuri Shimbun*) during the course of Olympic coverage, between 15 September and 1 October 2000. From this, she determined that the personal lives of female athletes were discussed far more often than the personal lives of males, with marital status or motherhood considered fair game for the media.[46]

A 2003 academic article in the journal *Supōtsu to jendā kenkyū (Sport and Gender Studies)* looks at similar issues in a more detailed manner, comparing the language used in the media to describe the achievements of two specific female jūdō wrestlers, Sugawara Noriko and Narazaki Noriko.[47] The author concludes that Narazaki is regularly portrayed as having been encouraged by a man – her father when she was younger and her husband after her marriage. Headlines also often attach the word 'housewife' (*shufu*) to her name, suggesting that she has responsibility for both her athletic career and her domestic work. Male reporters write the majority of articles using language that downplays or trivializes women's athletic achievements, while female reporters tend to describe female athletes as self-reliant and independent women.[48] These two critical articles about Japan's media portrayal of female athletes show that there is still a long way to go before equality is reached between men's and women's sport. However, they also show that there is public dissent and discussion over hyper-feminized representations of women, which is an important step towards a more inclusive acceptance of sportswomen (and arguably broader categories of women who do not fit certain ideals) by Japanese society.

In all of the above discussions on the 'master metaphors' that can be explored through Japanese women in sport, it is important to keep in mind that the field of women's sport studies in Japan is still young and that the depth of critical research carried out within it remains relatively shallow. That said, I have endeavoured to make use of a variety of theoretical frameworks in an effort to broaden our understanding not only of the history itself but also of the possibilities of using this kind of research for future critical work.

For future consideration

In this work, a comprehensive view of the changes that occurred both for and by female athletes in modern and contemporary Japan has been undertaken. Primary and secondary sources have been drawn upon in an effort to provide a well-rounded historical narrative of events as well as an analysis of how looking at these events can shed new light on various aspects of modern Japan. Because so little has previously been written in English about Japanese women in sport (especially when compared to the body of work on male-dominated sport in Japan such as baseball and sumo wrestling), a broad and sweeping approach was taken to the subject matter. While this was the most encompassing means

of conveying the long and complex narrative, the volume of material included meant that certain areas were not delved into as deeply as they might have been. My hope is that future projects might focus in more depth on some of the individuals and issues raised by this book.

For example, though a substantial amount of information was provided on Japan's first female international sensation, Hitomi Kinue, much more could be written on this influential woman. It would be revealing to trace the ways she was received over time – from the time she was a young woman competing to the time of her death, to the time her name was resurrected in the public's eye by Arimori Yūko in the early 1990s, the image of Hitomi has been used to very different ends over the past eighty years. Other athletes such as Maehata Hideko or the 'witches of the Orient' could also have similar in-depth studies conducted about them, with the breadth of material available in Japanese on these subjects making such a project entirely feasible.

A direct ethnographic approach to the topic of female athletes in contemporary Japanese society could also shed great light on the issues of how these women currently influence and have been influenced by Japanese society. While first-hand accounts have been relied upon as much as possible throughout this narrative (namely autobiographies and articles written by female athletes), the ability to ask pointed questions directly *to* athletes would provide a nuanced perspective on the issues. Spending an extended period of time with athletes might also allow a researcher to delve into the 'darker' side of sport that is rarely highlighted in autobiographical materials, looking at issues such as doping, chauvinism, sexual harassment or attitudes towards (real or perceived) homosexuality.

Comparative projects between Japan and other nations might reveal interesting similarities or peculiarities about Japan as well. Such a comparison would provide an added layer of analysis with respect to the rate at which Japanese women have progressed over the course of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. How does the change in reception towards female athletes in Japan compare to that of other Asian nations? How does it compare to Western nations? Has the commercialization of female athletes in Japan been greater or lesser than in other parts of the world? How does the manifestation of prejudices against so-called 'masculine' sports such as wrestling or weightlifting compare to the prejudices faced by women in these sports elsewhere? Finding answers to such questions would provide further insight and perspective on how 'progressive' Japan really is when it comes to its treatment and support of sportswomen.

Finally, a quantitative sociological approach to the topic of female Olympians in Japan might provide a different kind of framework for tracking the success of these women over the past century. There are no doubt countless statistical breakdowns for such a measurement – one could look at Olympic gold medal winners, at all medal winners, at all contestants finishing in the top five or top

ten of their international events or at all athletes who compete regardless of their success. One might also do a comparison of these categories between male and female competitors from Japan in order to get a more clear idea of how women are progressing with respect to their male counterparts.

One Japanese scholar, Kawahara Takatsu of the National Institute of Sports Sciences (*kokuritsu supōtsu kagaku sentā*), conducted one such small-scale study focusing on female Olympic athletes, which was published in the November 2006 edition of *Sports Godzilla* magazine.[49] In it, he includes several different charts that break down the number of athletes, the number of events they participated in and the number of medals garnered by both male and female delegates from Japan from 1964 to the present.[50] He calculates the percentage of medals won by female athletes in comparison to those won by men. For example, he shows that in Barcelona in 1992, men won thirteen medals while women won nine, meaning women took home forty-one per cent of the total Japanese medals. In 1996, male and female competitors each took home seven medals, meaning the women's medals were fifty per cent of the total.[51] In Sydney in 2000, men won five medals while women won thirteen, meaning women won seventy-two per cent of the Japanese medals. In the last line of Kawahara's final chart (which shows the gendered breakdown of medals for the Winter Games), he lists the results of the most recent Winter Games at the time, in which figure skater Arakawa Shizuka brought home Japan's only medal. According to his analysis, when you try to calculate the percentage of female medals at these Olympics, the result is a telling symbol: ∞.[52] Although perhaps not statistically significant, I believe that this result is more symbolically important than any other figure on Kawahara's charts. It suggests the infinite possibility for Japan's female athletes to continue to excel and the boundless opportunities that have opened to women in contemporary Japan.

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Afterword

What about women's baseball and women's sumo?

Given the title of this book, it would not be complete without mentioning that Japan's two national sports, baseball and sumo wrestling, can no longer be held up as the all-male domains that they once were. Scholarship and media attention given to sport in Japan has largely been androcentric due to the very fact that the nation's most visible sports are virtually all male. In the twenty-first century, though, female athletes have begun to step into the already bright spotlight shining on these sports, again altering perceptions towards both female athletes and the sports themselves in the process.

A 2010 book titled *Yomigaeru! Joshi puro yakyū: Hīru wo supaiku ni hakikaete* (*It's back! Women's professional baseball – exchanging high-heels for spikes*) documents the resurrection and surge of popularity of women's professional baseball in twenty-first century Japan. Women's baseball was first played in an organized fashion in Japan in 1917, with sporadic matches between Japanese and American women's teams taking place through the 1920s and 1930s. The sport of softball emerged in Japan in the mid-1940s[1] and coexisted with women's baseball for a few decades. A professional women's baseball league was established in Japan in 1950, and although the sport itself never completely disappeared, at the professional level it was gradually overtaken by softball, and the women's baseball league formally disintegrated in 1971.[2]

In 2010, as the title of the book suggests, professional baseball for women re-emerged in Japan, with the founding of the Girl's Professional Baseball League (GPBL or Nihon joshi puro yakyū rīgu). The league consists of two teams, the Kyōto Asto Dreams and the Hyōgo Swing Smileys. Media reports suggest that the league got off to a strong start, with training sessions alone seeing more spectators than the training sessions of other popular sports like men's football (with several hundred fans coming to watch GPBL practices).[3] Leading newspapers gave continual coverage of the league throughout the season, including lengthy articles highlighting the background and statistics of individual players.[4]

The inaugural teams of the GPBL were comprised primarily of young women who played baseball or softball on club teams in high school or college. One player from a high school baseball club, Yoshida Eri, was drafted in 2009 by the Kobe 9 Cruise, one of four teams in Japan's Kansai Independent League, to become the first female professional pitcher in Japan. A sidearm knuckleballer (dubbed 'knuckle princess' (*nakkuru hime*) by the Japanese media), she had reasonable success with her team in Japan, and when the

Kansai Independent League folded after her first season with them, Yoshida got a contract to play in the Arizona Winter League in the United States. This led to the eighteen-year-old getting signed for the 2010 season with the Chico Outlaws, a minor league professional team in central California that is part of the independent Golden League.[5]

Much hype surrounded the arrival of Yoshida to the Chico Outlaws, and the media reported that the crowds at her games were filling stadiums to capacity. Japanese and female fans alike flocked to see her play, as one of only a handful of women ever to play professional baseball in the United States and the first from Japan. In spite of all the media and fan attention, Yoshida's first season with the Outlaws was not good. The team lost in all of the games for which Yoshida pitched. She finished her season with zero wins and four losses, allowed more runs than any other pitcher on the team and was dropped from the roster when the team made the playoffs at the end of the season. Her relatively poor performance confirmed rumours that had been brewing in the media that her presence on the team was little more than a publicity stunt to get fans to come to games.[6]

The case of Yoshida Eri gets at the very heart of the issues surrounding women's sport in the twenty-first century. While she was an undeniably good pitcher, especially given her age and experience, perhaps her appearances in professional leagues in Japan and the United States *were* merely for publicity. And perhaps they were not. That it is unclear whether it was her athletic skill or her ability to draw fans that got her into the professional leagues is a sign of how inextricably connected sport, media and capitalism have become. Sport can only thrive because of the media and financial backing, and the media and industries thrive on the success of individual athletes and sports teams.

The burgeoning sport of women's sumo brings up similar issues, though at present the sport is only carried out at the amateur level and has yet to be professionalized.[7] Known in Japan as *shin sumo* or *onna zumō*, the sport was formalized in 1996, when both the International Sumo Federation held the first women's tournament in Europe and when the Women's Sumo Federation was established in Japan. For a variety of reasons, the sport caught on slowly in Japan, with Europeans dominating women's sumo tournaments from their inception. Not only has the national sport of Japan been so male-centric that women have been officially forbidden from setting foot on the dohyō, or sumo ring, but a sordid history of lewd 'sumo' matches involving topless women and other similar forms of entertainment has led to a tremendous stigma being attached to women's involvement in the sport.[8] In contrast to the long, gendered history of sumo in Japan, many of the top European wrestlers report that they had never even seen professional Japanese sumo when they got involved in their local women's sumo clubs.[9]

However, Japanese women in the twenty-first century are increasingly getting involved and being taken seriously in the sport. Local tournaments

and international bouts alike are attracting large crowds within Japan, and the media maintains regular coverage of them. Moreover, popular television dramas such as the 2010 *Dohyō Girl!* on TBS have drawn attention to women's involvement in the sport and helped to normalize the notion that sumo is no longer the all-male domain that it once was. The push for further inclusion of women in the sport was spurred in part by a 1994 decision by the International Olympic Committee to no longer allow single-sex sports to be introduced to the Olympic programme. With the hopes of eventually making sumo an Olympic sport, the International Sumo Federation has backed efforts to alter the image of sumo as being a single-sex sport.[10]

Like with women's involvement in baseball, it remains unclear as to whether spectators are interested in the sport *per se* or in the novelty or spectacle of women's involvement in traditionally male activities. What is clear is that allegations of game fixing and ties to organized crime have tarnished the respective images of men's baseball and sumo in Japan. Perhaps this has resulted in the public's favourable reception of new, unblemished versions of their most popular pastimes.

Regardless of how female athletes today are garnering their share of the media spotlight, the fact that women today represent a larger percentage of the sporting world in Japan than ever before is irrefutable. The twenty-first century inextricability of sport with the media and commercialism has had an arguably positive effect on Japanese women. Whether they get there by winning Olympic medals or by successfully endorsing products, female athletes are finding themselves in positions of great stature. These women send a clear message that nothing is off limits to young women, and they show that sport as a male-dominated realm in Japan is beginning to crumble.

Moreover, as media exposure through sport has repeatedly led to voter popularity at the polls, a number of prominent female athletes have reached positions of significant political power. These athlete politicians have lobbied for improved conditions for mothers in the workplace, for better day care facilities and for other policies that both facilitate gender equity and help to ease the burdens from Japan's twenty-first-century population crises.[11] The change that female athletes have precipitated in Japanese society over the past century is tangible, and the trend towards more female involvement in sport shows no signs of slowing down anytime soon.

