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Women and Politics in Japan: Flowers of the Home to Flowers of Politics

Sarah Ann Langer

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日本における女性と政治：

家庭の華から政治の華へ

Nihon ni okeru josei to seiji:
katei no hana kara seiji no hana e

Women and Politics in Japan:
Flowers of the Home to Flowers of Politics

A THESIS
The Honors Program
College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University

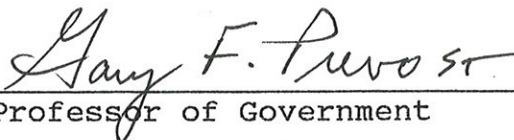
In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Distinction
and the Degree Bachelor of Arts
In the Department of Government

by
Sarah Ann Langer
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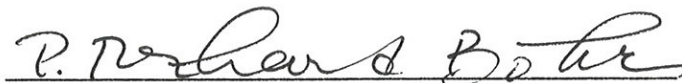
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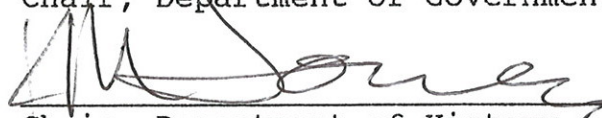
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Acknowledgements

Five years ago a high school student from Edina, Minnesota, received an opportunity to travel and study abroad in a country quite foreign to her. The journey would dramatically change her world view and the outlook she held on its people. In the fall of 1991, I was that lucky student who was selected to be a Rotary Ambassador to Japan. I was to attend Tatebayashi's Girls High School and to participate in the curriculum as a Japanese student. In addition, I was to live with Japanese host families and to learn the customs and traditions of this new society.

From the beginning I was encouraged to learn Japanese which I found to be a very challenging language. Throughout the year and subsequent visits, I have formed many cherished friendships with classmates, clubmates, host families, and Rotarians. These friendships have made an unforgettable impact on me and have encouraged me to deepen my knowledge of Japan's traditions, culture and history.

In an endeavor of this sort, it is impossible to give adequate thanks to each individual who has in some manner contributed to this thesis. However, to those individuals who are not mentioned here, know that the assistance that you provided me will not be forgotten. I take all responsibility for any mistakes of interpretation from the translations of scholars whose works I have utilized. I attempted to translate the

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First, I would like to thank my family who has always allowed me to follow my dreams even when they lie across the ocean. My father has let his "little princess" travel, my mother has challenged "her angel" to reach for the stars, and my two wonderful brothers have always told their sister she is a star. Without their love and support, I would never have been able to imagine such a project as this. Mom, Dad, Tim, and Phil I will be forever grateful for your love, encouragement, and courage to share my future dreams with me. I also want to thank my uncle, Ray Pierce, who taught me how to laugh at myself and my maternal grandmother, Lucille Noah Pierce, who blessed me with her love each time I returned to the land which I shall forever call my second home.

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My teachers (*sensei*) also took great care to teach me this foreign language and culture. Countless hours of teaching took place which allowed me to interact within the community. My host

mothers in sharing their lives with me influenced my desire to focus on just how women's traditional roles have changed. My host fathers and siblings encouraged me and never doubted that I could do anything that I set my mind to.

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Since the Second World War our lives have become intertwined in many ways. In spite of occasional friction, official relations between Japan and America are very strong. As our governments strengthen their relations, so should our people. In this thesis, I hope that I have helped to further the quest for knowledge and understanding. If in some small way I have contributed to a peace-loving humanity, I will have helped to further the legacy of my family, friends, and professors.

The rock divides the stream in two,
And both with might and main
Go tumbling down the waterfall;
But well I know the twain
Will soon unite again.

Written by Emperor Sutoku, this poem metaphorically talks about a divided people being peacefully reunited. From the first day that I placed my foot in Japan, I academically committed myself to an international education and philosophically committed myself to be a modest ambassador for world peace. To all of you who made this possible, hontou ni arigatou gozaimashita.

"The day when the mountains will move has come. Though I say this, nobody believes me. Mountains, once active in flames, sleep only for a short time. But even if you forget these words, just believe all those women who are now awakened from their sleep" (Yosano Akiko in Vernon, 1988, p.1)

I. Introduction

In no country around the world at present do women have political status, access, or influence equal to men. The sweep of women's political subordination encompasses a great variety of cultures, economic arrangements, and governments under which they live. In research on women and politics, feminist scholars have argued that women frequently exercise political power indirectly through movements and organizations, and in many situations their political activism is defined by their gender roles. Their point is not that women are never powerful or that they never enjoy political equality with men, but rather that in most cultures there is a complex matrix of political power composed of many social hierarchies, of which gender is one component. Nonetheless, in spite of the increasing political involvement by women, men of any group are more able than women to be active in politics. The "ubiquity of women's secondary political status" demonstrates how their political status is intertwined with other aspects of life such as their subordination within family and society (Nelson, 1994, p.3).

My research on women and politics in Japan provides many insights into their activism as well as the changes they have brought about in Japanese politics. In the past fifty years, the world has witnessed in Japan a remarkable recovery of a nation totally destroyed by the Second World War. This nation of more than 125 million people squashed into a land area that is smaller than the state of Montana, now produces almost fifteen percent of the world's GNP and is the world's largest exporter of capital. This major actor in the world stage of economic affairs offers a fascinating history of women's political involvement which began in mid 19th century literary and political organizations. Contributing factors for this emergence of women include a suffrage movement, the advocacy of birth control developed in the early 20th century, and a "women's liberation" movement in the 1970s. Influence of global communication has also triggered a challenge to traditional roles worldwide. Even before women had legal status as candidates or voters, they were politically visible participating in support of various political issues such as peace, free speech, and labor reform.

In the "Land of the Rising Sun," this phenomenon can be fully observed for, women are not only changing their traditional roles but also the nature of politics itself. How can this change occur in a country where male supremacy reflects its political structure and reinforces it? In this research, I hope to clarify and exemplify just how the roles of Japanese women are transforming within contemporary Japanese politics. I shall do

this through a number of questions. How have women been pressed towards a changing role by Japanese society? In what ways are the roles of women in politics changing? What political laws/techniques do women use within politics to strive for their desired goal of political change? How have Japanese women utilized the 1994 crisis within politics to forward their demands upon the system? What are the specific political issues that women in Japanese politics are concerned about today? How would a woman's agenda transform Japanese politics? Finally, what political differences exist among these activists?

Scholars have traditionally utilized four elements when researching women and their political impact upon society: culture, society, literature and personal experience within the country (Nelson, 1994, p. 398). Japan has been called "the Land of the Rising Sun" a phrase which Edwin Reischauer used to refer to its rapid economic and technical advancement after the Second World War. It is also a country in which men have risen to dominate the visible scene of politics. However, feminist research on Japan has filled in the otherwise unnoticed contribution of Japanese women in politics. An example is found in Dorothy Robins-Mowry's book titled The Hidden Sun: Women of Modern Japan, which reports that women in Japan have changed their role in society as well as pushed for pioneering changes. This changing role was also captured in the early women's journal, *Bluestocking Journal*, which attempted to establish a new political party called *Seito*. The following verse from the

journal illustrates women's growing awareness of their dependent status and their desire for autonomy.

In the beginning, woman was really the sun,
 She was a true woman,
 Now woman is the moon,
 She depends on others for her life,
 And reflects the light of others,
 She is sickly as a wan, blue-white moon.

We, the constantly hidden sun, must now restore
 ourselves,
 We must reveal the hidden sun-our concealed genius
 This is our constant cry and the inspiration of our unified
 purpose,
 The climax of this cry, this thirst, this desire will impel
 the genius in ourselves to shine forth.
 (Robins-Mowry, 1983, inside cover)

Dr. Robins-Mowry's work has also raised important questions in the study of Japanese women as she found much conflicting evidence steering scholars in contradictory directions. Numerous images of Japanese women contradict one another: the flirtations of beautiful women (*geisha*); the beaten housewife; the neat, cute office girl; the dreary, exploited female factory worker; the educating mother (*kyoiku mama*); and the tight-fisted mistress of the family finances. Recently, the rise of rebellious women authors and famous leaders within Japan seem to combine meekness and iron-like strength, docility and domestic dominance, gentle beauty and daring action (Robins-Mowry, 1983, p.xvi). These images cannot easily be meshed into a comprehensible whole.

Few scholars have gone beyond penetrating surface level impressions in order to deeply examine individual women's aspirations and personalities. For the non-Japanese scholar, surface level observations are inevitable due to the language

barrier. Male Japanese scholars are inhibited by the fear of losing power and *turf* that was once all theirs. Japanese society had traditionally kept all women secluded in the inner house. These women were figuratively spun into a protective cocoon that enhanced their mysterious and romantic aura (Robins-Mowry, 1983, p.xviii). These women were molded into a doll-like figure, lovely but not real. Entrapped in the legend of her own perfection, Japanese women were merely a likeness that harmonized various symbols of Japan: cherry blossoms and Mount Fuji.

Current images of women in Japan presented by the media are still superficial, merely updated versions of the same themes. Perceived to be delicate like a Japanese doll, enclosed in a glass box, Japanese women are still misunderstood to a great extent. It is time we hear their voices and realize that they are real women who experience joy and sorrow, have aspirations and engage in valiant struggles.

The tangled threads surrounding the lives of women in Japan, their emotions, and the depth of their attitudes form the central theme for this story symbolizes "the conscious effort of women leaders in the development of a more coherent and self-respecting role for women in Japan" (Robins-Mowry, 1993, p.xvi). In the 19th century a remarkable group of women strove to contribute their energies to bring about an eventual change in the role of women within Japanese society. They started movements that grew to such large proportions that today they deeply affect the society, the economy, and the politics of contemporary Japan.

Today Japanese women are demanding their men to spend more time with them and their families. If these women could change their society, the male-dominated pattern of employment with its long working hours would have to change. In addition, women who are highly educated, motivated, and talented would be more actively able to participate in the labor force.

There are a few Japanese women who can be cited as pioneers of major social transformation in Japanese society. Tsuda Ume, Yosano Akiko, Ichikawa Fusae, and Tanaka Makiko must be identified in this daring group. Tsuda Ume led her country as the pioneer of women's education. Yosano Akiko awakened her nation's consciousness through her literary activities and can be credited with pioneering nationalism through her poetry. Ichikawa Fusae, a pioneer of feminism with respect to politics, made her mark upon Japanese society through her political activities. Tanaka Makiko exemplifies the high level a Japanese woman can achieve within politics for she was a minister in the last government and is a pioneer of present change.