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Tables

Table 1 Japanese participation in the Summer Olympics (1896–2008)

Olympics	Number of Japanese men	Number of Japanese women
1896 (Athens)	0	0
1900 (Paris)	0	0
1904 (St Louis)	0	0
1908 (London)	0	0
1912 (Stockholm)	2	0
1920 (Antwerp)	15	0
1924 (Paris)	19	0
1928 (Amsterdam)	42	1
1932 (Los Angeles)	115	16
1936 (Berlin)	162	17
1948 (London)	0	0
1952 (Helsinki)	61	11
1956 (Melbourne)	103	16
1960 (Rome)	147	20
1964 (Tokyo)	294	61
1968 (Mexico City)	153	30
1972 (Munich)	144	38
1976 (Montréal)	152	61
1980 (Moscow)	0	0
1984 (Los Angeles)	178	53
1988 (Seoul)	188	71
1992 (Barcelona)	181	82
1996 (Atlanta)	160	150
2000 (Sydney)	158	110
2004 (Athens)	141	171
2008 (Beijing)	170	169

Table 2 Japanese medal winners at the Summer Olympics (1896–2008)

Olympics	Japanese medal winners[a]	
	Men	Women
1896 (Athens)	0	0
1900 (Paris)	0	0
1904 (St Louis)	0	0
1908 (London)	0	0
1912 (Stockholm)	0	0
1920 (Antwerp)	2	0
1924 (Paris)	1	0
1928 (Amsterdam)	4	1 (silver)
1932 (Los Angeles)	17	1 (silver)
1936 (Berlin)	19	1 (gold)
1948 (London)	0	0
1952 (Helsinki)	9	0
1956 (Melbourne)	19	0
1960 (Rome)	17	1
1964 (Tokyo)	27	2
1968 (Mexico City)	24	1
1972 (Munich)	27	2
1976 (Montréal)	24	1
1980 (Moscow)	0	0
1984 (Los Angeles)	29	3
1988 (Seoul)	11	3
1992 (Barcelona)	13	9
1996 (Atlanta)	7	7
2000 (Sydney)	5	13
2004 (Athens)	20	17
2008 (Beijing)	13	12

a. Team medals count as one medal.

Table 3 Japanese participation in the Winter Olympics (1924–2010)

Olympics	Number of Japanese men	Number of Japanese women
1924 (Chamonix)	0	0
1928 (St Moritz)	6	0
1932 (Lake Placid)	17	0
1936 (Garmisch-Partenkirchen)	33	1
1948 (St Moritz)	0	0
1952 (Oslo)	13	0
1956 (Cortina d'Ampezzo)	10	0
1960 (Squaw Valley)	36	5
1964 (Innsbruck)	42	6
1968 (Grenoble)	53	9
1972 (Sapporo)	70	20
1976 (Innsbruck)	51	6
1980 (Lake Placid)	46	4
1984 (Sarajevo)	32	7
1988 (Calgary)	37	11
1992 (Albertville)	42	21
1994 (Lillehammer)	49	16
1998 (Nagano)	100	66
2002 (Salt Lake City)	61	48
2006 (Torino)	59	53
2010 (Vancouver)	49	45

Table 4 Japanese medal winners in the Winter Olympics (1924–2010)

Olympics	Japanese medal winners[a]	
	Men	Women
Women	0	0
1928 (St Moritz)	0	0
1932 (Lake Placid)	0	0
1936 (Garmisch-Partenkirchen)	0	0
1948 (St Moritz)	0	0
1952 (Oslo)	0	0
1956 (Cortina d'Ampezzo)	1	0
1960 (Squaw Valley)	0	0
1964 (Innsbruck)	0	0
1968 (Grenoble)	0	0
1972 (Sapporo)	3	0
1976 (Innsbruck)	0	0
1980 (Lake Placid)	1	0
1984 (Sarajevo)	1	0
1988 (Calgary)	1	0
1992 (Albertville)	5	2
1994 (Lillehammer)	4	1
1998 (Nagano)	8	2
2002 (Salt Lake City)	1	1
2006 (Torino)	0	1
2010 (Vancouver)	3	2

a. Team medals count as one medal.

Notes

Chapter 1 Introduction: Why women's sport? Why Japan?

1 Image can be seen on the Japan Post website (Japanese only): http://www.post.japanpost.jp/kitte_hagaki/stamp/design_stamp/2000/image/20c_des_5l.jpg [accessed 4 August 2011].
2 See French (2003).
3 Another telling figure is that in 2004 there were ten per cent more female than male delegates representing Japan at the Summer Olympics in Athens. Japan was one of the very few nations at these Olympics with more female than male athletes.
4 Fujita 1968: 93.
5 Cha 2009: 25.
6 For example, Korean athletes in occupied Korea in the 1920s formed athletic clubs that were strongly associated with independence movements, as sport was one of the few ways that Koreans were permitted by the Japanese to congregate in groups. Sporting bouts between occupied Koreans and their Japanese colonizers came to be seen as symbolic fights for Korea's independence from Japan (Cha 2009: 25).
7 *The New York Times*, 3 August 1928.
8 Books written in English on gender in Japan prior to 1984 include Gail Bernstein's *Haruko's World: A Japanese Farm Woman and Her Community* (1983), Samuel Coleman's *Family Planning in Japanese Society: Traditional Birth Control in Modern Urban Culture* (1983), Alice Cook and Hiroko Hayashi's *Working Women in Japan: Discrimination, Resistance, and Reform* (1980), Tadashi Fukutake's *The Japanese Family* (1981), Joy Hendry's *Marriage in Changing Japan: Community and Society* (1981), Takie Lebra's *Japanese Women: Constraint and Fulfillment* (1984), Susan Pharr's *Political Women in Japan: The Search for a Place in Political Life* (1981), Dorothy Robins-Mowry's *The Hidden Sun: Women of Modern Japan* (1983) and Sharon Sievers' *Flowers in Salt: The Beginnings of Feminist Consciousness in Modern Japan* (1983).
9 One such feminist scholar, Marilyn Boxer (1982: 663–70), explains that she and others of the time were inspired by the civil rights movement in the United States, through which programmes and courses on black studies emerged.
10 This report was based on the proceedings of a 1984 gathering of scholars of Japan to discuss the direction of gender studies in the Japanese context.
11 See, for example, Liddle and Nakajima's *Rising Suns, Rising Daughters: Gender, Class, and Power in Japan* (2000), Glenda Roberts' *Staying on the Line: Blue Collar Women in Contemporary Japan* (1994) and Patricia Tsurumi's *Factory Girls: Women in the Tread Mills of Meiji Japan* (1990).
12 See, for example, W. Donald Smith's chapter in Uno and Molony, 'Sorting Coal and Pickling Cabbage: Korean Women in the Japanese Mining Industry' (2005) (race, class and gender), Frank Upham's 'Unplaced Persons and Movements for Place', in *Postwar Japan as History* (1993) (race, gender and disability) and Gregory Pflugfelder's *Cartographies of Desire: Male–Male Sexuality in Japanese Discourse* (1999) (sexuality and gender).

13 See Mary Brinton's *Women and the Economic Miracle* (1993), Janet Hunter's *Women and the Labour Market in Japan's Industrialising Economy* (2003) and Robin LeBlanc's *Bicycle Citizens: The Political World of the Japanese Housewife* (1999) for some examples of work looking at gender in Japan's political economy.
14 Bestor 1985: 286.
15 See Sandra Buckley's 'Altered States: The Body Politics of "Being-Women"' in *Postwar Japan as History* (1993) and Joyce Gelb's *Gender Policies in Japan and the United States: Comparing Women's Movements, Rights, and Politics* (2003). A related concern when considering the international dimensions of gender in Japan is that of how gender is socially constructed in Japan vis-à-vis women from other societies, including the West, South-East Asia and other countries in East Asia.
16 Of these, two notable ones are Sharon Sievers' *Flowers in Salt: The Beginnings of Feminist Consciousness in Modern Japan* (1983) and Vera Mackie's *Feminism in Modern Japan: Citizenship, Embodiment and Sexuality* (2003).
17 Barbara Molony's article, 'The Quest for Women's Rights in Turn-of-the-Century Japan' (2005) discusses some of the distinctive aspects of women's rights in a modernizing, industrializing Japan. See also Mackie (2003: 2–3).
18 Mackie 2003: 55.
19 Chan-Tiberghien 2004: 142.
20 The plural 'feminisms' has been used to indicate the multiplicity of causes being fought for and groups being represented by the term.
21 One edited volume in particular, *Men and Masculinities in Contemporary Japan: Dislocating the Salaryman Doxa*, contains several essays engaging with diverse issues of masculinity in Japan.
22 Jennifer Robertson has written several pieces focusing on related issues of gender and performance in Japan. Spotlighting the issue of androgyny in Japanese theatre, Robertson looks at the all-female Takarazuka Revue and its all-male predecessor, kabuki, to see the ways that androgyny is both acted out and received in Japanese society. Ayako Kano has also explored the way that performance has affected the modern formation of gender, with her focus being on female actresses (playing females).
23 I thank Ayako Kano for drawing my attention to this parallel during a discussion in graduate school.
24 Studies of women's entrance into sports in the West include the following: Pamela Grundy, *Learning to Win: Sports, Education and Social Change in Twentieth Century North Carolina* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2001) and J.A. Mangan and Roberta J. Park, *From 'Fair Sex' to Feminism: Sport and the Socialization of Women in the Industrial and Post-Industrial Eras* (Ottawa: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd, 1987). One about East Asia is Jinxia Dong's, *Women, Sport and Society in Modern China: Holding Up More than Half the Sky* (Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 2003).
25 Cahn 1994: viii.
26 Cahn 1994: 208.
27 See, for example, Anne Bolin and Jane Granskog, eds, *Athletic Intruders: Ethnographic Research on Women, Culture, and Exercise* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2003); M. Ann Hall, *Feminism and Sporting Bodies* (Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics, 1996); and Jennifer Hargreaves, *Sporting Females: Critical Issues in the History and Sociology of Women's Sports* (New York: Routledge, 1994).
28 The current state of English-language scholarship on women's sport in modern Japanese history no doubt adds to this marginalization. One heavily referred to

volume, Guttmann and Thompson's (2001) *Japanese Sports: A History*, provides a good example of this phenomenon. Of their otherwise very carefully researched 200 plus page detailed history of Japanese sports, Guttmann and Thompson (2001: 221–5), devote five pages to 'women's sports'. While the section was no doubt included with the opposite aim in mind, such a separation from the rest of the book's content ultimately ghettoizes 'women's sports' as separate and distinct from 'actual sports' and reinforces the marginalization of women's athletic endeavours.

29 Spielvogel 2003: 5.

30 See, for example, Guttmann and Thompson (2001), Igarashi (2000) and Hurst (1998).

31 See Talamini and Page (1973).

32 See Kelly (2004), Spielvogel (2003) and Edwards (2003).

33 See Cahn (1994), Bolin and Granskog (2003) and Guttmann (1991).

34 For example, Japan-specific books include Maguire and Nakayama (2006), Guttmann and Thompson (2001) and Linhart and Frühstück (2003). Many other works exist in other 'areas' of study, for example, studies of football in Europe or Africa, baseball in Latin America and sport in communist societies like Soviet Russia.

35 Meaning more scholars are part of Japan's leading academic associations on sport than in any other nation (Maguire and Nakayama 2006: 1).

36 Outlined concisely by Bill Kelly (2007: 4–5) in the introduction of his edited volume, *This Sporting Life: Sports and Body Culture in Modern Japan*.

37 See Sugawara's *Taiiku shakaigaku nyūmon* (1975) and Takenoshita's *Purei, supōtsu, taiikuron* (1972).

38 Kelly 2007: 5.

39 Available at http://www.jssgs.org/ [accessed 4 August 2011].

40 Raita 1999: 120.

41 For example, the September 2010 edition (vol. 18, issue 2) of the *Japan Journal of Sport Sociology* (*Supōtsu shakaigaku kenkyū*) was a special issue titled 'The Theoretical Gender Gaze and a Shaken Body' and included a number of articles about women (generally speaking, the focus was not on individual athletes) in sport (as opposed to physical education).

42 *Supokon manga* comes from a combination of the words *supōtsu* (sports) and *konjō* ('fighting spirit' or 'guts').

43 Laura Miller uses a similar approach in her book *Beauty Up*, in which she critically examines the Japanese beauty industry. Just as the industry she looks at is primarily about popular consumption but has its fair share of critical discourse, so too is the sporting industry. Both industries are significantly shaped by commercial and social forces, and have shifted dramatically over time to accommodate such demands.

44 For a detailed and insightful take on the emergence and significance of sport celebrities in modern Japan, see Dennis Frost's *Seeing Stars: Sports Celebrity, Identity, and Body Culture in Modern Japan* (2011).

45 See, for example, Itani *et al*. (2001) and Takahashi *et al*. (2005).

Chapter 2 Japanese sportswomen in context

1 Though her married name is Ishizaki, Hashimoto is usually referred to by her maiden name.

2 See, for example, Inoue and Thomson's chapters in *Mirror of Modernity: Invented Traditions of Modern Japan*, Stephen Vlastos, ed. (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998); G. Cameron Hurst's *Armed Martial Arts*

of Japan: Swordsmanship and Archery (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998); Karl Friday's *Legacies of the Sword: The Kashima-Shinryu and Samurai Martial Culture* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press, 1997); and Winston King's *Zen and the Way of the Sword: Arming the Samurai Psyche* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

3 Hurst 1998: 2.

4 See Guttmann's article 'Targeting Modernity: Archery and the Modernization of Japan' in Kelly and Sugimoto (2007), Guttmann and Thompson's *Japanese Sports: A History* (2001) and Guttmann's *From Ritual to Record: The Nature of Modern Sports* (1979).

5 Guttmann and Thompson 2001: 3.

6 Guttmann discloses an interesting irony about the origins of sumō wrestling as it relates to gender: apparently the earliest known use of the word 'sumō' referred to matches among women in the fifth century AD. While the activity itself was not precisely described, the reigning Emperor Yūryaku had female attendants strip to their waistcloths and grapple in plain view. The account is clearly sexually provocative and has been played down by many historians when talking of the origins of sumō (Guttmann and Thompson 2001: 14–15).

7 Guttmann 2001: 26–7.

8 Guttmann 2001: 30.

9 Guttmann 2001: 102.

10 Josei taiiku shi kenkyū kai 1981: 10.

11 For example, *kendō* and *kyūdō*. See Hurst (1998) for a detailed description of Japan's armed martial arts.

12 In Kelly 2007: 27.

13 Kelly 2007: 35.

14 Hall 1973: 361.

15 Cave 2004: 386–7.

16 Roden 1980: 511–12.

17 Roden (1980: 512) asserts that the number of foreign residents, visitors and military personnel in Japan during the 1860s grew to over 15,000, though the number of permanent foreign residents was closer to 3,000.

18 Morris 1895: 223–4.

19 Roden points out that baseball became so popular amongst American expatriates in Japan in the Meiji era in part because the sport helped them 'maintain social and cultural difference from the Japanese and, to a lesser extent, from the British, who outnumbered the Americans in Yokohama by as much as three to one' (Roden 1980: 518).

20 Asami 1984: 191.

21 Other American teachers credited with having helped baseball enter Japan include F.W. Strange, G.H. Mudgett and Leroy Janes, all of whom believed that baseball might help break down cultural barriers between the Japanese and the Americans (Roden 1980: 518–19).

22 Roden 1980: 519.

23 Li 1993: ii.

24 Male students during the Meiji era were assigned a series of 'newly selected physical exercises' (*shinsen taisō*) as part of the national curriculum. These exercises involved moving ones arms while holding small, dumbbell-shaped pieces of wood and doing different leg movements such as lunges and squats. The University of Tsukuba's Gallery of Sport and Physical Education had a fascinating interactive exhibit in September 2010 in which you could see a video of a

(present-day) student re-enacting the *shinsen taisō* routine. I thank Dr Shimizu Satoshi for taking me to see this exhibit.

25 Li 1993: 2–3.

26 From an official statement given in 1872 in Ibaraki prefecture (from Li 1993: 18).

27 Li 1993: 22.

28 These schools also emerged in large part because of the lifting of the official ban against Christianity after the Meiji Restoration. They flourished because of a growing desire among Japanese to learn English in the Meiji period as well (Li 1993: 62–4).

29 Yamamoto *et al*. 2006: 254.

30 Yamamoto *et al*. 2006: 254.

31 Li 1993: 95.

32 See, for example, Li-Hsiang Lisa Rosenlee's *Confucianism and Women: A Philosophical Interpretation* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2006), Chenyang Li's edited volume, *The Sage and the Second Sex* (Peru, IL: Open Court Publishing Company, 2000) and Dorothy Ko *et al*.'s *Women and Confucian Cultures in Premodern China, Korea, and Japan* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003).

33 Fan 1997: 5.

34 Jane Jaquette (2001: 120) argues that the strength of Confucianism and of the state in East Asia has made autonomy an option that exists for only the most radical feminist groups, which remain largely marginalized.

35 Fan 1995: 16.

36 Fan 1995: 16.

37 Fan 1997: 21–2.

38 It is important to note that Morris sees the roots of modern physical culture in China not in the activities introduced from the West but more so in the Qing self-strengtheners, reformers and revolutionaries who sought to improve their physical strength in order to better deal with imperialist advances in the nineteenth century (Morris 2000: 877–8).

39 Fan 1997: 7.

40 Fan 1995: 16.

41 Liang Qichao, quoted by Morris (2000: 883).

42 Fan 1995: 17.

43 Riordan and Dong 1996: 131.

44 Riordan and Dong 1996: 149.

45 Riordan and Dong 1996: 150.

46 Medals given to individual athletes, with team medals not being counted. Chinese men won thirty-four individual golds. Source: IOC Olympic medal database.

47 With sixteen being the minimum age for competition in the women's artistic gymnastics competition, it was reported that several members of the Chinese team had their records manipulated by officials to make them appear older than they were. For example, He Kexin's passport lists her as being born in 1992, while other official records list her birth year as 1994, which would have made her fourteen and underage at the Beijing Olympics. Officials were ultimately unable to prove that she was underage, and she kept her gold medal.

48 Some sources list hurdler Ji Zheng as China's first female Olympian, but she competed for Taiwan in the 1968 Mexico City Olympics.

49 Although the name of Korea was changed from Chosŏn to the Korean Empire in 1897, the country was governed by the Chosŏn dynasty until Japanese colonization in 1910.

50 Koh 2003: 69.
51 Koh 2003: 69.
52 Haboush 1995: 131.
53 Haboush 1995: 130.
54 Koh 2003: 69.
55 de Ceuster 2003: 59.
56 de Ceuster 2003: 62.
57 de Ceuster 2003: 65.
58 Koh 2003: 70.
59 South Korean Olympic and World Champion gold-medal-winning weightlifter Jang Mi-Ran has broken several world records in the clean and jerk, and has often been referred to in the media as the 'strongest woman in the world'.
60 Kidd 2010: 18.
61 Longman, *The New York Times*, 23 February 2010, p. B12.
62 Riordan and Dong 1996: 151.

Chapter 3 The road to participation in competitive sport

1 Josei taiiku shi kenkyū kai 1981: 10.
2 Fröbel believed that children were like flowers, each one needing care and nurturance. He thought that children were lovely as individuals but glorious when in a community of peers. Thus he called his school 'kindergarten' or 'garden of children' (Olson 2002: 353).
3 Josei taiiku shi kenkyū kai 1981: 12.
4 Josei taiiku shi kenkyū kai 1981: 31.
5 Josei taiiku shi kenkyū kai 1981: 43–4.
6 *Kyōiku kenkyū*, vol. 33, 1876: 87 (cited in Josei taiiku shi kenkyū kai 1981: 50).
7 Josei taiiku shi kenkyū kai 1981: 52.
8 Josei taiiku shi kenkyū kai 1981: 52.
9 Ōbitsu 2000: 189.
10 In the Meiji era, physical education in Japan was far less organized than it was at the same time in Europe and America. While certain equipment such as balls could be found in many schools, there was little systematized 'learning' involved with their use.
11 See, for example, Kiku's 'The Japanese Baseball Spirit and Professional Ideology' (in Maguire and Nakayama 2006) and his 'Bushidō and the Modernization of Sports in Japan' (in Kelly 2007) and Whiting's popular works, *The Chrysanthemum and the Bat: Baseball Samurai Style* and *You've Gotta Have Wa: When Two Cultures Collide on the Baseball Diamond*.
12 Hancock, H. Irving. *Japanese Physical Training: The System of Exercise, Diet, and General Mode of Living that Has Made the Mikado's People the Healthiest, Strongest, and Happiest Men and Women in the World* (New York: Putnam, 1904).
13 Hancock 1904: xi.
14 'I bowed, and we backed off a little way, then approached each other sinuously, each looking for an opening. There was a clinch that lasted, as nearly I could judge, about five seconds. Three seconds later I was compelled to pat the floor in token of surrender … "She very good," observed the teacher, a statement in which I was quite wiling to concur' (Hancock 1904: 6–7).
15 Hancock 1904: 8.
16 From '"Jiu-Jitsu" for Women', *The New York Times*, 20 February 1904.

17 Hill 1903: 4.
18 Hancock 1904: 152.
19 Jujitsu (*jūjutsu* in Japanese) is the unarmed martial art from which jūdō stemmed. According to Guttmann and Thompson, in the early years of jūdō (late nineteenth to early twentieth century), there was often confusion among Westerners as to what constituted jujitsu and what constituted its 'modernized' form of jūdō. Guttmann and Thompson (2001: 102–4) also assert that women were more welcome in jūdō than in prior forms of martial arts, which suggests that perhaps Hancock was in a jūdō school but was referring to the sport as jujitsu.
20 Inoue and Kameyama 2006: 134.
21 Also, in the Tohoku region she came from, the name 'Aguri' was given to the last female child born to parents who wanted a son (Raita 2005: 788).
22 In addition to Inokuchi, the seven other women were sent abroad to study music, home economics and English education (Josei taiiku shi kenkyū kai 1981: 106).
23 From the *New York Herald Sunday*, 6 April 1902. Reproduced in Josei taiiku shi kenkyū kai 1981: 108–9.
24 Josei taiiku shi kenkyū kai 1981: 111.
25 Raita 2005: 789.
26 Raita 2005: 789.
27 Josei taiiku shi kenkyū kai 1981: 114, 121.
28 Josei taiiku shi kenkyū kai 1981: 119–20.
29 A women's golf tournament took place in Kobe on 9 September 1905 (Itani *et al.* 2001: 14).
30 Fujimura suffered from pleurisy (*kyōmakuen*) and tuberculosis (*haibyō*).
31 Koshimizu 2005: 867.
32 A branch school next to the Tokyo joshi shihan gakkō that Toyoda Fuyu had attended, this school was established in 1900 for high school girls (also now part of Ochanomizu Women's University).
33 Josei taiiku shi kenkyū kai 1981: 136.
34 Koshimizu 2005: 868.
35 From Baron Nils Posse's *Handbook of School Gymnastics of the Swedish System*, citied in a review article in *Science* magazine (October 1892: 209).
36 Wosh 1982: 48.
37 *Tokyo joshi taisō ongaku gakkō*.
38 In the first seven years of its existence, 380 students graduated from the Tokyo Women's School of Gymnastics and Music, but in the ten years from the time Fujimura took leadership, only 120 women completed their studies. With the financial help of Tsuboi Gendō and the logistic support of her family members, Fujimura barely escaped having to close down the school (Koshimizu 2005: 868).
39 These journals started being published in the 1920s and continued until the start of the Second World War (*Josei taiiku shi kenkyū kai* 1981: 144).
40 From *Josei taiiku* (vol. 1, issue 12: 15–17, 1931) and *Josei bi* (vol. 3, issue 7: 7, 1931), respectively.
41 Koshimizu 2005: 867.
42 Koshimizu 2005: 869–70.
43 Quoted in Mangan and Park (1987: 42).
44 Cahn 1994: 13.
45 Mangan and Park 1987: 131.
46 Cahn 1994: 12.
47 Miller 2006: 19–25.
48 Miller 2006: 22.

49 Koshimizu 2005: 870.
50 She was fourteen years old at the time (Anamizu 2001: 11).
51 Josei taiiku shi kenkyū kai 1981: 153.
52 Anamizu 2001: 14.
53 Anamizu 2001: 14.
54 Anamizu 1999: 61.
55 Anamizu 2001: 17.
56 Josei taiiku shi kenkyū kai 1981: 163.
57 Murayama 2004: 49.
58 Anamizu 2001: 18.
59 Spielvogel 2003: 146–7.