When we study women like these, it is easy to recognize the significant contribution that these Japanese women have provided as leaders and in so doing they have become symbols of progress and role-models for other women of Japan. Their lives and endeavors upon examination offer us the means by which foreigners can look into the hearts and minds of Japanese women. Scholars frequently have paralleled this type of woman's awakening to that of opening a glass box for in the analogy, the closed glass box

encases the stereotypical Japanese woman, but in lifting the lid, the active modern woman emerges or steps forward. Ichikawa Fusae expressed her hope that all scholars would begin to "tell about the Japanese women as you see them, both favorable and unfavorable, but tell their story" in place of the commonly found distorted images in the media (Robins-Mowry, 1983, p. xxi). It is **this** story of **these** women, these truly extraordinary women, and the spread of their emerging social philosophy and commitment from a few individuals to mass organizations, that has helped to shape and to change Japanese society and politics.

Conscientious women's movements today in Japan attempt to assume nothing but rather untie the mystery surrounding them. In order to discover what modern Japanese women, their families, and their society are truly like, scholars must conduct research into an area where change is occurring. Without such a probe, outside scholars are prone to regard current and past roles of Japanese women in simplistic terms. However, Japanese male scholars are also equally guilty of limited visions about the *forgotten ones* of their society by failing to explore how the women truly are reenforcing the traditional images of female roles.

Through the lives of these four women I seek to provide a broad-stroke picture of Japanese women's attitudes, activities and their effort to ameliorate themselves, their society, and their country's policies. It exemplifies their influence and how they seek to expand it. It echoes their remarkable capacity to pinpoint domestic problems well in advance of national

recognition, making them the forecaster of the need for social and economic change. The outline for my research: in the next section, i.e. part two I provide a broad overview of Japanese politics, in part three I discuss women's roles in Japanese society, and in part four I will analyze the lives of four pioneering women who made a great impact on Japanese society and politics. Finally, in part five I offer my conclusions.

II. Politics within Japan

In the postwar period, a democratic pattern of politics emerged in Japan which incorporated respect for civil liberties, competitive elections, responsible government, and the high cost of election campaigns. However, Japan used these threads of democratic politics to weave a distinct Japanese pattern through its social structure, constitutional order, political traditions, and value systems. The result has been a political system characterized by striking contrasts: political change versus political stability; one-party dominance versus strong interest in party competition; adaptation in the face of new circumstances versus profound continuity of the political system (Bystdydzienski, 1992, p.5).

The Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), in power from its creation in 1955 until its fall in 1995, was able to create one of the hallmarks of Japan's political system, i.e. its profound stability. For forty years, government was in the hands of the LDP. This party never received a serious challenge to its dominant position until 1994. Such dominance entitled the LDP to control the Premiership and the Cabinet. From this continuity and stability arose a political party system in 1955 that is quite different from that which resides today. LDP's dominating power served as a kind of umbrella under which Japan experienced widespread political as well as economic and social changes, exemplified in Japan's economic recovery and the democratic social relations ("Diet Gives Green Light to Political Reform

Bills,"1994).

The LDP's total commitment to the goal of winning pulled it steadily towards the political center and away from many of the earlier political reforms to which it had been committed. In the public's mind LDP was associated with defending the status quo not with adapting to change (Iwao,1993,pgs.214-215, Nelson, 1994,p.398). Japanese society was profoundly divided ideologically. Conservatives derived their electoral roots in the agricultural work force and small business leadership. In contrast, Socialists and other progressive groups spoke for the modern, young electorate. Distrust and hostility were the hallmarks of these two camps and the LDP relied upon a basic fear of the Socialists gaining power and ultimately dividing the party.

Another way LDP tried to maintain its support was by advocating a wide range of policy issues including the increase of Self Defense Forces, the promotion of clean politics, the opposition to American military bases, and the reduction of cult's influence in politics. Its agenda also included an emphasis upon creating equality within Japanese society while promoting increased internationalism (Murayama,1991,pgs.154-155).

This flexibility was not always seen as positive. Dissatisfaction with LDP policies found a voice in a large number of movements. Many Japanese scholars today hold that these movements provided the opportunity for the emergence of new forms of political participation and the challenge to the established

party system. For example, it was Tanaka Kakuei (from July 1972-December 1974, and Tanaka Makiko's father) who set the blueprint for remodeling politics under his bold new style in governmental policy which took account of public opinion (Iwao, 1993, pgs. 219-223, Ling, 1992, p. 64).

Japan's Socialist Party (JSP), often labelled the party of constant opposition, also had an important influence in the agenda of politics. JSP derived its popularity from its early opposition to constitutional revision, from its resistance to democratizing reforms introduced under American Occupation, and from its opposition to the US-Japan Security Treaty. Such permanent opposition made a profound impact upon both JSP and LDP. JSP in missing several opportunities to come to power allowed the LDP to secure the position of a one-party dominance. On the surface, the JSP was an anti-system party, committed to removing the LDP from power and to fundamentally reorganizing Japan's political and economic system. However in practice, the JSP used its contact with LDP leadership to secure benefits for its supporters by operating as a lobby for public sector union and by supporting constituents (Bystdydzienski, 1992, pgs. 117-121).

However JSP's fortunes were to change on June 29, 1994, when Murayama Tomiichi (from July 1994-January 1996), the former 1993 chairman of JSP, became Japan's 52nd Prime Minister following the resignation of Hata Tsutomu (from March 1994-July 1994) and his Cabinet. This event is significant for Murayama Tomiichi then became Japan's first Socialist Prime Minister in forty-seven

years. His newly formed Cabinet commanded a majority in the Diet and consisted of thirteen ministers from the LDP, five from SDP and two from the New Party (*Sakigake*). One of Murayama's State Ministers, was the Director-General of Science and Technology Agency, an LDP member and a woman by the name of Tanaka Makiko. She was the only female in Murayama's Cabinet and the first woman to achieve such status.

In his first Policy Speech presented to the 130th Diet, Prime Minister Murayama promoted a new order of peace and stability divorced from the old paradigms of capitalism and socialism. The Prime Minister wished to create an international society in which human rights would be protected and people could live their lives in peace and stability. He also stressed the urgency for strong political reform. "Never before has it been so important that politics return to its roots and dispel this popular distrust" ("Murayama's Cabinet Inaugurated, 1994). Prime Minister Murayama, leery of how his coalition could commit to administrative reform, was pressed with key bills including political reform, tax reform, and world trade reform. "I don't think it is possible to have a two-party system now as values become ever more divergent, and a party of democratic and liberal forces should become the third pole" ("Diet Gives the Green Light on Reform Bills," 1994).

To date national politics in Japan remain among one of the foremost areas of male dominance. Changing the present Diet is a major political transformation which includes steps such as

establishing political ethics, reforming the system of political funding, reforming the electoral system, reforming the party in power, revitalizing the Diet, and decentralization. Japanese men see the arena of national politics as one of the most important territories for action and self-actualization. Therefore it has become a "territory zealously preserved for themselves, firmly resisting the threat posed by women to entrenched values, customs, and organizations built up within their fraternal society over centuries" (Iwao,1993,p.214).

Women who have been allowed entry into politics are believed only to be able to perform in areas related to the women's housekeeper's instinct (*daidokoro kankaku*): household affairs, child care, education, health and welfare, and environment. Women are seen as unfit for positions involving political policy, the economy, security or diplomacy (Iwao,1993,p.214, Tanaka,1995, pgs.343-346) (see appendix C-4). With this confined scope of female involvement in policies, male politicians have endeavored to reserve the world of national and international politics for themselves.

The majority of Japanese women view politics as a remote, alien realm, a world of managerial power, influence peddling, and corruption. In short, politics is held generally as a filthy occupation which has no relationship to their lives and values (Iwao,1993,pgs.213-215, Sato,1995,pgs.365-370). Many women do not see their gender roles embracing the world of politics, however others regard politics as an important arena for

improving women's status. It has been for the most part outside the formal party organizations of national politics that women have gained the most status. The unit keenly affected by this change is the family in which women exert their control over their family's economic resources. Japanese women's pragmatic approach is centered on problem solving whereas the men have the tendency to follow well-defined principles and to address goal-orientated avenues.

In the past, labelled as reactive or situation-orientated, women have tended to be ineffective and helpless against the scandal-ridden collusion between big business and government or in the reform of organizational structures (Nakamura,1995). Women who have challenged this hurdle are blessed with two major characteristics. First, these women are able to be understood as they sidetrack the rhetorical and abstruse language that many male politicians utilize. Secondly, women who have succeeded in a political career confront the conflict with their traditional role by employing desirable female qualities. Although these two characteristics, these two avenues of enterprise, i.e. the traditional versus the political, are ever-present, the overbearing pressure to remain outside the world of politics, outside the man's world, discourages women from seeking political office (Pharr,1987,pgs.236-237).

Women have only been given a partial participation within the political system. Japanese women have struggled since the first general election of 1890 to gain the right to vote and to

hold political office (see appendix C-2). For more than half a century the Japanese legislative system functioned with its doors firmly closed to women. This tendency to underestimate their importance in politics and their questioned sense of responsibility for political affairs, was reversed in October 1945 with Shidehara Kijuro (from October 1945-May 1946) and his Cabinet when they decided to support women's right to political participation (Iwao,1993,pgs.214-216).

Universal suffrage followed and in April of 1946, the first Japanese general elections were held. Sixty-seven percent of Japanese women went to the polls. Seventy-nine women fielded the election, and thirty-nine were victorious. Suddenly there was an influx of women in the National Diet. This political involvement and success was to represent a three percent proportion of women in the National Diet and would continue for decades. As of March 1990, the percentage of women in the political arena has increased to 5.9 percent thereby giving Japan a rank of one hundred eighth among democratic countries allowing women in political leadership roles. There are twelve members of the House of Representatives who are women (2.3 percent of the entire membership) and thirty-three members of the House of Councilors (thirteen percent) (Iwao,1993,pg.118) (see appendix C-3).

The patterns and practices that have defined the male-dominated political ethos are the main reasons why there has been a limited entry of Japanese women into politics. In addition, the fact that it takes so much money to get elected has put

political office far beyond the reach of most politically ambitious women. Indirectly and occasionally, however, women have been allowed access to the reign of power. When bestowed in the past, those political roles were more as figureheads meant to tide an organization over until a 'real successor,' often a son, emerged. On the fringes of the political world, wives of candidates and elected representatives were allowed to exercise their talents. The obligations these women had to fulfill were immense for they had to learn how to dress and to speak in ways that would not provoke criticism or alienate any potential voter, to use proper etiquette, and to participate in the details that would court the support and favor of the voters. This politically limited woman's role had a strong resemblance to the one of traditional good wife and wise mother, and was a role in which a woman was supposed to achieve self-realization through the success of her husband (Reischauer, 1988, pgs. 175-177, 278).

It is significant that in contrast, male politicians needed not to prove themselves as good husbands or fathers in order to be recognized by their peers. A woman's behavior might mean the difference between her husband's success and failure. The tendency of the parties was therefore to treat women as expendable figures or stand-ins, rather than as serious candidates for political office, the reason being that if a woman were to lose an election, she could always be supported by her husband; but if a man were to fail, the consensus was that the reverse would not be possible (Tanaka, 1977, pgs. 27-31). Seen as

objects of policy and not as subjects of the politics, women were denied the ability to raise their own voices and create their own policies. A few politically strong women were able to ascend to these positions only after their traditional roles of wife and mother were completed.

The July 1989 House of Councilors elections brought women into the limelight of Japanese politics as never before. A record one hundred forty-six female candidates ran with one of the leading issues being the newly introduced consumption tax. Thirty-four percent of women "concerned" about the elections were not however prepared to completely overturn the LDP government and give control of the government to JSP, the opposition party. The outcome was that women ultimately voted for the LDP showing an attitude of sternness, yet willingness to forgive ("Diet Gives Green Light to Political Reform Bills,"1994) (see appendix C-1).

Without any particular support from the world of politics, women doubted their ability to actually become elected candidates for nothing had prepared them to hold a seat in the national legislature. Whether seen as a potential crippling force in politics or as the movers of mountains, women definitely had increased their visibility in the structure once forbidden. With their emergence as elected officials, women had to be dealt with by the party in power which it should be noted did not have any concrete plan on how to utilize women's political skills. In general, parties had not expected to have to accept women as active members of the Diet. In their political eyes, men

regarded women as amateurs, possessing neither the necessary knowledge nor the models from which to learn. However, since the 1980s it is significant to note that there has been an increased number of women in leadership positions, though neither JSP nor LDP have truly valued or acknowledged the ability of these Japanese women.

The designation of the role of Prime Minister is a major function of the Diet. This function did not exist in the Imperial Diet. The Constitution recognizes the precedence of the House of Representatives over the House of Councilors in this area. Usually, both houses designate the same person to be Prime Minister. Only twice have their decisions differed. Of special interest is the second, in 1989, which involved both a person and a gender differentiation. The House of Councilors, due to a reversal of power, had designated the JSP Chairwoman Doi Takako, while the House of Representatives had designated the newly appointed LDP President, Kaifu Toshiki (from August 1989-October 1991). For the first time in thirty-six years, a joint committee of both houses broke up after only seven minutes, and in accordance with the Constitution, Kaifu became Prime Minister. To that date, all of Japan's postwar Prime Ministers had been members of the House of Representatives and never before had an Upper House member been designated Prime Minister.

This event was labelled as the *Doi phenomenon*. Doi did not fit the old stereotype, that of an imposing female who passively accepted her sacrificial lamb fate (Iwao, 1993, p. 228). Doi

challenged the presumably male dominated system with a declaration of "the advent of the era of women". She was to mark the stage as the first female Diet member and the first woman ever to be promoted to the role of Prime Minister. This step was far from achieving her ultimate goal. Nevertheless, the level of grass roots politics steadily would grow as an outcome and the number of women pursuing legislative office was to continually increase.

If JSP can be criticized for preventing its female party chair from becoming the next appointed Prime Minister, then LDP can be criticized for placing women in power in order to control the damage caused by sex scandals of its leaders. In 1989, as never before in Japanese politics the House of Councilors brought women into political limelight. The newly introduced consumption tax was the dominant issue in the campaign.

Meanwhile, as mentioned briefly before, a scandal involving Prime Minister Uno who had proceeded Prime Minister Kaifu, aroused such female indignation as to bring women to the polls to chastise the ruling party for making such a disreputable character its Prime Minister. Prime Minister Uno in retaliation and also to cover-up the sex scandal, removed four women from government and hindered their further entry into political office. Prime Minister Hosokawa Morihiro (from July 1993-March 1994) would follow in office and in scandal.

Knowledgeable of such changing focus on women as reported above, it must become somewhat conclusive to the reader that the

state of women's leadership in politics has been on a roller coaster, riding high or low according to the whims or direction of each new Prime Minister. One may wonder whether the motives of each Prime Minister were to select women based on their abilities or as a ruse to cover up scandals. The significance of the fore-mentioned examples and incidents can be interpreted in many ways. One such interpretation could conclude pessimistically that the dominant male political elite prevents even capable, respected, and experienced women leaders like Doi Takako from gaining top leadership. On the other hand, one could also argue that women's political activism has changed and challenged the old game of politics in Japan. Men can no longer carry on in their old ways without facing political scrutiny. To understand more fully the impact of the changes in Japanese politics, especially women's influence, we need to examine in more depth women's changing roles in society and how they became active in politics.

III. Women's Roles in Japanese Society

Japanese women are members of two cultural realms simultaneously: the general culture and the distinct women's culture which is defined by their socialization. It is a gender segregated realm in which women are responsible for most of the child rearing, family maintenance, and social welfare. These roles exclusively performed by women ensure lack of interference from the male domain.

Gender role socialization, the process by which women learn gender appropriate behavior, and political socialization, the avenue in which individuals learn politically relevant attitudes and behavior patterns, both offer an explanation to the Japanese feminine culture (Nelson,1994,p.397, Pharr,1981,p.11,Kaneko,1995, pgs.3-7). Research from feminist scholars verify the presence of a distinct Japanese women's culture which provides the lens to view politics including its issues and its organization. Japanese women strongly believe that women politicians can make a difference, a change for the better because of their distinct knowledge and skills. They also believe that Japanese male politicians because of their set ways cannot safely bring about these changes. Women know and understand more about the family and the local community from which come the real problems of Japan. Becoming dissatisfied with regard to problems such as environmental pollution, women's health, the aging population, and the burdensome responsibility for family well-being, female politicians have entered the political arena. They have

proceeded to develop concrete policies and to enact effective legislation in those areas.

Japanese women's changing roles must be placed against the backdrop of Japanese social tradition. Gender role change was an essential precondition for their activism. It provided the opportunity for women to challenge the prevailing attitude towards them. This is significant for in order to become active, women first had to challenge the dominant definition of women's roles. After progressing through this stage, they could effectively cross the threshold into active politics. Rising successfully to this challenge, women brought forth a cutting edge to social change, a direct challenge to the dominant definition of women's role. Scholars agree that all political women serve as agents of change and facilitate the way for other women to enter politics.

A growing feminist consciousness in Japan is inspired by the study of ancient history in which it can be noted that Japanese women held such prominent positions within society as deities, early rulers, literary writers, and teachers. It was under feudalism that women would lose this inheritance of status and property rights and that their roles would become restricted. What followed was a society, which had been relatively homogenous, become effectively segregated and a separate women's world was created.

Confucian values, the foundation for a male-dominant society, resulted in an educational policy that trained girls to

be "good wives and wise mothers" (Nelson,1994,p.398). The civil law code created a legal system that weakened women's social status, further contributing to male dominance in both the private and the public spheres. Japanese scholars have stressed that a sharp gender based division of roles placed men in the public domain and women at home. For years this social pattern of thought and practice has persisted and influenced women's participation in the political world.

Women have drawn upon their feminine experiences, values, and perspectives in an attempt to begin to change existing political institutions in Japan. Modernization and reform have swept through Japan and have flourished the feminist movement. The strategies used by activists stress the importance of empowerment. Women in struggling for it have shattered the view that Japanese women are shy, passive, and without question subordinate. Today women are more visible in the public sphere of politics, they are stepping out of their traditional roles, questioning their society, and running for public office in order to change a system they view as corrupt and unjust.

An example of women's awakening to challenge the women's traditional role was shown by the women of the Bluestocking group (*Seito*) who started with a bold manifestation of self-liberation in 1911 (Meiji 44). This group consisted of women determined to create a new relationship with men by first emphasizing a woman's development as an independent person and by encouraging her self-expression. The hope was to create a single agency charged with

the sweeping responsibility for improving women's status in Japanese society, and empowered to deal with everything from the concerns of housewives to the problems facing farm women, business women, professional women, and female civil servants (Kaneko,1995, pgs.7-9, Ling & Azusa,1992,pgs.51-60, Pharr,1981, pgs.15-41). Publishing the revered magazine, *Seito*, members presented works exemplifying the group's mission. Yosano Akiko was one of these women to bridge the ideals by way of her poetry and her writings. Her literary art, centered on the notion of romantic love and turbulent passion, portrayed the struggles within women's lives. Her poetry and novels were to signal the rise of a "new" woman.

Social reforms were also being advocated by scholars. They wanted to reform the roles of women from the prevailing "good wife and wise mother" ideology. The government had encouraged this type of bondage to the family system through the ideology which asked a woman to obey her husband and take care of her family. It was the "proper way" to serve her country. This oppression led most women to become subservient, locked behind the doors of the family system (Lebra,1976,p.29). At the same time women were envisioned as objects of beauty. One woman for example stated that "Beautiful girls could get all kinds of good positions, but ordinary girls like me who weren't beautiful and had no special skills couldn't get any kind of a decent job" (Pharr,1981,p.153).

Such oppression was equally responsible for the rise of the new generation of women who would protest the traditional family system and who would desire to use their untapped talents. The parallel development of the Japanese economy, the rise of a middle class, and the expansion of women's higher education all had its effects upon the formation of groups such as *Seito*. Through *Seito*, opposition to the traditional Japanese family system became most evident in young women who advocated ideas of free love and self-selected marriage. Japanese leaders believed these radical ideas to be a direct threat to the surviving feudal system. Women's advocacy of modern self-awareness brought about a direct confrontation with the traditional family system which had oppressed them for so long (Lebra, 1976, p.30). No longer would groups such as *Seito* allow the government enforced social ethics to restrict their self-expression.

Self-awareness, self-choice, self-fulfillment, self-development, and self-assertion created an atmosphere in which there could arise the rejection of societal repression. Women began to speak out and compare their own personal experiences: the marriage which their parents had forced upon them, the impossibility of getting an education, the difficulties of supporting themselves, and the lack of opportunities for seeking professional careers. Women dreamed for reform!

Seito, historically recognized as the beginning of women's activism, created a strong awareness of self which grew into a movement. Proclaimed by some scholars as "the Renaissance in the

history of Japanese women," Seito created the fuel necessary for future socialist movements to emerge within Japanese politics (Kaneko,1995,pg.7, Lebra,1976,p.31). Japanese women were first initiated into the public and political world through the redefinition of their traditional roles of wife and mother. This success came as a surprise to the political establishment as well as to the public.

The first transformation in the female work force took place during the 1970's economic boom. The largest percentage, i.e. forty-three percent of working women were employed in the primary sector, while twenty percent were working in the secondary sector and nearly thirty-seven percent were in the tertiary sector (Tanaka,1975,pgs.27-30). Women had been transformed into *flowers of the office*, pretty to look at and decorative but still undervalued and transient. However, many women endured the job long enough to eventually compete with men for promotion. The hurdles were enormous and it took women on average some twenty years to achieve a promotion in the business sector (Sato,1995, pgs.369-372).