Chapter 4 From calisthenics to competition: Early participation in international sport

1 Guttmann and Thompson 2001: 79.
2 At one such for-profit event, the sixth Far Eastern Championship Games (the precursor to the Asian Games) in 1923, Japanese women competed in the volleyball tournament, which was included as an exhibition event. The Japanese women beat the team from China to win the tournament (Guttmann and Thompson 2001: 79).
3 Of course, the attitude towards women's competitive sports varied from country to country at this time. According to Allen Guttmann, in the 1920s and 1930s the Europeans were more accepting of seeing women compete than were the Americans. While Americans thought that women could channel their energies into non-competitive 'play days', the Europeans had more clearly 'athletic' events (Guttmann 1991: 154–5).
4 Japan was the first Asian nation to send delegates to the Olympic Games, after becoming the first Asian country to have a representative in the International Olympic Committee (Kanō Jigoro, the so-called inventor of Judo). Two Japanese men, a sprinter and a marathon runner, represented Japan in the Fifth Olympic Games in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1912 (Japanese Olympic Committee website: http://www.joc.or.jp).
5 Guttmann and Thompson 2001: 92.
6 In 1917, a 508-kilometre *ekiden* from Kyoto's Sanjō Bridge to Tokyo's Ueno Park took place. In 1920, university students participated in an *ekiden* from Tokyo to Hakone and back (Guttmann and Thompson 2001: 74).
7 Guttmann and Thompson 2001: 76–7.
8 Guttmann and Thompson 2001: 79.
9 Terada 1928, first twenty pages (pages unnumbered).
10 Terada 1928, preface.
11 It should be noted that football at this time was more of a kickball-like activity, with players standing in a circle and kicking the ball instead of competing towards two opposing goals (Edwards 2003: 19).
12 The first 'Women's Olympic Games' were a one-day track meet held in Paris in 1922. Athletes came from England, the United States, France, Switzerland and Czechoslovakia to compete in the following events: 60-yard dash, 100-yard dash, 300 metres, 1,000 metres, 100-yard hurdles, 440-yard relay, running high jump, running long jump, discus throw and javelin throw (Leigh and Bonin 1977: 77).
13 Mihashi 1924: 11.
14 Mihashi 1924: 13–14.

15 *Osaka Mainichi Shimbun*, 11 June 1924, and Raita (1996: 45). It is also important to note that the day after these talks took place, the *Osaka Mainichi Shimbun* ran another article specifically about the lectures. The article also further hypes the following day's athletic tournament (*Osaka Mainichi Shimbun*, 14 June 1924).
16 Raita 1996: 50.
17 Raita 1996: 45.
18 So impressive a body of material on Hitomi Kinue exists, in fact, that two separate 'literature inventories' (*bunken mokuroku*) have been published – one cataloguing newspapers and images, the other cataloguing movies, TV shows and books (Takeda and Misawa 1998, 1999). She appears to be the only female athlete for whom such an inventory was created or deemed necessary.
19 Like many young women of her day, Hitomi's exact birthday was not accurately recorded. Her birth date is often listed as 1 January 1907.
20 Originally published by Heibonsha in 1929. Reprinted in Hitomi (1983).
21 Hitomi 1983: 16.
22 Okayama kenritsu kōtō jogakkō, where only one out of every four girls who took the entrance exam was admitted (Hitomi 1983: 18).
23 1.5 *ri* ≈ 6 kilometres ≈ 3.75 miles.
24 Hitomi 1983: 23.
25 Hitomi 1983: 29–32.
26 This record was not counted as an 'official' record (Hitomi 1983: 34).
27 Hitomi 1983: 34.
28 Misawa 2003: 58–61.
29 Hitomi 1983: 45.
30 'When she triumphantly returned to the *juku*, headmistress Nikaidō was absolutely delighted over the new records that Hitomi had set' (Ohara 1990: 51).
31 The school of physical education was a two-year programme from which Hitomi graduated in March 1925.
32 Her immediate postgraduation jobs included working as a coach at girl's high school in Kyoto and filling in for a summer as head of the Nikaidō Taisō Juku while Nikaidō Tokuyo was away teaching a course in colonized Taiwan (Ohara 1990: 54).
33 Misawa Mitsuo has chronicled the *tanka* poetry Hitomi wrote between 1922 and 1931 (see Misawa 2001).
34 The *Mainichi Shimbun* was founded in Tokyo in 1872, with the Osaka branch opening in 1876. Hitomi was the first female journalist in any of the company's offices. (Source: http://www.mainichi.co.jp/corporate/co-history.html [accessed 9 July 2011]).
35 Hitomi 1983: 49.
36 Young and Wamsley 2005: 148.
37 After the Second Women's Olympic Games, the IOC declared that the FSFI had stolen the name 'Olympics' and they insisted that the word be removed from the name of the event. The FSFI agreed to change the name of the event to the 'Women's World Games' but only in exchange for ten events for women at the 1928 Olympic Games in Amsterdam. This entry of women into Olympic track and field events took place right after Pierre de Coubertin retired as president of the IOC. The IOC ultimately did not uphold its end of the bargain, however, and even though the FSFI changed the name of its competition, the IOC only granted five events for women at the Amsterdam Olympics (Dyreson 2003: 444; Leigh and Bonin 1977: 11; Young and Wamsley 2005: 148).

38 The *Osaka Mainichi Shimbun*, of course, also took advantage of Hitomi's trip to Sweden to create a massive publicity campaign, running numerous stories about Hitomi and women's sport in the days before, during and after the Women's Olympic Games (Ohara 1990: 67).
39 Hitomi 1983: 51.
40 Ohara 1990: 68.
41 In Russia, Hitomi stayed with Mr Kuroda, a *Mainichi Shimbun* special correspondent living in Moscow, and his family at their house (Hitomi 1983: 54).
42 Ohara 1990: 69.
43 The ambassador told Hitomi that Stockholm was like Sweden's Tokyo and that the industrial factory town of Gothenberg was Sweden's Osaka (Hitomi 1983: 59).
44 Hitomi 1983: 60, 64.
45 Ohara 1990: 80.
46 *Asahi Shimbun*, 29–30 August 1926.
47 Ohara 1990: 103.
48 Leder 1996: 27.
49 This was a point of contention because many member nations of the IOC thought that an event celebrating only winter sports would go against one of the main ideals of the Games, namely the bringing together of 'the youth of the world'. This was because only a small group of geographically appropriate nations would be able to take part in such games (Guttmann 1992: 41).
50 Guttmann 1992: 41.
51 An amateur is 'one who devotes himself to sport for sport's sake without deriving from it, directly or indirectly, the means of existence. A professional is one who derives the means of existence entirely or partly from sport' (Guttmann 1992: 44). The rules of amateurism underwent many revisions in the IOC over subsequent years.
52 To understand the significance of Coubertin's retirement to women's sports, one only has to hear what he has said of women's sports – for example, he said women's participation in the Games would be '*impratique, inintéressante, inesthétique et incorrecte*' (Guttmann 1992: 38).
53 Statistics for participants of each Olympics can be found on the official website of the IOC (http://www.olympic.org).
54 In Japan, the WWCTU took the name *Nihon Kirisutokyō Fujin Kyōfūkai*, or the Japanese Christian Women's Reform Society, and took the lead on the first Japan-wide suffrage federation in 1924 (Dubois 2000: 547).
55 The five events held in women's track and field in Amsterdam were as follows: the 100-metre race, 4 × 100-metre relay, 800-metre race, discus throw and high jump (Markel *et al*. 1997: 103; IOC website). The British women's team was unsatisfied with having only five events, and as a result their amateur athletic association boycotted the 1928 Olympics – the only known women's boycott at an Olympic Games (Guttmann 1992: 47).
56 Hitomi 1983: 250.
57 Hitomi 1983: 255.
58 Hitomi 1983: 257.
59 While I have found no explicit mention of the procedures necessary to participate in Olympic events, it seems that in 1928 there were far fewer formalities involved when it came to athletes signing up for Olympic events at the last minute.
60 Hitomi finished second in her heat – three heats were run in the qualifying round, and the runners with the top nine times competed in the finals the next day (*Tokyo Nichi Nichi Shimbun*, 3 August 1928).

61 The world record had in fact been broken the day before during the qualifying 800-metre race by an American runner, who ran it in 2 minutes, 21.2 seconds (*Tokyo Nichi Nichi Shimbun*, 3 August 1928).
62 *The New York Times*, 3 August 1928.
63 Of course, this has had several exceptions such as Germany's denial of several Jewish athletes for its national team in Berlin in 1936 (Guttmann 1992: 65). The International Olympic Committee, however, has strived to separate sports from politics from its inception, which accounts in part for the inclusion of women and racial minorities in the Olympic Games *before* they were fully included in their respective societies. For example, women in Japan were competing in the Olympics before they had the right to vote, and African-Americans were competing while many parts of the United States were still segregated.
64 Young and Wamsley 2005: 149.
65 Most articles from the weeks following the Amsterdam Olympics simply group Hitomi together with Japan's other two medal winners – triple jumper Oda Mikio (gold medal) and 200-metre breaststroke swimmer Tsuruta Yoshiyuki (gold medal). These three Japanese athletes (along with the Indian field hockey team) were the first Olympic medal winners from Asia (*Tokyo Nichi Nichi Shimbun*, 3 August 1928).
66 *Fujin Sekai*, July 1929, 54–69.
67 *Fujin Sekai*, July 1929, 58.
68 Hitomi 1983: 289.
69 She writes in her autobiography that she lost motivation after returning from Amsterdam. After the journey back to Japan her spikes were covered in rust and mould, her training clothes smelled of mildew and when she saw the sports grounds where she used to train she had no desire to return (Hitomi 1983: 290).
70 The first such article to appear was the 11 August 1924 *Asahi Shimbun* piece cited above, written when Hitomi was only seventeen years old.
71 The original phrase is, 'Standing she's a peony, seated a tree peony, and her bearing as she walks a lily'. Cited in Yamashita (2001: 132).
72 *Asahi Graph*, 14 March 1928, cited in Yamashita (2001: 132). Ohara also contends that the jeers towards Hitomi in her races against the Terao sisters were related to the fact that the sisters were considered very cute and were popular among male fans (Ohara 1990: 123).
73 Inoue and Kameyama 2006: 139.
74 See *Shincho 45*, Issue 283, November 2005: 'The Legitimacy of the Theory that Amsterdam Olympic Medallist Hitomi Kinue Was a Man' and *Sunday Mainichi*, 20 August 2000: 'Was the "Blazing Sprinter" Really a Man?'
75 Hitomi 1931: 87–9.
76 Cited in Yamashita 2001: 132.
77 *Asahi Shimbun*, 3 August 1931.
78 Japan came in fourth place overall at this meet (Ohara 1990: 292).

Chapter 5 From antipathy to applause: The emergence of female powerhouses on the international scene

1 Her publications are written under her married name, Hyōdō Hideko. Her 1982 memoir (*Maehata ganbare*) recounts her childhood up to and including the 1936 Berlin Olympics. Her 1990 memoir (*Yūki, namida, soshite ai*) focuses more on the later part of her life, including her wedding after the Berlin Olympics, her experiences as a swimming coach and the births of her children.