Many young scholars raise the question whether today's women still persist in being tied to their husbands and their children in the traditional subservient sense. Statistics would indicate that this is far from the norm. In 1991, women excluding the self-employed and the farmers, comprised thirty-eight percent of the total employed labor force (Iwao,1993, pgs.153-156, Foreign Press Center,1992). Less as a means of survival, work had become

for the vast majority of women a means to supplement family income and a means by which women could gain and enjoy freedom and economic autonomy. It was through perseverance, obedience, diligence, and self-sacrifice that women's eyes were opened to pursue more individualistic avenues.

No longer valued as *flowers of the work place*, women in the last decade have been able to search new jobs. In the past, based upon the patriarchal bias of the Japanese economic system, men had been guaranteed a job waiting for them upon graduation. Women were told to take it easy; their lives were supposed to be without any particular purpose and women should not expect to be able to compete on an equal basis with men. In many companies, while women performed trivial office chores such as pouring tea, their male counterparts competed for rank. Questioning this hierarchial structure, female employees began to wonder why they had been hired. "I could have retired from this situation five years ago. But if I had done nothing against the company, it would have meant that I accepted such discriminatory employment practices against myself and other women of my age" stated a woman at Sumitomo Metal (Nakamura,1995). Holding higher expectations with regard to her potential and ability, she accused the company of applying gender bias against women at many levels of management. The management, however, claimed that the difference in salaries and promotions was based upon performance and not upon gender biased ideology. Significantly today many female employees no longer accept this explanation.

Gender biased presence in the male work place is exemplified through such practices as lifetime employment (eikyu shushoku), temporary seat (koshikake), and observing the outside (shyakai kengaku). Women are seen as temporary supporters not as regular employees. Many women affirm this separation for they report that they consider themselves to be short term, non-career workers who therefore do not need to take the same responsibility as their male counterparts. There is no question that Japanese industry surged ahead in the postwar period due in great part to the supporting role women played thereby allowing men to put work above everything else. Men seemed to be the only moving forces in the country's politics, society, and economic growth (Ling & Matsuno, 1992, pgs. 60-63). Women were all but invisible as far as anyone could observe.

So far I have examined how the changing social roles allowed women to improve their economic participation. It is equally important to recognize how their changed socioeconomic roles influenced a change in their political status. In the next section, I will show how these women, freed from traditional roles, begin to engage in significant political transformation.

Challenging the Confucian philosophy of "good wife and wise mother" activists were to speak out against the oppression of women, to advocate women's rights, and to support the restructuring of the family all of which would bring about fundamental economic and political changes. A twofold movement emerged early in the twentieth century. The first phase was

labor organizing, working through a political party and left-wing groups. However, these two agencies prevented any substantial change within the status of working women at that time because of their sustained traditional values. The second wave was in response to the restriction placed upon women by the Meiji Constitution of 1889, criticizing and attacking the discrimination against women. Women began to rise up and forcefully develop their own social movement (Ling & Matsuno, 1992,pg.54). For example, Yosano Akiko, among other scholars, criticized this gender discrimination.

In 1919, Ichikawa Fusae and Hiratsuka Raicho followed Yosano's lead with the formation of the Association of New Women which would campaign for equal rights, women's suffrage, and a labor union for women workers. Ichikawa did not stop there for she assisted with the formation of other groups, including the Women Suffrage Alliance. A position of political neutrality in order to mobilize all forces was established in support of women's suffrage (Condon,1985,pgs.60-62). Women had to be allowed to join political parties and to vote in local elections.

Growth of militarism led to an increased anti-feminist sentiment and a reordering of national priorities which placed women's suffrage on the back burner. Newspapers and leaders were banned from expressing anti-government opinions; many of the activist women were arrested, some even assassinated (Ling & Matsuno,1992,pg.55). Ichikawa stood firm in her campaign to encourage women to vote and to run as candidates. In the 1946

election, sixty-seven percent of eligible women voted, electing thirty-nine females to the Lower House of the National Diet and ten to the Upper House (Ling & Matsuno, 1992, pg. 55). This indeed was an impressive accomplishment for a nation valiantly struggling to establish democratic norms. Of significance is that Japanese women have yet to surpass this record in the postwar period. With the new Constitution, the right of women to vote included a section which guaranteed women equality as a constitutional right. Remarkably their activism and struggle for empowerment have continued and intensified in recent decades.

Many women recently have joined political parties, become involved in political campaigns, and even run for public office. This activity has coincided with a growing reorientation of thought that unless women enter into the formal political process, they cannot effectively expect to alter the obstacles that remain in their path to seeking complete equality with men. Women have become increasingly zealous in campaigning against corruption in politics for they believe themselves to be less likely to fall prey to bribery and the misuse of public funds. Many campaigns supported by women have brought increased numbers of women to politics as candidates while convincing other women to vote for their own gender.

It has been said that the voting gap is an important, contributing factor in the outcome of elections. Of interest is the fact that the expected life span of women is eighty-one years whereas men's life-expectancy is said to be only seventy-eight.

With these figures, the age-factor should serve as a challenge to the past pressures that society has put on men to carry the sole responsibility for the country's economic growth and political agenda. The question that justifiably follows is why women who both outlive and outvote men are socially deprived of the opportunity to serve their country in leadership roles (Akamatsu, personal communication, February 15, 1995)?

Another key problem for women in Japan has been to translate legal rights into effective political power and to bring old traditions in line with what the current laws state. Poverty, illiteracy and the lack of educational opportunities are generally denoted as a major constraining forces upon political participation by both men and women. It is also nearly impossible to measure to what degree gender differences independent from role conflict has constrained women's political behavior. Japan does provide the ideal setting in which to isolate and study those two factors, i.e. gender and role.

A woman's search for a place in political life is related to the degree her right to participate in all levels of politics is accepted. In no nation are women fully represented at the elite level proportional to their numbers in population. Why women remain marginal in politics, despite legally guaranteed access, has been the subject of recent research. For women confronted with the options of becoming politically active, the stakes are not easy. There are inherent conflicts between the norms and expectations linked to their political roles. As women struggle

to enter the new terrain of politics, they do so only by adding certain rights to their basic identity as woman. This then calls for role redefinition at the societal level as well as the individual level. It can be accepted that if traditional definitions of a woman's role have served to constrain her from past political participation Japanese must seek to understand how these constraints function and how they must be and are being overcome individually and collectively. My case studies are of four pioneering women who felt limited by the imposed traditional roles and thereby struggled to overcome them.

IV. Leading Women Who Serve as Role Models

A long history plus recent political activist movements could explain current fields of effort that Japanese women are attempting to change. Relying on their knowledge of family and local community needs and on their organizational skills acquired in consumer groups, Japanese female politicians have brought forth family issues and community concerns to the political agenda. As issues have increased, so has pressure for action and attention. Pioneers such as Tanaka Makiko have become the liaison between ordinary people and politicians utilizing direct, everyday language to emphasize concrete political goals. Distinguished as possessing the experience of consumer cooperatives and the knowledge of agenda issues, women spearheaded movements of societal cooperation thereby increasing the sponsorship and support of women candidates seeking political office. Results have been far reaching and include the increased representation by women at all levels of government, and the development of coalitions, organizations and levels of government across party lines (Molony, 1978, pgs. 319-322).

New opportunities in higher education, greater flexibility in male-female relations, and various other new possibilities have created a setting in which change in women's self and role could occur (see appendix C-5). For example, the reason eighty percent of women are now engaged in various forms of role experimentation is credited to the increased opportunities for women's involvement in politics (Pharr, 1981, p. 224). "Women saw

their political commitment, not as an extension of their duties as women to primary figures in their lives, but as a separate category of activity they had undertaken as adults" (Pharr,1981, p.221).

A variety of influences including the basic political orientation of parents and the level of political interest within the family can be directly related to women's political behavior and political desire in adulthood. It is important to study the process by which politically oriented women, unlike other women, emerged from adolescence into young adulthood as political activists. Scholars offer a theory on individual growth and change in order to explain how these individuals successfully altered the traditional women's mold (Pharr,1981, p.226, Sato, 1995,pgs.366-370).

Throughout my case studies, I will review the distinguished contributions made by four distinctly independent yet connected leaders. These four studies will focus on Tsuda Ume, Yosano Akiko, Ichikawa Fusae, and Tanaka Makiko each of whom paved the way for the next to carry the torch of change. The common threads to all four include their energetic personality, their innovative societal role, and their distinct background to this movement.

A. Tsuda Ume (1864-1929)

Pioneer of Higher Education

Tsuda Ume, known to scholars as the pioneer of higher education, created many avenues for multiple entrances into a once gender-restricted society. Serving as a role-model for Japanese women, Tsuda led the way in women's higher education in 1900 with the foundation of Tsuda Women's College (Tsuda Jyuku Daigaku), a prestigious women's college in Japan. Her socially conscious path began in 1872 when Tsuda, at the age of seven, became the youngest member of the Iwakura Mission which was a delegation of five girls sent to the United States by the Emperor to symbolize the willingness of the Meiji leaders to experiment with female education and show that Japan was rapidly progressing towards modernization.

Tsuda was an eager girl who wanted her nation to modernize. Personally encouraged by the challenge, Tsuda was to become a symbol of higher education for her countrywomen. As her American education progressed, she would begin to realize that in her country women's education was limited by the Japanese male vision which defined a woman's sole educational need was to be trained as a "good wife and wise mother." Tsuda sought to create a school which offered more diverse opportunities than this to Japanese women. Tsuda, a pure idealist, held the dream to establish an institution that would implement a new educational philosophy. Ignoring the Ministry of Education's policy directing girls to become "good wives and wise mothers," she

would create an atmosphere which educated women to become professionals" (Yamakawa,1992,p.165). She rejected the slave mentality and the spineless submissiveness that characterized many schools. She then gave students an opportunity to practice the skills they acquired. A nucleus of support for the creation of a social standard for westernized tastes inspired and motivated the students to break the past submissive *geisha* ideology.

It is important to note Tsuda's family life in order to appreciate the path she took and the mark on history that she left. Tsuda represented strength and perseverance plus resilience similar to the plum tree blossoms which also symbolized her name, *ume*. Sen, her father, had left her home in rage on December 31, 1864, when she was born. Sen had made strategic plans for his next son but not for a daughter. Although her father was disappointed, he came to accept his daughter when Tsuda became a glimmer of hope for the family, one who could advantageously reverse the family fortunes if she were to prove herself. Through attaining an overseas education, he believed that she could possibly bring prestige, honor, and even material wealth back to her family.

On December 23, 1871, Tsuda left Yokohama for America. Although very frightened, her curiosity was strong. After five weeks on the boat, she disembarked into throngs of people who starred at her as a mystical princess from a foreign land. Tsuda was placed under the care of Mr. & Mrs. Charles Lanman. This

family after longing fruitlessly for a daughter of their own, saw in Tsuda the opportunity to provide a child with the education typical of a middle-class American girl. Tsuda's mind would soon exhibit a "live Yankee element in the Oriental mind" (Rose,1992, p.22). Her teachers were proud of their Japanese student. Demonstrating a strong desire to fit into her new surroundings, Tsuda would let nothing stop her from fully absorbing and meshing into this culture and lifestyle.

As she continued her study abroad, she discovered the Madame Butterfly syndrome was a prevalent stereotype of Japanese women. Tsuda's experiences and gender discoveries would ultimately become cross-cultural. The idea now seeded was to mature later in the development of Japanese women's higher education (Demakis,1989,p.3). American education made Tsuda curious, despite her limited language skills. Even though she was placed in a climate unreceptive to advancing female education, Tsuda persevered because she was determined to elevate the status of Japanese women and expand their influence in society.

In Tsuda the need to educate women was seen as similar to the need to cultivate a healthy ume tree.

"While Japan is educating her young men so finely, let her not forget the women, else she will have a lopsided plum trees, one side tall, sharply, and blooming with fair promise of abundant fruit, the other deformed and barren. Let both grow together into a tree which shall delight the eyes of all beholders" (Rose,1992,p.39).

The women effected would become cultivated ladies able to overcome the historical traditions that had segregated men and

women for centuries. Tsuda, an alien to her own country, no longer felt pure, i.e. pure to the spirit which distinguished the Japanese. She feared the danger of becoming second class. Tsuda viewed this fear as foolish (*baka*) but she recognized that traditionally women had been dehumanized to an inferior status through five sins: lack of willfulness, the lack of the desire to offend others, lack of the desire to abuse others, the lack of the presence of jealousy, and presence of apparent shallow-wittedness (Rose, 1992, p.45).

Tsuda experienced this restrictive role first hand. On one hand, her father proudly encouraged her American ways in public, but privately in the world of the Tsuda family, he required her to act as a model Japanese daughter, a code of behavior to which she had little knowledge since she had been removed from it so long before. Marriage seemed to be on her father's mind but for Tsuda it represented too high a price to pay in order to achieve social acceptance. Tsuda stood firm and was determined to remain childless in order to achieve her ambitions. This caused contempt from her father for he thought she needed a husband if she wanted to fit into society. He believed that marriage would give her respect and authority both of which would enable her to carry out her plans. Tsuda carried the will of determination to remain unmarried in a society which defined women solely in terms of their relationships. She identified early in life that she would have to sacrifice her independence if she were to fulfill the standards expected of a Japanese wife: silence, deference,

obedience.

Tsuda, now ready to transform her nation, realized that it was while living abroad that she had gained a strong belief in Japan as a nation (Rose,1992,p.27). A strong sense of self-worth and personal dignity fostered a growing spirit of independence. Her American education had indeed contributed to her character formation and the creation of her sense of duty.

Beginning in 1882, Tsuda portrayed this new sense of independence as she struggled to pay respect to the Japanese society that she no longer wholeheartedly agreed to accept. In her was depicted the agony of a young soul seeking an identity for though she was Japanese by birth she was an American by education and upbringing and therefore held an unique point of view. "A restricted mind creates self-delusion: a woman believes herself perfectly happy if she has a house, a husband, and children" (Rose,1992,p.45). She would not let her government forget their original purpose for her study, i.e. to improve women's status.

Returning almost as a stranger to her own society, she was immediately hit by the language barrier for she could hardly speak her native Japanese. Tsuda was extremely conscious of being different from others. Many of the Japanese customs proved difficult: removing shoes, gift giving, sitting on the floor, and the overwhelming restrictions on women's behavior. Her painful adjustments both in America and at home taught her caution. She was isolated, lonely, disoriented, and even alienated while

setting out to fulfill her dream. Isolated by turning into a foreigner among her own people, her language became unknown to them.

In 1889, she went again to America and studied at Bryn Mawr College for three years. Her desire to further her American education inspired her to direct future efforts strongly towards the higher education of women in Japan. She learned American democracy, Puritanism, and independence which left a distinct mark upon her life. In order to expand women's opportunities, Tsuda stated that the education in Japan needed to be secularized, a strategy that she used in founding her own school (Furuki, 1991, pgs. 40-43).

While at Bryn Mawr College, there emerged a vision of woman's role in society that became even more radical than the domestic ideal for it emphasized the social mind of woman as expressed in the growing women's suffrage movement. "If the mothers are superb, they can have superb children, and Japan can become a splendid country in later generations." This quote, from her father, rang in her ears and yielded her to the mission to educate the daughters of Japan (Rose, 1992, p. 33). Convinced of her duty to Japanese women and seeing herself in a future role as an authority on female education, Tsuda felt this special obligation to share her advantages. "I feel I must be of use, not because I know much, but because I am a Japanese woman with an education" (Rose, 1992, p. 35).

Tsuda planned for a school where her influence would prevail. In 1900, Tsuda opened the first private college for women in Japan, Tsuda Jyuku Daigaku, which mandated a vision to educate women in such away that they would develop their individual personalities, becoming financially emancipated and independent working women (Furuki,1991,p.46). Fluent in English and trained to achieve a high standard of academic excellence, the graduates were prepared to avoid the "helpless economic dependence on men" (Tanaka,1990, p.46). Tsuda's work proved pivotal to Japanese women's emancipation. Her life exemplified a young woman's struggle with her strange fate, her sense of mission, and her dedication to the improvement of her countrywomen's status through education. As she stated in a speech, "I think my reward ought to be a field to work in, a place to teach. It is my right and my place" (Rose,1992,p.70).

Tsuda has left a legacy of multiple achievements. Scholars have hailed the challenges she planted against the restrictive ideology that had long held women to a life within the imposed boundaries of women's proper place. Tsuda also created an urgency among the leaders to bring about change. Through the legacy of her life, scholars have celebrated the new Japanese woman who has attained higher education, who has gained privilege in a world of male power, and who has struggled in a world of oppression. A pioneer of Japanese women's education, Tsuda promoted women's rights. Her experiences reflected the political and social currents of the Meiji (1868-1911) and Taisho (1911-

1925) Periods in Japan. Her story dramatized the fundamental issue of female education which ultimately served to reform Japanese education.

Groomed at the government's expense for what she had assumed to be a position of leadership within the Meiji establishment, she was to become Japanese education's innovator. By using effective strategy, she was able to realize her ambitions and to see her ideals put into practice. Confident of her ideals regarding womanhood, namely independence and self-sufficiency, Tsuda attained success and worth despite the traditionally held ideals. She challenged her nation to find new power and privilege from the ranks of the forgotten ones of society, long neglected but never silent. Women's higher education was achieved only because she was not afraid to challenge the hierarchies of family and the old norms of society (Sato, 1995, pgs. 370-372). Indeed she left a valuable legacy of impressive activities for the next pioneer to carry further.

B. Yosano Akiko (1878-1942)

Pioneer of Poetic Expression of Politics

Yosano Akiko is the next pioneering activist woman whom I will cite. She was to enter the world of politics by expressing her political voice through poetry. Political activism at this time occurred in a variety of ways. The change to varying degrees of women's perceptions of their proper role and their opinions towards political activism provided preconditions for women's entry into the world of politics.

Born on December 7, 1878, in what is now known as Sakai City in Osaka prefecture, Yosano Akiko was the third daughter of her family. It is interesting to note that her birth name was Sho. Since her name in kanji script could also be read aki, her pen name became Akiko. Like Tsuda Ume, Yosano was an unwanted daughter who was born two months after her brother had died in an accident. Disappointed by Yosano's birth, her father left home and remained at an inn for several days. Until the third son was born, Yosano was exiled from the family and her birth was not approved. Her father gradually grew to like her as her keen intelligence emerged. Later his admiration increased as he recognized her literary talents. He then sought the highest education possible in their district for his daughter.

Yosano secretly began to write poetry and publish it in magazines in her late teens. Her poetry was written in graceful lyricism and it was remarkable both for its accuracy and its sensitivity. But it became frustrating for Yosano, educated as

well as she had been, to undergo the restraints imposed upon her by her domineering father. Yosano found the atmosphere in her home hateful and oppressive. She would vent her feelings in the bold unconventional tanka of Tangled Hair (*Midaregami*). She reshaped the tanka into a modern poetic art form through her individualistic departure from its classical precedent. The tanka collection boldly explored her personal responses to the world, her youthful sensuality, and her newly awakened feelings of love (Robins-Mowry, 1983, p.179). Her collection of tanka had a sensational impact on all areas of literature, reviving Romanticism just as leading authors were turning to Naturalism. Her richly creative tanka were filled with the tensions of life. She sympathized with the downtrodden, and dwelled in the mind of the priest, the courtesan, the dancing girl, the mourner, and the kept woman (Yosano, 1987, pgs.1-2).

As the era of Meiji ended and the Taisho Era ushered in, the contradictions surrounding women did not subside. The debate signalled redefinition of women's roles as they entered the public arena. Due to their backgrounds, experiences, and philosophies, four prominent women came forth to challenge the traditional women's role each in her own way. These women included Yosano Akiko with the likes of others: Hiratsuka Raicho, Yamakawa Kikue, and Yamada Waka. Within this thesis, focus will be made on Yosano Akiko to clarify the important role which she carved out. Yosano advocated a feminism grounded in equal, educational, and social rights and responsibilities for women

(Yosano,1987,pgs.3-4). She used her literary talents to touch upon such critical topics as the role of women in politics and in the home, the educational goals for women, women's rights within the family and work-place, the need for women to control their own sexuality, and the role that the government should play in supporting women in their roles as wives and mothers (Tanaka, 1990,p.29).

A major forum for the debate over the "new women" was the literary magazine *Seito* founded by Hiratsuka. Yosano published her poetry regularly in *Seito* until the literary magazine ceased to exist in 1916. Politics as expressed effectively through poetry would bring Yosano national recognition. Poetry was at the time the only safe means to express her individual voice of protest. Her 1904 poem, *Do Not Offer Your Life*, advocated to men that since the Emperor did not go to battle they should not give their own lives. Opposing military service, Yosano wrote this poem for her brother who was with the Japanese army in China. Her words "Do not forget your forlorn young wife, weeping, ... who else than you alone is she to rely on in this world? Do not offer your life" portrayed Yosano's strong message that she did not approve of her brother's present position (Murayama,1963, pgs.155).

At first, her poems affected policy very little. She did however affect the way that an individual, especially a woman, could indirectly criticize the government. Gradually her writings served to empower people who wanted to disagree with

governmental decisions. Yosano struggled with her own disapproval of compulsory military service for she had come from a family who honored the Emperor strongly and was very nationalistic. In this period of intense nationalistic feelings her disapproval of her brother's participation in the military conquest of China caused great criticism to be leveled against her (Nakamura,1994,p.20-22).