2 Hyōdō 1982: 14.
3 Hyōdō 1982: 15.
4 Hyōdō 1982: 17.
5 'The ladies in my neighborhood would laugh and say things like, "That little Maehata girl will swim in this cold weather till her lips turn blue!" People would also say, "Won't that little girl become a tomboy, being raised with that short haircut?"' (Hyōdō 1982: 20).
6 Hyōdō 1982: 29.
7 Hyōdō 1982: 32.
8 Maehata recounts in her memoir an amusing interaction between herself and her coach, in which the time he recorded her in was so quick that he doubted the veracity of the time on his stopwatch (Hyōdō 1982: 33).
9 Hyōdō 1982: 38.
10 Hyōdō 1982: 51.
11 Including the 1912 Stockholm Games, the 1920 Antwerp Games and the 1924 Paris Games (there were no Olympic Games in 1916 due to First World War) (Guttmann 1992: 173–4).
12 In addition to having its first female medallist, Japan also had its first swimming medallist at the 1928 Amsterdam Olympics, as Tsuruta Yoshiyuki won the gold medal in the men's 200-metre breaststroke event (Hyōdō 1982: 58–60).
13 Hyōdō 1982: 64.
14 The American woman to whom Maehata lost in the 200-metre race was the world record holder at the time. Moreover, the finals of the 200-metre race took place only 30 minutes after Maehata had won her gold medal in the 100-metre race, and she contends that she was unable to swim to her full potential as a result (Hyōdō 1990: 31).
15 Hyōdō 1982: 81.
16 Hyōdō 1982: 83–91.
17 Hyōdō 1982: 103.
18 The other female athletes who competed in the 1932 Olympic Games included a 4 × 100-metre swimming relay team, freestyle swimmers, a 4 × 100-metre track team, a high diver and a javelin thrower. Japanese Olympic Committee website database: http://www.joc.or.jp/database [accessed 4 August 2011].
19 *Asahi Shimbun*, 10 August 1932.
20 She writes that she had recurring dreams in which her mother would tell her to keep swimming (Hyōdō 1982: 127).
21 Hyōdō 1982: 127–8.
22 Hyōdō 1982: 130.
23 See Hyōdō (1990: 83).
24 Hyōdō 1990: 135.
25 Guttmann (1992: 53) and Mandell (1971), respectively.
26 Mandell 1971: xii.
27 'Olympism is a philosophy of life, exalting and combining in a balanced whole the qualities of body, will and mind. Blending sport with culture and education, Olympism seeks to create a way of life based on the joy found in effort, the educational value of good example and respect for universal fundamental ethical principles' (Olympic Charter, Fundamental Principals, Paragraph 1).
28 Guttmann 1992: 66.
29 While Riefenstahl denied that her film was in any way linked to the Nazi government it was, in fact, financed by Hitler's propaganda minister, Josef Goebbels. Goebbels realized the Olympics' potential to demonstrate to the world

the organizational expertise of the Germans. The film also premiered on 20 April 1938, Adolf Hitler's birthday (Guttmann 1992: 55, 66–71).

30 Hyōdō 1982: 143.

31 That said, many athletes intentionally choose to hold back during preliminary heats in order to conserve energy for the finals (Mandell 1971: 178).

32 Name appears occasionally as Marta Genenger.

33 Total Olympic Ladies 1996: 26.

34 Hyōdō 1982: 156.

35 The first commercial station, KDKA, was broadcast from Pittsburgh, PA, beginning in November 1920. That same year, Japanese radio stations began covering university club sports and the all-Japan middle school baseball tournament. This kind of sports coverage was widespread in the early 1920s and became more popular after NHK was incorporated in 1924 (Hashimoto 1992: 14).

36 Hashimoto 1992: 17.

37 Sakaue 1998: 220–1.

38 *Asahi Shimbun*, 12 August 1936.

39 'Now the only question left for that twenty-three year-old young lady is that of marriage – I know that she will have a splendid wedding and a happy future, and I wish her the best for the rest of her days' (*Asahi Shimbun*, 12 August 1936).

40 Hyōdō 1990: 98.

41 'Now that this weight has been lifted from my shoulders, I feel very relieved. I think that I would like to live a somewhat more relaxed lifestyle now' (Hyōdō 1990: 98). It is important to keep in mind that, unlike Hitomi Kinue's autobiographies, Maehata's were written several decades after the events actually took place (in this case, almost fifty years later). Her recollection of her thoughts during this period of mayhem may well be influenced by later events in her life.

42 Maehata was introduced to Hyōdō by the principal of her former girl's school, Sugiyama Sensei.

43 Hyōdō 1990: 101.

44 Collins 2003: 72.

45 Collins 2003: 73.

46 Japan had left the League of Nations in 1933, and in order to counter this move, Japanese government officials stressed the importance of bringing foreigners into Japan in order to 'promote a correct understanding and appreciation of our nation' (Collins 2003: 84).

47 Collins 2003: 89. Note that it was extremely uncommon for IOC members to speak directly to political figures or to engage in political negotiations, and the IOC considered Sugiyama and Soyeshima's gesture to be inappropriately aggressive.

48 Collins 2003: 108.

49 Collins 2003: 121.

50 Collins 2003: 123.

51 Collins 2003: 205.

52 Guttmann 1992: 73.

53 Guttmann 1992: 74.

54 Mandell 1971: 288.

55 With, of course, the exception of the 1936 Berlin Olympics.

56 See, for example, Martin Vinokur's *More than a Game: Sports and Politics* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988), Paul Taylor's *Jews and the Olympic Games: The Clash between Sport and Politics* (Portland, OR: Sussex Academic Press, 2004), Mark Kurlansky's *1968: The Year that Rocked the World* (New York: Ballantine,

2004) and Richard Pound's *Five Rings over Korea: The Secret Negotiations Behind the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, 1994).

57 Some of these medals were later contested, however, as some athletes from colonized territories competed for Japan. Two such notable athletes were the gold and bronze medal winners in the men's marathon competition, Korean runners named Sohn Kee-chung and Nam Sung-yong running for Japan under the names Kitei Son and Nan Shoryu, respectively (Olympic medals database: www.olympic.org).

58 Itani *et al*. 2001: 18.

59 Havens 1975: 915.

60 While the volunteer corps was not a compulsory labour system, the Ministry of Welfare estimated that between 1944 and 1945, about 472,000 women had gone to work for them. It was difficult for single women to refuse serving in the corps, but the mobilization plan stipulated that 'due consideration shall be given to the limitations of women' (Havens 1975: 922).

61 Moreover, while they may have been physically strong, by the end of the war there were many food shortages and the female population increasingly came to be physically and emotionally fatigued. Loss of a menstrual period was a physical effect noticed by many malnourished women during the war years in Japan (Havens 1975: 929).

62 Itani *et al*. 2001: 18.

63 Itani *et al*. 2001: 18.

64 *Asahi Shimbun*, 14 July 1946.

65 '*Bungeishunjū*' went out of publication for one year during the war (1942), so there are no articles from this year included in the volume.

66 Toyoda 1988: (vol. 1), 559.

67 Guttmann 1992: 82.

68 Guttmann 1992: 82.

69 The advances made in women's sports were in spite of other biased and controversial viewpoints that Brundage espoused. For example, he was often called anti-Semitic and a Nazi sympathizer, and he strongly opposed any sort of politicization of the Olympic Games (which was virtually impossible considering the global state of affairs at the time of his presidency) (Guttmann 1992: 87–9).

70 'State of Japanese Participation in the Games', Japanese Olympic Committee online database: http://www.joc.or.jp/olympic/sanka/olympic_s4.html [accessed 4 August 2011].

71 Total Olympic Ladies 1996: 35.

72 'Overall Records of Japanese Olympic Delegates', Japanese Olympic Committee online database: http://www.joc.or.jp/database/search_top.asp [accessed 4 August 2011].

73 The Asian Games took several different forms over the twentieth century – it was called the Oriental Olympics when it began in 1913, then the Far East Championships, the Oriental Championships, the Asian Track and Field Championship and finally became the Asian Games in 1951 (Asian Games website: http://www.gz2010.cn [accessed 9 July 2011]).

74 Katzoff 1998: 10.

75 Ueno 2004: 34.

76 The 1956 Olympics were the first to be held in the southern hemisphere, taking place in the late Australian spring from November to December. However, Australian quarantine laws were too severe to allow the entry of foreign horses, so the equestrian events were held separately in Stockholm in June. This was the first and only Olympics to separate a single Games by time and continent (IOC website).

77 'Japanese Delegation Participation at the Olympic Games', JOC website: http://www.joc.or.jp/english/JapaneseDelegation.html [accessed 4 August 2011].
78 JOC database: http://www.joc.or.jp/database/ [accessed 16 August 2011].
79 '"*Hi no maru" ni mune ga itai hodo no kandō*'.
80 Total Olympic Ladies 1996: 45.
81 Total Olympic Ladies 1996: 48.
82 Thirteen-year-old figure skater Inada Etsuko took part in the 1936 Garmisch-Partenkirchen Winter Olympics (Total Olympic Ladies 1996: 243). No other women took part until the 1960 Squaw Valley Games, in which five Japanese speed skaters participated (Japanese Olympic Committee website).
83 Guttmann 1992: 41.
84 The Winter Games would be held the same year as the Summer Games (preceding the Summer Games by a few months) until 1992, when it was switched to a two-year alternating schedule for Summer and Winter Games (Guttmann 1992: 41).
85 Long-distance skier Nagata Makoto earned twenty-fourth place in the 50-kilometre cross-country skiing event with a time of 6 hours, 2 minutes, 42 seconds (JOC database).
86 Wallechinsky 2000: 581.
87 Wallechinsky 2000: 582.
88 For a more complete account of Inada Etsuko's appearance at the Olympics, visit the 'Olympic Memorial Goods' link on the Japanese Olympic Committee's website. This site also contains a few good photographs of Inada (http://www.joc.or.jp/olympic/memorial/20051124.html (Japanese only) [accessed 9 July 2011]).
89 'I wore a costume that consisted of a red carnation pinned to a white outfit – the red and white represented the colors of the Japanese flag. The costume had been a gift to me from the Japanese Women's Association in Berlin' (Total Olympic Ladies 1996: 246).
90 Guttmann and Thompson 2001: 195.
91 Japan had sent 179 athletes (seventeen women) to Berlin and came back with twenty medals, and 167 athletes (twenty women) were sent to Rome and came back with eighteen medals (JOC database).
92 Partner 1999: 162–3.
93 JOC database.
94 'Miss Tanaka Sets New Record of 2:37.1 in 200-Meter Backstroke', *Asahi Shimbun*, 13 July 1959.
95 *Asahi Shimbun* (evening edition), 4 September 1960.
96 *Asahi Shimbun* (evening edition), 4 September 1960.
97 For example, marathon runner Takahashi Naoko ('Q-chan'), judo champion Tamura/Tani Ryōko ('Yawara-chan') and table tennis star Fukuhara Ai ('Ai-chan').
98 Yamanaka Toshiko's article 'Queens, Misses, Fighting Ladies … Wait a Minute! What Are Those Words You're Using?' and Iida Takako's article 'How Have Female Athletes Been Gendered in Newspapers? A Case Study: Change in Identity from Miss Noriko Sugawara to Mrs Noriko Narazaki' discuss these representations in the media, which will be looked at later in further detail.

Chapter 6 Progress and potential: Sportswomen in the 1960s and 1970s

1 In 1994, the IOC announced that single-sex sports were no longer eligible for being introduced into the Olympic programme ('Women's Sumo Pushes for Olympics in a Turn from Tradition', *The New York Times*, 18 October 2010).

2 Every four years, the IOC commissions, with the host city, a film to commemorate the Games, though most of these films are more like compilations of television broadcasts than of actual works of documentary art. According to Ichikawa, in a 1992 interview included on the DVD, he instructed his cameramen to pay special attention to the moments just before and just after a given sporting event, as the results themselves would be covered by TV and print media (*Tokyo Olympiad*, Criterion Collection DVD, 2002).
3 See, for example, Gordon (1993: 72).
4 The main impact of the Games on Japan's infrastructure is often cited as the development of the bullet train, as the Tōkaidō line connecting Tokyo, Nagoya, Kyoto and Osaka opened on 1 October 1964, just in time for the Olympic Games (Roche 2000: 138–9). The Tokyo Metro system was also considerably expanded and improved for the Games, with two new lines totalling over 22 kilometres added to the system (Findling and Pelle 1996: 136). The Olympics also had a major impact on Tokyo's highways and roads, its architecture and its parks system.
5 Guttmann 1992: 106.
6 Findling and Pelle 1996: 136.
7 Yoshikuni Igarashi's *Bodies of Memory* contains several interesting discussions of the Tokyo Olympics in the context of post-war memory. Guttmann and Thompson devote four pages of their *Japanese Sports* to the Tokyo Olympics, as do Findling and Pelle in their *Historical Dictionary of the Modern Olympic Movement*. In Japanese, the National Diet Library holdings contain fifty-six monographs that focus solely on the Tokyo Olympics, and countless academic journal articles. The topics of the Japanese monographs vary greatly, from first-hand accounts of life in the athletes' Olympic Village to strict historical accounts of the event to behind-the-scenes accounts of Japanese journalists covering the Games. Shimizu's (1994) edited volume *Orinpikku Sutadīzu* contains four chapters (out of twelve) that focus only on the Tokyo Games.
8 Findling and Pelle 1996: 137.
9 'Heroes on Every Hand', *Time*, 30 October 1964. The *Asahi Shimbun* also reported that the Soviet team was wailing in the locker room after the match (*Asahi Shimbun*, 24 October 1964).
10 Igarashi 2000: 156.
11 Both men's and women's volleyball were introduced into the Olympics in 1964 (along with men's jūdō – women's jūdō was to be added to the programme in 1992). (Official website of the Olympic movement: http://www.olympic.org [accessed 4 August 2011].)
12 See Arata in Shimizu, ed., 2004, 175.
13 In Shimizu, ed., 2004: 175–91.
14 Shimizu, ed., 2004: 184.
15 *Asahi Shimbun*, 12 October 1964.
16 *Bungeishunjū*, November 1964.
17 *Asahi Journal*, 27 April 1984.
18 *Bungeishunjū,* November 1964.
19 Of course, this dynamic was by no means limited to the case of Japan, as management in most industrialized countries has, and continues to be, dominated by men. However, for the present study I am only looking at twentieth-century Japan.
20 Molony and Uno 2005: 361.
21 Molony and Uno 2005: 374.