Her poems often mentioned a country, an individual, an event, or a moment in time. Through this individualistic poetic method Yosano would often criticize her country's lack of stamina and inner strength (*gaman*) that she observed the Chinese held. She also criticized her government's hasty and careless decisions. Japanese scholars labelled her a radical critic. Women were not supposed to criticize governmental policy. Therefore writing poems and essays gave her the means to express her strong feelings. Her poems were found to be highly regarded and gave ordinary people, especially women, courage. She would often express personal memories and was not afraid to write opposing views to the general consciousness of nationalism. These traits when added together, placed Yosano apart from many poets and women (Nakamura,1994,p,22-24, Shima,1981,pg.74).

On the subject of Japanese women, Yosano's message was clear: support the women's movement and appeal for international feminism. In the poem titled *The Day the Mountains Move*, she exhorted "My friends, as long as you believe: All the sleeping women are now awake and moving" (Robins-Mowry,1983,p.180).

Yosano became the leading figure in the literary world. Yosano's interest in social issues, individual rights, and education made her as eager as her husband, Yosano Hiroshi, to experience with her own eyes the literary art of the various nations whose poetry had first attracted them to know more about the lives of women in those countries (Robins-Mowry,1983,p.183).

Her husband Yosano Hiroshi who had taken the pen name of Tekkan was the fourth son of a Buddhist priest born in a suburb of Kyoto in 1873. His family's poverty stricken circumstances encouraged Tekkan to become a writer at the age of sixteen. At first Akiko's love for Tekkan was based on her adoration of his talent and fame, but at the same time she sympathized with him over his unhappy marital situation. As soon as Tekkan's second wife, Tomiko, left him, Yosano came to Tekkan's side in Tokyo and lived with the poet. In August of 1901, *Midaregami* was published and two months later they were married.

Yosano remained loyal to Tekkan who was to betray her more than once. Forced to support her family by the pen, her strong character proved more than adequate to the task. Her boldness, resourcefulness, and energy enabled her to gain the necessary funds. Tekkan inspired her to publish *Midaregami* through his poem: "To you I present this name suited to autumn, lady of the restless mind, of the tangled hair" (Yosano,1987,p.19). Yosano developed a new style of poetry, one with tears and songs. It was she herself who established this new style. Her poems were bold in thought and style without a trace of the sentiments of

Tekkan's Old School of Poetry.

As Yosano's reputation climbed, Tekkan's fell. Yosano now the famous and 'prolific master' whom everyone clamored to meet, was also interested in contemporary political reforms as they affected women. Of particular interest to Yosano were the Constitution and the Imperial Rescript on Education. She argued that "women are people the same as men" and attacked contemporary theories of education designed to produce "good wives and wise mothers" (Rodd,1992,p.180).

In 1916, her family financial worries increased with the birth of her tenth child. The motivation to make money in order to support her children carried her onwards. However, the income for those who derived to make their living by the brush or by the pen was pitifully low. Yosano was determined to make the economics and poetry work despite the odds, "I don't care if I can't write poems or do any other particular thing, as long as I can live a life with a reason for living" (Rodd,1980,p.187). She refused to give into her grief and exhaustion. Her writing pace did not falter regardless of how many distractions loomed up. In a steady stream of essays, Yosano refuted the traditional concept of the wife willingly following her husband's opinion (*fusho fuwa*). She argued that anyone whose eyes have been opened to the equality of men and women must be shocked by this old-fashioned ideal which repressed women.

Ironically, many scholars criticized her for being too yielding. Yosano replied that the distinction between subjection

and equality lay not in behavior but in freedom of choice. It is she who chose to campaign for her husband, support his activities, bear their children, and support her family. She and her husband were equals. Yosano refused to bow to attacks against her position in her family. She was determined to give her husband, herself, and her children a chance in this world. Realizing her goals and traits, Yosano's children were uniformly educated and several became prominent figures themselves as writers, teachers, or government servants. Yosano and Tekkan made it well known to their children that they were expected to succeed despite societal and economical constraints. Yosano recognized her self-confidence and independence and refused to give in to occasional self doubts. Her talent and her energy were her guaranteed earning power.

Yosano's poetry stressed women's individuality and argued for freedom of education, expansion of the work world, economic independence, and women's suffrage. "I know from my own experience from my girlhood until today that it is possible for women to work" echoed in her continued literary efforts to support women's economic independence and to resist state protection of traditional motherhood (Rodd,1980,p.195). Her ultimate goal was the liberation and perfection of women, who would then be able to cooperatively establish with men a better and higher life for all human beings (Nakamura,1994,pg.211).

Yosano stressed through her poetry that women suffer in the work place because they have irregular work hours, scheduled

night and day, all year long, void of holidays. Now with eleven children and an unemployed husband, her remarkable productivity persuaded her fellow feminists to become more vocal. She devoted her energy to all types of topics. She was constantly working towards the realization of her vision of a new society in which husbands and wives would take equal responsibility for their households and each individual would receive an education that was practical and encouraged the development of individual talents (Robins-Mowry,1983,p.198).

Yosano also poetically expressed her support of political action movements. In 1931, she wrote a woman's suffrage song. It served as a symbol of the new life these women brought to social thought and questioned women's roles. Dying four years short of the realization of women's suffrage, it cannot be questioned that she definitely ignited the nation's fire to prepare for this reality.

The sensational impact of this social critic helped poetry to prosper. Yosano's poetry was one of protest, of love, and of emancipation for women. She sympathized with the downtrodden, the woman kept waiting, the isolated traveler, and the lonely prostitute. Her major literary emphasis and contribution was to focus on personal tension with dramatic overtones of pity, hate, suffering, love, death, sexual frustration, revolution, and madness (Shima,1960,pg.209-210). A straightforward diary, her poems became a strict report of events taking place in one's emotional life. Needless to say, Yosano came to be one of the

best poets of the time and her talent was broad enough to elevate her to the stature of social critic (Shima,1960,pg.210).

C. Ichikawa Fusae (1893-1981)

Pioneer of Movements

The twentieth century has seen a worldwide revolution in the extension of political rights to women. Less than ninety years ago there was no major country in the world where women were guaranteed the right to participate in politics on an equal basis with men. Women's political rights, once gained, lacked the roots and systematic role redefinition necessary to incorporate political activities into most individuals' definition of appropriate behavior for women. One woman, Ichikawa Fusae, decided to take on the challenge to elevate women's rights in politics.

Ichikawa was born into a farm family in 1893, an era when women's rights were scarce. As she witnessed her father's abuse of her mother, she grew determined to improve the quality of women's lives. In 1919, Ichikawa helped found the New Women's Association, an organization which advocated equal opportunities for men and women. One of the group's main achievements was to convince the government to revoke the law that forbade women to attend political meetings (Ashby, 1995, p. 207).

Ichikawa's efforts were directed to improve the position of women by obtaining political rights and then using them effectively. Ichikawa lived in a period of growing individual freedom and democracy. She lived through Yosano Akiko's and Tsuda Ume's pioneering activities which encouraged her to continue carrying their torch. She recognized that these

pioneers had organized women for the purpose of raising their political and social position. Their efforts resulted in establishing women's suffrage, equality in higher education, an improved position for women within the family, and welfare for working women (Kaneko,1995,pg.5).

Beginning in 1921, Ichikawa spent two and a half years in the United States where she studied the women's movement and became involved with the National Women's Party which sought equal rights for women at the federal level. Inspired and motivated to push for women's rights in her own country, she returned to Japan in 1924. She then founded the Women's Suffrage League, an organization which campaigned for voting rights.

Ichikawa faced a nation where a large percentage of women were not interested in politics. In the early part of this century, twenty-eight percent were reported to be not interested in politics, fifty-four percent were semi-interested, and only fifteen percent were interested to a varying degree (Lebra,1976, p.236). Japanese politics at this time were characterized by such political images as bloc voting, party politics, candidates' personalities, and mass media's powerful influence. Some of these factors explain the disinterest women held in regards to politics.

The hostilities between Japan and China in 1937 marked another turning point in Ichikawa's activist life for once the war had begun, suffrage was no longer of paramount interest to her. During the Manchurian war she, like Yosano, actively

opposed the rising tide of authoritarianism and militaristic tyranny. Her efforts lessened the emotional and psychological trauma caused by war.

As the leader of the women's movement, Ichikawa stated "Woman Suffrage is the key" (Akamatsu,1990,p.33). Ichikawa fought desperately for the realization of women's rights for herself and for her fellow women. She had deemed that women's suffrage was necessary in order to protect women's rights and to improve their status. Ichikawa stressed this fact and transformed it into her mission. She presented a petition to the Cabinet for the realization of women's suffrage through democratic means.

As the Second World War approached, the Women's Suffrage League disbanded. However, Ichikawa saw the war as an opportunity to promote her cause. Since the men were away fighting, women would have to take their places working full-time in the factories. Their wages, hours, and working conditions were far from equal to those of men. Ichikawa pushed her hesitant government to recognize the discrepancies between work opportunities given to men and women.

After the war, social conditions in Japan changed dramatically. The Japanese government was forced to guarantee equal rights for both sexes, to clarify the social significance of the home, and to safeguard the rights of women as mothers and daughters (Straelen,1940,p.99). These changes requested by women raised an important challenge to the cultural norms of the people. Scholars have noted that until the feudalistic habit of

subordination was abolished, it would be impossible to elevate the cultural and social level of the entire nation (Straelen, 1940,p.101). Ichikawa assailed members of society who still held conservative views,

"Girl students who are to grow into wives and mothers must have freer and brighter girlhood. If you poke into trivial details of their loves, condemning their language, manners and this and that and interfering with what they do, you twist the minds of innocent girls"

(Straelen,1940, p.113).

On the political front, Ichikawa supported a new group whose objectives were to see that suffrage was included in the Constitution. With Japan's defeat in 1945, Ichikawa expressed her thoughts in the following manner, "Even though I expected this event tears fell" (Vavich,1966,p.48). Ichikawa hoped that the Japanese government would voluntarily grant suffrage rather than have it imposed by the occupying authorities. She saw this goal realized when women rushed to the polls in the first election to include women as eligible Diet members.

Ichikawa attracted her followers with her depth of intelligence. She was a woman of action. She knew her own abilities, believed in what she was doing, and ignored criticism.

"Her head and heart have been only for achieving woman's suffrage. When it was impossible for them to carry out her struggle for the political status of women, she would then work for other benefits for women only because she had no other alternative" (Vavich,1966,p.59).

As her country adapted the idea of democracy, she again challenged her people to struggle to define the inner moral

principles of a democratic people. She challenged women to adapt to the new Japanese norms as well as to the expectation of their new equalized status and increasingly modernized life style.

"When I talk to Japanese women about democracy, I explain that it did not historically grow in Japan and the individuality of each person has unfortunately not been fully realized. Japan remains a vertical society... this vertical society emanated from the character of the Japanese people which flows from their history and geography, it is very difficult to change" (Robins-Mowry, 1983, p.213).

These words were shared by Ichikawa in Tokyo in 1973 as she addressed her country's ambivalence towards men's and women's full participation in politics. She challenged her country to yield the power necessary for change but soon realized the difficulty due to the yet vertical society within which she lived.

Bringing politics to the kitchen, Ichikawa familiarized women with the possibility of coordinated activity to achieve their desired goals. She motivated housewives who had been oppressed for centuries by traditional socialization to demand a leader possessing greater patience and determination. Ichikawa set forth a mission which would hopefully summon courageous women who did not yield to money, power, obligation (*giri*), and sentiment (*ninjo*).

Uncompromising and untainted reputation in political affairs, Ichikawa encouraged youth and reform groups to appeal to the general public. The public, disgusted with excessive campaign spending, began to voice their support for their pioneer, Ichikawa. She conquered the political machine, directed

national attention be given to reformed political practices, and cleansed the civic spirit. She would not live long enough unfortunately to fully realize this aspect, but her ideas are still building the civic consciousness of people today (Ashby,1995,pgs.207-208, Kaneko,1995,pgs.3-6).

As the pioneer of women's suffrage, Ichikawa faced many challenges both socially and personally in her political activities. She, like the other pioneers, would not allow obstacles to stand in her path. She campaigned for social equality during her five appointments to the House of Councilors. Through she did not belong to a national party and lacked financial backing, she was able to solicit major support and was elected to the House of Councilors from 1952 until 1971 and then again in 1974 until her death in 1981.

Perennially elected Diet member Ichikawa was perhaps the classic and certainly the most persistent example of an independent in Japanese national political life (Molony,1980, p.237). She was her own woman standing alone, confronting the establishment, representing the voice of morality in politics. As a champion of women's rights, she continually ran on the basis of a political process known throughout Japan as clean elections. This latter effort also influenced some male politicians to declare their wish to run a clean election. "If I cannot go on clean and clear but also with an ideal election... I will not plead with the people" were the familiar words she spoke to her country (Vavich,1966,p.229).

"Let's support the person whom you want to send rather than one who wants to run herself" which Ichikawa echoed frequently eventually cost her reelection in 1971. Constituents did not yet appreciate her important historic role within the women's movement (Vavich, 1966, p. 237). This defeat ultimately helped Ichikawa for it became her mission to increase public awareness of the abuses surrounding political financing which had helped fuel her opponent's victory. During the next four years her time and energy towards clean elections would ensure Ichikawa victory once again in the 1974 election. Supporters made banners showing "Keep on walking Ichikawa Fusae!" (Bystrydzinski, 1992, p. 237). They did not want this woman to throw in the towel.

Ichikawa passed away in 1981 at the age of eighty-eight. Her dream of changing women's status in society and of instilling a sense of pride and involvement in women was realized within her lifetime. Her work on behalf of equal rights and suffrage will transform the lives of Japanese women for generations (Ashby, 1995, p. 208). Having her last independent clean election campaign succeed for a fifth term in the Upper House in 1980, she became the top vote getter winning more than 4.5 percent of the casted votes. Her life became an example of the achievement Japanese women could attain in modern political life. She exemplified courage and the undaunted pursuit of political morality. At her eulogy, this was amplified,

"Never will there be another politician for whom the people will shed real tears...Ms. Ichikawa Fusae was a great bright torch leading and encouraging us and providing us with hope and vitality.

The loss of Ms. Ichikawa Fusae is like losing the concentration of the minds of the people who have been unceasingly seeking clean and just politics"

(Vavich,1966,p.232).

Her death ended an era but left new challenges to those who were to be her successors. Labelled by scholars, such as Kathleen Molony as the "woman who dared" Ichikawa had taught women the importance of self-determination and personal independence, two traits whose seeds were planted within society by the earlier pioneers (Molony,1978,pg.12-14).

Research on the Japanese women's movement offers conflicting sources of where women received their political rights. Some scholars state that MacArthur gave them to the Japanese women in the new Constitution. Others however believe in fact that Ichikawa had struggled much earlier to win political rights for all Japanese women. It is the latter position that my research confirms. Some foreign scholars who hold the earlier position are ignoring the struggle that had been present within Japan for these rights. Women's political rights were far from a gift of the Occupation but stemmed from an established movement which was given its full light at the end of the war. No foreign intervention could have changed traditional societal standards in such a short time (Molony,1978,p.4).

D. Tanaka Makiko (1944-present)

Pioneer of Present Change

Ichikawa's influence upon future pioneers was strongly felt. She encouraged women to question their role and status. The contribution of the earlier pioneers to influence women's role redefinition had been very significant. One present day woman who can exemplify this energy is Tanaka Makiko, the daughter of Tanaka Kakuei one of the LDP party's stronger factional leaders, and who coincidentally served her first lower house term in the Diet. Recently serving as the only female within the twenty member Prime Minister Murayama's Cabinet, Tanaka certainly has experienced all aspects of political activity. The Cabinet, formed on July 1, 1994, caused a stir within the society which clung to its traditional past. The new Cabinet included fifteen Diet members who were given Cabinet portfolios for the first time. Among these was Tanaka of the LDP who was named Director General of the Science and Technology Agency.

The LDP, now the underdog political party, gained two ministers' positions, but more importantly gained a woman minister. Tanaka made an historical advancement for she climbed in 1994 to the highest appointed position to which a woman had been elevated. This occurred within a party struggling to regain majority status. This was a daring step made by the Prime Minister when he named Tanaka his new Minister of Science and Technology. Although friction and clashing of policies occurred, scholars applauded this advancement. Tanaka Makiko's intent to

continue to pursue the practice of clean politics is amazingly impressive when one consider her father's politics.

Fujiwara Hirotatsu's biography of Tanaka Kakuei reports the effects of his style of leadership and enormous influence upon Japanese politics. Through this work, one can glimpse the upbringing his daughter underwent. Labelled "the Godfather of Japan," Tanaka Kakuei promoted the use of money politics in order to work his way into the role of Prime Minister.

The Tanaka Kakuei style of leadership can be studied from his earliest years in the Ministry of Finance. As the Finance Minister Tanaka offered generous political favors and made efforts to dispose of state lands. Sensing the enormous influence the mass media could exert in the political realm, especially during elections, he used various methods in order to find out other candidates' weak points. He studied and mastered how each person would react if pressured in a certain manner and at a certain time. In so doing, he thwarted lesser positioned individuals from striking him for he held calculated power. This power allowed Tanaka Kakuei the opportunity to continue his acts of political corruption. However his fortunes were to collapse when he became accused of accepting payoffs in the Lockheed scandal. After this reversal, Tanaka Kakuei adopted a new political outlook, that of clean politics. With this new image he was able to retain his hold on politics through his role as the "shadow shogun" and the "king maker". Tanaka Kakuei's corrupted manner triggered his daughter to seek her place in her father's

political world, but with the goal to achieve clean politics.

Two factors seem relevant to all of these women's careers: their exposure to Western influence in their family and their father's encouragement of their careers. Variations on the latter were experienced dependent upon the extent of the father's interest. Undoubtedly Western influence, experienced either vicariously through their family members or directly themselves, was the significant factor which allowed all four of these women to become educated and to champion the right of women to seek self-sufficiency. Tanaka's father encouraged both her education and her career within the local government. He also compelled her to set her goals high regardless of the odds. The former leader of Japan was determined to help his daughter succeed in politics and thereby remove the negative image that had come to be associated with the family name.

One may ask how does the new Minister Tanaka Makiko compare with her predecessor Ichikawa Fusae? To make such a comparison one must recall that Ichikawa was an exceptionally independent Diet member. She ran as an independent candidate and stayed strictly within the election regulations. This was extremely unusual when election finance laws were generally circumvented and most independent candidates, if they won, joined the majority LDP. In contrast, Tanaka was associated with the party strongly due to her father. In the past, women politicians had generally promoted political activism through women's organizations and consumer groups. Society had readily accepted her through her

connection as the daughter of the LDP's strong factional leader. However, she was soon to demonstrate that not only was she interested in, but she also demanded her rightful position within politics (Kaneko, 1995, pg. 11-14). Tanaka made this step possible as she continued to carry the torch of change. Tanaka's true impact cannot be fully gauged in this generation. One fact is certain, however, women can no longer be prevented from taking an active part in political society due in part to her leadership.

The revolution that women like Tanaka and the other pioneers before her led was legendary. The connection once vertical had now become horizontal. The sphere broadened, the heart widened. Tanaka became part of a revolution which called for bold leadership. As a new moral force in politics, Tanaka was able to conscientiously lead her nation toward the twenty-first century. She mobilized her fellow countrywomen into believing that "the reins of change" were held by them. She represented more fully than ever before that the political status of women was visibly changing and strengthening in its movement from the traditional housewife role to the role of political and social activist.

V. Future of the Pioneers and Their Society

"Unless we change our ways and our direction, our greatness as a nation will soon be a footnote in our history books, a distant memory of an offshore island, lost in the midst of time like Camelot, remembered kindly for its noble past (Margaret Thatcher in Simpson, 1988, p.42).

Conflict between the traditional past and increasing social awareness continues with growing acceptance of variations in women's roles. The individuals who have led this directional change interpreted the conflict between traditions and actual change to be caused by social and political conditions. Feminist movements articulated the underlying malaise felt by women who were less articulate, less aware and perhaps less courageous (Pharr, 1981, p.11). Japanese feminists produced a qualitative transformation and a new articulation of ideology supportive of change.

The struggle for women's rights in prewar Japan encompassed Ichikawa Fusae, Hiratsuka Raicho, and Yamakawa Kikue. Ichikawa questioned the existing social norms that confined women to specific roles and furthermore saw women as a group to be restricted socially and politically. It was at this time that a significant number of individual women viewed themselves as part of a disconnected group. What the pioneers did was to mobilize women to find a path which could embrace change. They did this by fostering group consciousness.

Yosano Akiko along with Hiratsuka responded to Ichikawa's perception of the inferior positions of women with actions and they concentrated their activities on creating respect for

motherhood in their society. Tsuda Ume also responded to the perception of woman's inferiority as being directly linked to the lack of education provided women thus restricting them to the traditional role of "good wife and wise mother" (Lewis, 1978, p.21). She would found the first women's college on Japanese soil and thereby establish higher education and offer wider opportunities than ever before to Japan's women.

Feminist pioneers realized that they shared a common identity and as members of the same gender had common experiences. Even if they hesitated to be labeled "feminist" they nonetheless continued to reap the benefits of those pioneers who went before them and to internalize many of their less radical arguments.

These four women were focused upon in my research for their lives embodied the social consciousness necessary to achieve successful political developments and role changes. They set the stage for today's young women to reach their greatest potential by assuming leadership positions and actively pursuing political participation. It will be with today's women and their daughters that the future patterns of women's political participation in Japan will be determined. The pioneers, unlike women before them, had come to view politics as a possible forum for self-expression. Today's women will hopefully now pick up the torch and carry it to fuller realization, to higher heights, and to finally achieve equal status with men.