22 Molony and Uno 2005: 378.
23 Players were generally not involved in manual labour at the textile factory – they had low-level desk jobs, still managed by male supervisors.
24 Kelly 2007: 223.
25 Kelly 2007: 224.
26 *Kantoku – Orinpikku joshi marason rannā wo sodateta otoko tachi.*
27 *Hekotareru monkai.*
28 *Nazeba naru!, Watashi no shinnen, Dare no tameni ikirunoka.*
29 Okuda (1996: 224–5) asserts that there is something inherently alluring about men who can not only train women to run fast and far (i.e. physical toughness) but also teach patience, a fighting spirit and a strong will to win.
30 *Onna wa onna ga tsuyoku suru* (Women making women stronger; Masayo *et al.* 2001) was written by the three most famous contemporary female coaches in Japan: synchronized swimming coach Imura Masayo, softball coach Utsugi Taeko and rhythmic gymnastics coach Gomei Misako. Note that these three sports are among the only sports in which men generally cannot compete; therefore it is logical that some of the best coaches are women.
31 Over eighty per cent of the Japanese public watched the final Japan/USSR match on television (Wallechinsky 2000: 458).
32 At the Summer Olympic Games, the women's volleyball team won: gold (Tokyo 1964), silver (Mexico City 1968), silver (Munich 1972) and gold (Montréal 1976).
33 Wallechinsky 2000: 458.
34 Ono Takashi's other medals were in the horizontal bars, the parallel bars, the pommel horse, the rings, the vault, individual all-round and team competition (Olympic database).
35 A November 1964 article in *Bungeishunjū* about the Onos begins with the following passage: 'In Japan, it is uncommon to see mommy athletes. It is also uncommon to see married couples in which the husband is the coach and the wife is the athlete. Gradually, more and more unmarried women are taking part in sports, but it is very rare to see a pair like lovebirds like Takashi and Kiyoko Ono' (Toyoda 1988: vol. 3, 330).
36 Yoshioka was known for his quick starts at the beginning of his races. At his Olympic race he was in the lead for the first 40 metres. However, at 60 metres five runners passed him by, and he wound up taking sixth place with a time of 10.8 seconds. The gold medal winner of this race, Thomas 'Eddie' Tolan, was known in Japan as the 'late night super express' because of the way he would pick up speed at the end of his race, and Yoshioka came to be known as the 'daybreak super express' because of his speed at the start of the race (*Asahi Jinbutsu Jiten* 1990: 1738).
37 *Asahi Jinbutsu Jiten* 1990: 1762.
38 Yoda was only 0.2 seconds off the winner's time – in fact the race was so close that the gold, silver and bronze medallists were all clocked in at exactly 10.5 seconds, with Yoda coming in at 10.7 seconds.
39 *Shūkan Shinchō*, 27 October 1983, 162 ('Why Did Olympian Yoda Ikuko Decide to Hang Herself?'); and *Sports Graphic Number*, vol. 146 (5 May 1986), 40 ('100 Women Who Colored the Shōwa Era').
40 *Sports Graphic Number*, vol. 146, 40.
41 'As Far as Our Home Life Was Concerned, She Was a Perfectionist' (*Sports Graphic Number*, vol. 146, 40).
42 *Shūkan Shinchō* (27 October 1983), 160.

43 For an account of Tsuburaya's suicide, including a scanned image of the suicide note he left for his family, go to http://www004.upp.so-net.ne.jp/kuhiwo/dazai/tsumuraya.html (Japanese only [accessed 9 July 2011]). Some tabloids report that when he was found dead he was clutching his bronze medal in his hand, but I cannot find any solid evidence to support this claim.
44 In Rome in 1960 there had been 167 Japanese athletes (twenty women), in Tokyo there were 355 (sixty-one women) and in Mexico City in 1968 there were 183 (thirty women). (http://www.joc.or.jp).
45 For example, in 1968 the sport of shooting was opened to women, and in 1972 the women's 1,500-metre race and 4 × 400-metre relays were added, and the 80-metre hurdles race was extended to 100 metres, the same length as the men's race (Wallechinsky 2000).
46 The South African National Olympic Committee had long refused to take a stand against apartheid, and citizens from Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) were forbidden from entering Mexico because of similar problems in that country (Guttmann 1992: 127). Moreover, the civil rights movement in the United States was at its height, with the recent assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr (in April 1968) and ongoing student protests that often escalated to violent confrontations (Findling and Pelle 1996: 139). Sports sociologist and activist Harry Edwards had called for African-American athletes to boycott the Games in order to protest the ongoing mistreatment of minorities in the United States. While they did not boycott, there were several powerful statements made in protest, perhaps most memorably when sprinters Tommie Smith and John Carlos bowed their heads and raised their black-gloved fists in the well-recognized black power salute. The two athletes were expelled from the Olympic Village and suspended from the national team for this act, and as they were preparing to depart Mexico City, three of their African-American teammates expressed sympathy by wearing black berets when entering the stadium to receive medals for their 400-metre race (Findling and Pelle 1996: 144).
47 To this comment, IOC president Avery Brundage replied, 'The Olympic Games belong to all the world, not the part of it at sea level' (Guttmann 1992: 133). While those competing in distance running and rowing events did have difficulty breathing, athletes whose events required only short, anaerobic bursts of strength actually benefited from the thin air of Mexico City, with jumpers and pole-vaulters having particularly impressive results, including many world records. American long jumper Bob Beamon had one of the most incredible performances of the Mexico City Olympics, with his jump of 29 feet, 2½ inches beating the previous world record by nearly 2 feet (Findling and Pelle 1996: 143).
48 Guttmann 1992: 129.
49 Young and Wamsley 2005: 119.
50 Olsen-Acre 2007: 207.
51 Olsen-Acre 2007: 216.
52 For example, if the IOC were to deem a female athlete too 'masculine' in appearance, they might test for anabolic steroids. Women who are found to have elevated testosterone levels are considered unfair competitors. In this sense, Olsen-Acre (2007: 223) argues that the IOC policy simply shifted its focus from chromosomal to hormonal and that certain intersexed athletes are still marginalized by the policy.
53 Wallechinsky 2000: 459.
54 Japan's major newspapers (*Asahi Shimbun, Mainichi Shimbun*) did not begin to give the Olympics front-page coverage until around the time of the Tokyo Games in 1964. Prior to this, the coverage was generally found only in the sports section.

55 Total Olympic Ladies 1996: 113–4.
56 Findling and Pelle 1996: 284.
57 The medals were won by Kasaya Yukio (gold), Konno Akitsugu (silver) and Aochi Seiji (bronze) (Wallechinsky 2000: 619).
58 Japan had sent one woman to Garmisch-Partenkirchen (1936), five women to Squaw Valley (1960), six women to Innsbruck (1964) and nine women to Grenoble (1968) (JOC database).
59 The Japanese women who took part in the Sapporo Olympics were represented in five sports: alpine skiing, cross-country skiing, speed skating, figure skating and luge (JOC database).
60 JOC database.
61 Findling and Pelle 1996: 148.
62 Early on the morning of September fifth, eight Palestinian terrorists broke into the Olympic village, killed two members of the Israeli delegation and took nine more Israelis hostage. All nine of these hostages would be killed, as would five of the terrorists and one German policeman. The Games were suspended for a memorial service the following day, with IOC president Avery Brundage stating at the service,

> Sadly, in this imperfect world, the greater and more important the Olympic Games become, the more they are open to commercial, political, and now criminal pressure … I am sure that the public will agree that we cannot allow a handful of terrorists to destroy this nucleus of international cooperation and good will we have in the Olympic Movement. The Games must go on and we must continue our effort to keep them clean, pure and honest and try to extend the sportsmanship of the athletic field onto other areas. (Guttmann 1992: 140)

While some critiqued the IOC's decision to continue the Games after the terrorism incident, Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir agreed with the IOC that a cancellation of the event could suggest a victory for the terrorists and might encourage repeated acts of terror in the future (Guttmann 1992: 140).

63 However, in 1964 the Japanese team won sixteen gold, five silver and eight bronze medals, while in 1972 the distribution was thirteen gold, eight silver and eight bronze. In Mexico City, the team had won eleven gold, seven silver and seven bronze (twenty-five medals) (JOC database).
64 The Japanese men's gymnastics team dominated the Olympic competition in the 1960s and 1970s, winning the gold medal for five consecutive Games (Rome, Tokyo, Mexico City, Munich and Montréal) (Wallechinsky 2000: 309–12).
65 *The Japan Times*, 3 September 1972.
66 *Ushio*, September 2002, 284.
67 *Bungeishunjū*, March 1984.
68 By contrast, the number of women in the Winter Olympics dropped from twenty (at the Sapporo Games) to six at the following Games in Innsbruck, Austria, and remained below or around ten athletes until the 1990s (JOC database).
69 JOC database.
70 That is to say, Japan reached its game point of fifteen before nearly any team could even reach ten points (Wallechinsky 2000: 460).
71 Total Olympic Ladies 1996: 153.
72 'As I watched the Japanese flag slowly rise up the flagpole, my whole body was enveloped by an emotion more powerful than anything I had felt before. To this

day, I have never since experienced such a feeling of euphoria and contentment. It was as if something awoke in me that day' (Total Olympic Ladies 1996: 156).

73 See Nakano's profile on the website of sports advocacy group, S-Rights: http://www.s-rights.co.jp/member/athletes/nakano.html (Japanese only [accessed 9 July 2011]).

74 'I believe, from the bottom of my heart, that volleyball gave me the ability to overcome challenges and to never give up, in addition to all of the great experiences and people I came into contact through my involvement in the sport. The encouraging fans shouting "Mariko, fight! Mariko, fight!" brought out the courage in me' (Total Olympic Ladies 1996: 158–9).

75 One notable example to be discussed later in further detail is marathon runner Arimori Yūko, who established an NGO called Heart of Gold, which encourages disabled people to take part in sports. She helps raise money for victims of landmine explosions and has been named a goodwill ambassador by the United Nations Population Fund (http://www.unfpa.org/ambassadors/yuko.htm [accessed 9 July 2011]).

Chapter 7 Female athletes in contemporary Japan

1 Carter's official announcement came on January twentieth, when he wrote to Robert Kane, president of the United States Olympic Committee, 'I … urge [you] … to advise the International Olympic Committee that if Soviet troops do not fully withdraw from Afghanistan within the next month, Moscow will become an unsuitable site for a festival meant to celebrate peace and good will' (Guttmann 1992: 150).

2 Findling and Pelle 1996: 163. Guttmann's suggestion as to why Japan joined the boycott is simple – military dependence on the United States: 'On May 22, the Israeli National Olympic Committee – which had never been enthusiastic about sending a team to Moscow – voted to stay away. Two days later, Japan followed suit. Military dependence on the United States was unquestionably a factor in both of these decisions' (Guttmann 1992: 153).

3 The British government did its best to prevent athletes from participating – for example, they refused to allow the official state airline, British Airways, to fly anyone involved with the Olympics to Moscow, and athletes consequently had to ride ferries to and from the Games. The British flag was also never raised nor the national anthem played, with a generic Olympic flag and Olympic ballad playing in lieu of it for any winning British athletes (Guttmann 1992: 164).

4 Guttmann 1992: 164.

5 *Taiiku no kagaku*, vol. 30, October 1980.

6 'One of the reasons that the JOC decided not to participate was because of our strong belief in both the importance of solidarity with other Asian nations in the sporting arena, and in solidarity with the rest of the world. The fact is that many Asian nations did participate in the event, and I would like to report that many of the delegates of these nations said that the absence of the Japanese team at the Games was disappointing. While it is important to consider the position of Japan within the world of Asian sports, it is also important that we not forget the role and responsibility of Japan with respect to the rest of the world. Our strong belief is that by participating in the boycott of the Moscow Games, we have avoided creating a great stain on the otherwise splendid sports history developed in Japan over the past almost eighty years' (*Taiiku no kagaku*, vol. 30, October 1980, 771–2).

7 Riordan in Findling and Pelle 1996: 164.
8 Some non-dissenting voices were included as well, such as a 1976 Olympian in the steeplechase, Mike Roche, who said, 'I don't think we should go. I wouldn't go. I don't think the Olympics are going to be around much longer, anyway. This may be the last one'. Marathon runner Lou Calvano said, 'I support it because in a time of national crisis every American has to do his part for national unity and solidarity. Many times you have to make sacrifices' (*Running Times*, April 1980).
9 Total Olympic Ladies 1996: 166–70.
10 Total Olympic Ladies 1996: 166.
11 Total Olympic Ladies 1996: 168.
12 'While this would be the end of my competitive athletic career, looking back on it I realize that this difficult period gave me a real sense of self-awareness and independence that I may otherwise have never gained. That said, I have been told by many of my friends that competing at gymnastics at the highest level, the Olympic Games, truly provides a feeling of incomparable excitement' (Total Olympic Ladies 1996: 170).
13 Boston Athletic Association Past Champions database: http://www.baa.org/races/boston-marathon/boston-marathon-history/past-champions.aspx [accessed 9 July 2011].
14 Tokyo International Women's Marathon database: http://www.asahi.com/tokyo-marathon/results/1983.html (Japanese only [accessed 9 July 2011]).
15 *Sportiva*, 'A Thirty-Year History of Women's Sports', February 2005, 111–17.
16 *Sportiva*, 'A Thirty-Year History of Women's Sports', February 2005, 111–17.
17 *Sportiva*, 'A Thirty-Year History of Women's Sports', February 2005, 111–17.
18 In the team competition, Japan won the silver medal in 1978, 1998, 2001, 2003 and 2005 and the bronze medal in 1973, 1975, 1982, 1986, 1991 and 1994.
19 *Sportiva*, 'A Thirty-Year History of Women's Sports', February 2005, 111–17.
20 *Sportiva*, 'A Thirty-Year History of Women's Sports', February 2005, 111–17.
21 LPGA tournament winners' database: http://www.lpga.com [accessed 4 August 2011].
22 Flor Isava Fonseca of Venezuela and Pirjo Haggman of Finland were elected to be members of the IOC at the Olympic congress meeting of 1981. In 1982 they were followed by Mary Alison Glen-Haig of Britain, and in 1984 Liechtenstein's Princess Nora (Guttmann 1992: 156).
23 *Sportiva*, 'A Thirty-Year History of Women's Sports', February 2005, 112.
24 Four Japanese women travelled to Lake Placid in 1980 – three speed skaters and one figure skater. Watanabe Emi, who had won the World Figure Skating Championships the previous year, came in sixth place at the Lake Placid Olympics. Five women travelled to Sarajevo – three speed skaters and two figure skaters. The best performance in Sarajevo was by Hashimoto Seiko, who finished eleventh in the 500-metre speed skating event (JOC database).
25 Though her married name is Ishizaki Seiko, she is usually referred to by her maiden name. This is in part because of the recognition of her maiden name as well as the fact that her husband is now deceased (*Fujin Kōron*, 7 December 2000, 41).
26 Total Olympic Ladies 1996: 270.
27 'When I saw for myself the Olympic flame, the origin of my own name, all I could say was "incredible". That may have been the moment at which I decided to make sports the central focus of my life' (Total Olympic Ladies 1996: 270).
28 In addition to her eleventh place finish in the 500 metre, she finished twelfth in the 1,000-metre race, fifteenth in the 1,500-metre race and nineteenth in the 3,000-metre race in Sarajevo (JOC database).

29 Total Olympic Ladies 1996: 270.
30 JOC database.
31 Hashimoto 1992: 129.
32 Hashimoto 1992: 132.
33 Hashimoto's profile available on the *sangiin* website: http://www.sangiin.go.jp/ (Japanese only [accessed 9 July 2011]).
34 *Fujin Kōron*, 7 December 2000, 41–3.
35 Quoted in Roche 2000: 19.
36 Guttmann 1992: 157.
37 Findling and Pelle 1996: 174.
38 JOC database.
39 Bale and Christensen 2004: 148.
40 Findling and Pelle 1996: 158.
41 Findling and Pelle 1996: 169.
42 Guttmann 1992: 160.
43 This money was raised for various charities such as the YMCA and the Special Olympics, not to fund the Games themselves (Findling and Pelle 1996: 174).
44 Findling and Pelle (1996: 176) and Guttmann (1992: 163).
45 Roche 2000: 137.
46 JOC database.
47 For example, gymnast Mario Makiko (now Sate Makiko), who competed in the 1984 Games writes, 'From the time I was a young child, I had not envisioned ever entering an event like the Olympic Games' (Total Olympic Ladies 1996: 185). Rifle shooter Kunai Noriko, who competed in both 1984 and 1988, writes, 'I did not think that it was a dream of mine to be a participant in the Olympics, but it seemed that I should go to the Games in Los Angeles' (Total Olympic Ladies 1996: 191). A few women, however, do start their essays discussing their lifelong dreams to compete at the Olympic Games.
48 Masuda did not finish in the Olympic marathon.
49 'In 1984, she regrettably had to drop out of the long-anticipated women's marathon at the Los Angeles Olympic Games … After retiring, she became a sports journalist and a marathon commentator' (Masuda, book jacket cover). See also Masuda's personal profile at http://www.akemi-masuda.jp/profile.html (Japanese only [accessed 9 July 2011]).
50 In March of 2006, I ran a 10-kilometre race near Nagano, in which Masuda was the invited 'guest runner'. She had slowed down a bit over the years, to the point at which she was running my pace, and the two of us ran side by side for most of the race. I can personally attest, from the throngs of fans lining the entire course and calling out 'Akemi-chan!' and snapping photos, that she continues to have a large following.
51 Her record-beating time was 2 hours, 28 minutes and 1 second (*Sportiva*, 'A Thirty-Year History of Women's Sports', February 2005, 114).
52 Arimori *et al*. 2003: 23.
53 The women's marathon at the Barcelona Olympics produced the closest win ever recorded in Olympic marathon history, which drew more attention to the runners involved. Arimori Yūko finished only 8 seconds behind Russian runner Valentina Yegorova (Findling and Pelle 1996: 191).
54 A 2005 manga version of Hitomi Kinue's biography entitled *Raijingu Gāru!* (Rising girl!) features a photo of Arimori Yūko on the book cover with the quote, 'Please let us never forget – The woman who cleared this glorious road for us.' Also, a 2004 NHK special about Hitomi Kinue's legacy includes lengthy

interviews with Arimori Yūko, including a tearful discussion about the insults and ridicule she used to face for being a female distance runner at a time when it was still fairly uncommon (NHK, *Sono toki rekishi ga ugoita*, 18 August 2004).

55 Communist authorities in these countries believed that 'professional sports' were imbued with the spirit of profit and corruption, which were both akin to capitalist societies and harmful to the health of the athletes. Cash and material rewards for top performances were not officially permitted under this system. However, according to observations made by Reet Howell in his article 'The USSR: Sport and Politics Intertwined', top athletes in the USSR were in fact able to have better living quarters than poorly performing athletes, and they would receive some luxury items such as cars. During their competitive years, these 'state amateurs' received all their income from the state and remained under state control (Howell 1975: 143). The parallel between 'state amateurs' and 'corporate amateurs' is this complete reliance on the state/company for one's livelihood and the mindset that one must compete at one's highest level in order to further the state/company.

56 That is to say, a football or volleyball player would consider herself to be a professional when she was part of a corporate team, as her full income would be from the sponsoring company. Athletes from the individual sports mentioned above would be considered amateur until individually proclaiming professional status (Shimizu Satoshi, email message to author, 12 February 2008).

57 'Big in Japan: Yuko Arimori', *Metropolis*, July 2002, Issue 367.

58 'At that point, I had yet to participate in a national meet, and thought that by joining a company team I would be more likely to be part the national team' (Arimori *et al*. 2003: 24).

59 Keep in mind that Arimori had two major transitions – one from college athlete to high-level amateur athlete (when she was with Recruit) and another from amateur to full-blown professional athlete following the 1996 Summer Games.

60 Tomozoe: So, did your training change at all?
Arimori: It was the mood that changed. To that point, I had cared more about what the public thought of me, but after turning professional I cared less what people thought, and more about how I was being compensated. That was the mindset of a professional. (Arimori *et al*. 2003: 25–6)

61 Hartmann-Tews and Pfister 2003: 245.

62 'As she took action to turn professional, Arimori critiqued that, "It is strange for us not to have the rights to our own image"' (Shimizu Satoshi, email message to author, 12 February 2008).

63 Shimizu Satoshi, email message to author, 12 February 2008.

64 Hartmann-Tews and Pfister 2003: 245.

65 Not only did Arimori open the door for female athletes to break from the JOC to become professional if they so chose, but she also was the first woman to take issue in general with the policies of the committee. In 2000, another woman, freestyle swimmer Chiba Suzu, followed Arimori's lead by making an appeal to the JOC after she was not included on the roster to compete in the Sydney Summer Olympics (even after she won the women's 200-metre freestyle race at Japan's national championships that year). Chiba criticized the JOC for their lack of transparency in not disclosing the criteria they used for selecting Olympic delegates, and in June 2000 she became the first Japanese athlete to take her case to the Swiss-based Court of Arbitration for Sports. While Chiba remained cut from the national team the court did find that the selection criteria on the part of the JOC were unclear, and the JOC was ordered to reimburse Chiba for her legal fees ('Chiba Quit Over Olympic Appeal', BBC Sport, 26 October 2000).

66 'Runner with a Cause: Japan's Michael Jordan Takes on the NYC Marathon', *Village Voice*, 1 November 2000.
67 *Village Voice*, 1 November 2000.
68 See a list of the organization's activities at http://www.hofg.org/jp/activity/index.shtml [accessed 4 August 2011].
69 The team from the United States has won the gold medal in every Olympic Games until they were beaten by Japan in 2008 (JOC database).
70 This controversial decision has been criticized as being Euro-centric by many, as European members have strong voting power in the IOC. Baseball and softball have historically been more popular in the Americas and Asia than in Europe, which accounts for the accusations that Europeans would rather the sport be removed from the programme ('Baseball, Softball Bumped from Olympics', *USA Today*, 8 July 2005).
71 'I would say that Japanese society is centered around men. Companies are this way as well, right? I think that women must also hold a certain responsibility in society. There is a common belief that when it comes to running the household, women are more in charge than men. These days, though, the number of women working outside the home is similar to that of men. Since these women are still expected to run the home, I believe that women these days are working harder than men' (Imura *et al*. 2001: 144).
72 For example, during Hitomi Kinue's time there was discussion in women's magazines and tabloids that her muscular legs and suntanned skin were decidedly unfeminine. Swimmers, gymnasts, volleyball and tennis players are often photographed wearing skimpy, skin-tight uniforms, which has led to the sexualization of many of female competitors in these events.
73 Itō came in fifth place at the Calgary Olympics of 1988 and then won the gold medal at the World Championships in 1989. In 1992 she won the silver medal at the Winter Games in Albertville, making her the first female medallist, along with Hashimoto Seiko, at a Winter Olympics.
74 'Why was it that I wanted so badly to be a pioneer of the triple axel at the great Olympic Games? I had already successfully executed the jump at national meets and at the World Championships. However, the Olympics only take place once every four years. The Games are a place where the best competitors in the world gather to give it their best' (Total Olympic Ladies 1996: 288).
75 JOC database.
76 From Arakawa's personal website profile: http://www.shizuka-arakawa.com/english/profile/index.html [accessed 4 August 2011].
77 'The Arakawa Effect' (Web Japan, 21 April 2006).
78 Arakawa is now affiliated with Prince Hotels, a chain of luxury hotels that has funded and organized professional ice shows in Japan for over a decade.
79 The books, both published in September of 2006, are titled *Kin medaru he no michi* (The road to a gold medal; NHK publications) and *Tira mi su: Dakara watashi wa ganbaru!* (Tiramisu: that is why I persevere!; Kadokawa shoten).
80 According to Takahashi, she was given the nickname 'Q-chan' after a welcome party at Recruit in 1995, where she was told she had to do some sort of entertaining performance (a common hazing ritual at such parties). Takahashi sang a song from an anime series called *Obake no Q-tarō*, that went '*Kyū kyū kyū, shara shara shara, yay!*' and gave such a memorable performance that the nickname 'Q-chan' stuck with her over the years (Takahashi 2004: 79–84).
81 'Vaam' stands for 'vespa amino acid mixture'.
82 *The New York Times*, 3 January 2001.

83 'Even though I am technically still an amateur athlete, since running is the central focus of my life it feels as if I am a half-professional athlete. Be that as it may, I still think that I lack the mindset of a professional athlete. I think to myself things like, "you must make running a *more* central part of your life"' (Takahashi 2004: 273).
84 While certain restrictions still apply, nearly all Olympic athletes are now permitted to receive cash for their athletic performances, and the previous rules of Olympic amateurism are considered dated relics of the past.
85 Kanō defined the principle of his new school of jūdō as *seiryoku saiyūkō katsudō*, which means 'the most economical use of body and mind energy' or 'economized energy' (Maguire and Nakayama 2006: 12).
86 Guttmann and Thompson 2001: 102.
87 *Sportiva*, 'A Thirty-Year History of Women's Sports', February 2005, 113.
88 International Olympic Committee official athletes' database.
89 *Sports Graphic Number*, February 2005, 70.
90 *Sports Graphic Number*, February 2005, 70.
91 Articles about the birth of her son inevitably also mentioned the future of her career. For example, a *Nikkan Sports* article from 5 January 2006 (less than a week after the birth of her son) reads, 'On December thirty-first, 2005, Olympic gold medal winner in the women's forty-eight kilogram jūdō competition, Tani Ryōko, gave birth to her first child at Hyōgo prefecture's Nishinomiya Hospital. She had a son with husband Tani Yoshitomo, an outfielder on the Olympic baseball team. I interviewed Tani as she was holding her son, and she told me that she and her husband chose to take one character from each of their names to form their son's name, Yoshiaki. She told me of her desire to bring home a third gold medal, saying, "While raising my son, with some help from those around me, I still want to set my sights on a third consecutive medal at the Olympic Games in Beijing".'
92 The headline from an article in the popular weekly magazine *Yomiuri Weekly* reads, 'Saying, "As a mommy, a gold", Tani Ryōko finally makes her return to competition this spring' (*Yomiuri Weekly*, 21 January 2007).
93 'Judoka Tani Strikes Election Gold; Other Celebs Mixed', *The Japan Times*, 12 July 2010.
94 'Parliament member Tani retires; Female parliament members show understanding, and criticize "responsibilities to the party"', *Asahi Shimbun*, 16 October 2010.
95 *Asahi Shimbun*, 16 October 2010.

Chapter 8 Theoretical concerns surrounding Japanese women in sport

1 In the introduction to his 2007 edited volume *This Sporting Life: Sports and Body Culture in Modern Japan*, Kelly writes, 'There is surprisingly little foreign scholarship thus far on Japan's participation in the Olympics and in the Asian Games' (Kelly 2007: 7).
2 In the Olympic Games, for example, prior to Hitomi Kinue's appearance in 1928, Olympic medals had been won by women from the United States, Canada, Germany, France, Bohemia (Czechoslovakia), Great Britain, Italy, Austria, the Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Australia (IOC database).
3 I have borrowed the term 'master metaphors' from Olympic scholar John MacAloon. In his article 'The Theory of Spectacle', he writes, 'Terms such as spectacle continue to be used today as master metaphors for every conceivable

manufacturing of power, and critical terms old and new are if anything even more conflated in today's "discursive world"' (in Tomlinson and Young 2006: 16).

4 While the list of scholars whose work could be drawn upon in my analyses is impressive (i.e. those dealing with modernity, globalization, spectacle, femininity), I have chosen to limit my resources primarily to those who deal with Japan or sport in some form or another. The use of (the vast body of) work by those theoretical scholars working outside the bounds of these topics is beyond the scope of the current project.

5 Ivy 1995: 4–5.

6 Roche 2000: 6.

7 Miyoshi and Harootunian 1989: 146.

8 Molony and Uno 2005: 5.

9 Guttmann and Thompson 2001: 2.

10 Scrolls produced in the thirteenth century show aristocrats shooting at six-ring targets, which suggests that the activity of archery was rationalized and quantified at that time (in Kelly 2007: 30).

11 Kelly 2007: 35.

12 For example, in Gluck's 'The Invention of Edo', she writes that the idea of Tokugawa Japan being considered 'pre-modern' is illogical, as Japan was as modern as most Western nations at that time, and it was not until the Meiji Restoration that this period came to be thought of as '*pre*-modern'. She writes, 'Did Tokugawa Japan lag behind the West? Not a bit: in seclusion it experienced an "industrious revolution" of its own, gave up the gun, and lived peaceably in Asia while Europe tore itself apart' (Vlastos 1998: 276).

13 Josei taiiku shi kenkyū kai 1981: 10.

14 *Tokyo Asahi Shimbun*, 14 March 1925.

15 In his book *Assembled in Japan*, Simon Partner writes, 'Japanese television buyers seem to have been motivated … out of love for popular pastimes, particularly sports. Almost universally, Japanese television owners mentioned sports as the key reason for their purchase' (Partner 1999: 163).

16 Partner 1999: 162.

17 See images from the *Asahi Shimbun*, 12 August 1936.

18 Maguire and Nakayama 2006: 159.

19 Personal discussion with Dr Shimizu, October 2006.

20 Maguire and Nakayama 2006: 164.

21 The definition of 'neoliberalism' that I am using is the 'hegemonic mode of discourse and policies that seek to bring all human action into the domain of the market' (Hoffman *et al*. 2006: 9).

22 The slogan usually appears in English in Japan, but on the company's website the slogan is translated to Japanese and reads as follows: '"*Fukanō" nante, arienai*'.

23 Young 1986: 9.

24 In addition to endorsing commercial products, athletes are frequently used in public service announcements. For example, Tani Ryōko appeared wearing her jūdō uniform in a poster campaign by the Fire and Disaster Management Agency. The slogan on the poster read, 'Let's tighten up on our mindfulness in handling hazardous materials.' Hamaguchi Kyōko, daughter of famous wrestler Hamaguchi Animal, was a bronze medal winner in wrestling at the 2004 Summer Games in Athens. Like Tani, she can also be seen in various advertising and public safety campaigns around Japan.

25 Frost 2011: 128 (citing Hitomi's (1929: 365) *Supaiku no ato*).

26 That is to say, while the 'impossible is nothing' mindset has been promoted widely and many barriers that used to exist have been torn down, there is still a large segment of the population that is unable to participate in many sports due to a lack of money or resources.
27 Debord 1995: 12.
28 Tomlinson and Young 2006: 15.
29 For example, jūdō wrestler Emoto Yūko gained sudden fame as the first female gold medallist in the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta.
30 This image was made into the commemorative postage stamp in the year 2000.
31 You will recall that Hitomi won the silver medal in the 800-metre race, while Inada finished in tenth place in the free-skating competition.
32 See, for example, Hall (1996), Cahn (1994), Hargreaves (1994), Hartmann-Tews and Pfister (2003) and Mangan and Park (1987).
33 Interestingly, the few Japanese scholars who look at women in sport have also often relied on English-language resources, with Jennifer Hargreaves and Allen Guttmann appearing frequently in the footnotes of their work. See, for example, Tanaka Tōko's article 'The Olympic Baron and the Modern Day Athletic Girl' (in Shimizu) or Inoue and Kameyama's chapter 'Sports and Gender'.
34 See Ayako Kano's useful and relevant description of essentialism and gender in Japanese theatre on pages 21–3 of *Acting Like a Woman in Modern Japan: Theater, Gender, and Nationalism*.
35 See Elise Edwards, in Kelly (2007: 211).
36 According to the official Olympic database, prior to 1960 only one or two events for women were added each Olympics, while from 1964 onwards at least two events (and sometimes three or four) were added at almost every Summer and Winter Games. For example, in 1964 volleyball and luge were added; in 1976 rowing, basketball and handball were added; in 1988 it was tennis, table tennis and yachting; in 2000 weightlifting, pentathlon, taekwondo and triathlon were added to the women's programme (www.olypmic.org).
37 Ichō Chiharu won the silver medal in the under forty-eight kilo division, Yoshida Saori won gold in the forty-eight to fifty-five kilo division, Ichō Kaori won the gold in the fifty-five to sixty-three kilo division and Hamaguchi Kyōko won the bronze in the sixty-three to seventy-two kilo division (JOC database).
38 Cahn 1994: viii.
39 See, for example, the covers of the two books about Arakawa and the photos contained therein.
40 Cahn 1994: 224.
41 While Cahn's book contains many insightful views on gender and sexuality in sports, at times it feels dated, having been published in 1994 (and probably written several years before that).
42 Japan sent a team to the first ever Women's Rugby World Cup held in Wales in 1991.
43 '*Joshi ragubī no miryoku: gorin he no chikamichi mieta*' (The appeal of women's rugby: a shortcut to the Olympic Games is seen), *Asahi Shimbun Weekly*, 20 May 2002.
44 Yamanaka, Toshiko, '*Joō, misesu, onna no tatakai … chotto matta! Sono kotoba*' (Queens, misses, fighting ladies … Hold on a second! Those words!'), *Shūkan kinyōbi*, vol. 335, 13 October 2000.
45 For example, she reports that rather than calling Takahashi by her last name or full first name, she is frequently referred to in the media as 'Nao-chan', a diminutive form of her first name Naoko – *Naochan kagayaku egao* (Nao-chan radiantly smiled). Yamanaka, 12.

46 Yamanaka, 13.
47 '*Shimbun hōdō ni okeru josei kyōgisha no jendāka: Sugiwara Noriko kara Narazaki Noriko he*' (The 'genderization' of female competitors in newspaper reports: from Sugiwara Noriko to Narazaki Noriko), *Supōtsu to jendā kenkyū*, vol. 1 (2003), 4–14. Narazaki Noriko was a bronze medallist at the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta and a silver medallist at the 2000 Olympics in Sydney. Sugawara Noriko was a bronze medallist in 1996.
48 Iida and Itani 2004: 4.
49 Kawahara, Takatsu, '*Sūji de mitsumeru josei no tsuyosa*' (Looking hard at women's strength through the numbers), *Sports Godzilla*, vol. 1, November 2006.
50 For complete charts of Olympic participation and medals won by Japanese men and women since the start of the modern Olympic Games, see the Tables section at the end of this book.
51 This figure was also representative of the 2002 Winter Games in Salt Lake City, when Japanese men and women each came home with one medal.
52 '∞' is the mathematical representation for the undefined result of one divided by zero (Kawahara 2006: 16).

Afterword: What about women's baseball and women's sumo?

1 Softball had been an informal game for both men and women that changed significantly over the first decades of the twentieth century and was not formalized until the 1930s. The governing body of the International Softball Federation was founded in 1952, and the first world championships of softball took place in 1965, by which point the sport was dominated by women (International Softball Federation website: www.internationalsoftball.com).
2 Tanioka 2010: 258–9.
3 'GPBL/Girls Pro Baseball League Winning Fans in Kyoto', *Asahi News*, 7 August 2010.
4 For example, the *Asahi Shimbun* ran a long piece on eighteen-year-old Kyoto Asto Dreams player Miura Iori, one of the league's top batters (*Asahi Shimbun*, 1 September 2010).
5 'Japan's "Knuckle Princess" Arrives in U.S.', *The New York Times*, 30 May 2010.
6 'Tough Season for Female Pitcher', *The New York Times*, 11 September 2010.
7 Amateur sumō is set apart from the professional version through the inclusion not only of women but also of weight classes and a lack of religious ceremony. For a brief but detailed account of women's sumō in contemporary Japan, see the 23-minute documentary titled *Pushy Women* (2001) produced by the Royal Anthropological Institute (directed by Caro MacDonald).
8 'In Sumo's Push for the Olympics, a Turn Away from Tradition', *The New York Times*, 18 October 2010.
9 '*Sekai ni hirogaru josei sumō*' (The global growth of women's sumō), *Asahi Shimbun Weekly AERA*, 24 January 2000.
10 'In Sumo's Push for the Olympics, a Turn Away from Tradition', *The New York Times*, 18 October 2010.
11 For example, the concurrent 'greying' of the Japanese population and the declining birth rate.

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