Within Japanese politics, male politicians had enjoyed the "game of power." Their terms had often been filled with scandals which when they hit the media, broke their political careers. Women within politics still remain a rare phenomenon in Japan as well as the world at large (see appendix C-1 and C-3). However in Japan, the background of the women in power and their educational goals when examined shed a comprehensive light into political understanding and knowledge. A true political scholar must still search for the answer as to why there are so few women world-wide in politics and what has kept women in the Japanese society from challenging this?

Some answers have been forthcoming. Women face considerable odds when seeking positions within contemporary politics. According to scholars, women candidates seeking national offices have faced a variety of disadvantages. A man was assumed to inherit politics, but a woman was not. Large amounts of money were required much of which usually came from business sources. These sources were in the past unlikely to contribute funds to women due to the higher political risks associated with supporting a woman.

Election regulations worked against new candidates by restricting his/her activities while allowing the incumbent to stay in contact with his/her constituency as part of his/her responsibility. This condition strongly favors men and helps to perpetuate gender domination. Therefore, public visibility is a vital asset for women since they generally do not have strong

organizations backing them. The difficulties confronted in running for office apply to both men and women but being a woman compounds the problems immensely (Lebra,1976,p.237).

In Japan, party factions are responsible for funding and are the more visible political units. Factions remain timid to support a woman seeking positions within "their" political structure. Seniority is another crucial element within the Japanese political system. Even if a woman were able to acquire the education mandated for political position, she is faced with a discriminating political system. For example, upon graduating from a university, she must pass a government examination to obtain employment in a Ministry. There are three levels of examination and each level determines what type of work one will have and what the upper limits of employment will be. Passage of the highest examination is necessary to obtain management-level positions. Women, however, are not allowed to take those top examinations. In addition, families as well as universities frequently do not encourage women to seek top-managerial positions. Society at large also influences women by suggesting that a professional career is not considered conducive to marriage and marriage is expected to take priority to careers (Lebra,1976,p.239).

However, if a woman can conquer or ignore these societal pressures, she can then enter the world of politics. Once inside, however, she will discover that she advances slower than her male counterparts. Unofficial discrimination can include

poor promotion opportunities, discrimination in hiring those who pass the examination, and upon retirement the lack of assistance in obtaining consulting or business management positions. Women, such as Tanaka, worked to change these inequities, but the general situation is slow to change. Scholars note that women's positions will change as individual pioneers work their way into higher positions and as they use their power to help other women. However, this process is slowed by women who lack the interest to work through the male established, the male dominated political system in order to accomplish these goals.

If women's positions in Japan are going to change, women must spark the change and must raise future generations differently. They must be prepared to make decisions about their needs, desires, work, careers, and families. Legislation cannot improve women's position if they are not prepared to take advantage of the new opportunities. Discouragement to reach for these goals begins at the elementary levels and in the family. Scholars have observed that as pioneers such as Tanaka challenged these fundamental roots, the necessary skills to take advantage of the opening job market had to be made available to women. Government and society must assist women to pursue both work and family goals. It is important to assure men and women that they will have choices in the roles they will play within their family, their political, and their economic lives.

In the last half of the century, the idea that politics is 'a man's world' with women confined only to a secondary position

has begun to be challenged (Reischauer, 1988, p. 183). Many changes concerning women's roles have taken place. Many women have begun to stand up for their rights and beliefs, but at the same time some hold back failing to join a women's liberation movement because it does not fit their "lady-like" style. Some women feel that "they dominate in their home and tend to be psychologically stronger than men," so they ask why is there a need for change (Reischauer, 1988, p. 185)? Most Japanese women are willing to accept their present relatively slow progress towards broader opportunities and higher status rather than clamoring for more rapid change. But the Japanese pioneers are not willing to let time stand still, they want to see the pace quickened. It is they who have become the new flowers of social change.

"Time talks. It speaks more plainly than words. The message it conveys comes through loud and clear. Because it is manipulated less consciously, it is subject to less distortion than the spoken language. It can shout truth where no words lie (Reingold, 1992, p. 1).

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Appendix A

*Photographs of Tsuda Ume; Yosano Akiko;
Ichikawa Fusae; & Tanaka Makiko*



Tsuda Ume
1864-1929



Yosano Akiko
1878-1942



Ichikawa Fusae
1893-1981



Tanaka Makiko
1944-present

Appendix B-1

Glossary of Names

Akamatsu Ryoko	赤松 良子
Doi Takako	土井 たか子
Hata Tsutomu	羽田 牧
Hiratsuka Raicho	平塚 雷鳥
Hosokawa Morihiro	細川 護ひろ
Ichikawa Fusae	市川 房枝
Kaifu Toshiki	海部 俊樹
Murayama Tomiichi	村山 富市
Shidehara Kijuro	幣原 喜重朗
Tanaka Makiko	田中 真紀子
Tanaka Kakuei	田中 角栄
Tsuda Umeko	津田 梅子
Uno Sosuke	宇野 宗祐
Yawakawa Kikue	山川 菊枝
Yosano Akiko	与謝野 晶子
Yosano Hiroshi	与謝野 ひろし
Yosano Tekkan	与謝野 鉄幹

Appendix B-2

Glossary of Terms

Baka	ばか	Okusan	奥さん
Bluestocking Journal	青とう	Seito	政党
Daidokoro Kankaku	台所感覚	Sekaidai Hyaakajinten	世界大百科事典
Eikyu Shushoku	永久就職	Shyakai Kengaku	社会見学
Gaman	我慢	Sophia University	上智大学
Geisha	芸者	Tatebayashi	館林
Giri	義理	Taisho Period (1911-1925)	大正時代
House of Councilors	衆議院	Tokugawa Period (1603-1868)	徳川時代
House of Representatives	参議院	Tsuda Jyuku Daigaku	津田塾大学
Japan Socialist Party	日本社会党	Ume	梅
Koshikake	腰掛け	Women of the Home	家族の女性
Kyoiku Mama	教育ママ	Women of the Office	仕事の女性
Liberal Democratic Party	自由民主党		
Meiji Period (1868-1911)	明治時代		
Midaregami	みだれ髪		
Myojo	明星		
Ninjo	人情		

Appendix B-3

Roster of Prime Ministers from 1945-present

1940s	
Higashikuninomiya Naruhiko	1945.8 - 1945.10
Shidehara Kijuro	1945.10 - 1946.5
Yoshida Shigeru	1946.5 - 1947.5
Katayama Tetsu	1947.6 - 1948.2
Ashida Hitoshi	1948.3 - 1948.10
Yoshida Tetsu	1948.10 - 1954.12
1950s	
Hatoyama Ichiro	1954.12 - 1956.12
Ishibashi Tanzan	1956.12 - 1957.2
Kishi Nobusuke	1957.2 - 1960.6
1960s	
Ikeda Hayato	1960.7 - 1964.11
Sato Eisaku	1964.11 - 1972.6
1970s	
Tanaka Kakuei	1972.7 - 1974.12
Miki Takeo	1974.12 - 1976.12
Fukuda Takeo	1976.12 - 1978.12
Oohira Masayoshi	1978.12 - 1980.7
1980s	
Suzuki Zenkoh	1980.7 - 1982.11
Nakasone Yasuhiro	1982.11 - 1987.11
Teshita Noboru	1987.11 - 1989.6
Kaifu Toshiki	1989.8 - 1991.10
1990s	
Miyazawa Kiichi	1991.10 - 1993.7
Hosokawa Morihiro	1993.7 - 1994.3
Hata Tsutomu	1994.3 - 1994.7
Murayama Tomiichi	1994.7 - 1996.1
Hashimoto Ryutaro	1996.1 -

Appendix C-1

Party Affiliation of Women Diet Members, 1946-1980 (Election Years Only)

	House of Representatives														
Party	1946	1947	1949	1952	1953	1955	1958	1960	1963	1967	1969	1972	1976	1979	1980
Liberal	5	3		2	1	1	(3	(2	(2	(3	(3	(2	(1	(1	
Democratic		3	(2												
Socialist	8	9	5	6	7	6	8	4	4	3	2	2	3	2	2
Democratic															
Socialist								1	1	1					
Communist	1		3								1	2	2	8	7
Progressive	6														
Kōmeitō											2				
Minor parties	10		2	1	1	1									
Independenft	9											1	1		

	House of Councillors											
Party	1947	1950	1953	1956	1959	1962	1965	1968	1971	1974	1977	1980
Liberal			1									
Democratic	4	4	2	(3	(5	(8	(7	(3	(4	(3	(6	(6
Socialist	3	5	4	4	5	4	4	4	5		2	2
Democratic												
Socialist							1	2	2			
Communist								1	1	3	5	5
Kōmeitō							1	1	1		2	2
Ryōkufu-kai			3	3	1	1						
Minor parties	3	2	1	1								1
Independent	1	1	4	4	2	4	4	2		1	1	1

Source: Robins-Mowry, 1983, p. 320

Appendix C-2

Turnout Rate of Elections for the House of Representatives & the House of Councilors

House of Representatives			House of Councilors		
Election date	Turnout Rate		Election date	Turnout Rate	
	Female	Male		Female	Male
1946	67.0%	78.5%	1947	54.0	68.4
1949	68.0	80.7	1950	66.7	78.2
1958	74.4	79.8	1959	55.2	62.6
1969	69.1	67.9	1968	69.0	68.9
1980	75.4	73.7	1980	75.3	73.7
1983	68.3	67.6	1983	57.1	56.9
1986	72.5	70.2	1986	72.4	70.1

Source: Ministry of Home Affairs. (1990).
 In National Women's Education Center.p.197

Appendix C-3

Changes in the Numbers of Dietwomen

Election Date	Total No. of Dietperson			The House of Representatives			The House of Councilors		
	Female ①	Total ②	①/②x100	Female ①	Total ②	①/②x100	Female ①	Total ②	①/②x100
1950	24	699	3.4	12	449	2.7	12	250	4.8
1960	24	698	3.4	11	451	2.4	13	247	5.3
1970	21	733	2.9	8	486	1.7	13	247	5.6
1980	25	762	3.4	9	511	1.8	17	251	6.8
1983	26	759	3.4	8	511	1.6	18	248	7.3
1984	27	752	3.6	8	508	1.6	19	249	7.6
1986	27	750	3.6	8	502	1.6	19	248	7.7
1987	29	761	3.8	7	509	1.4	22	252	8.7

Source: *Secretariat of Both Houses*. (1990).
In *National Women's Education Center*. p.197

Appendix C-4

Women in Local Assemblies

Year		1955	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1986
Prefectural assemblies	Total(A)	2468	2643	2606	2628	2828	2833	2857	2811
	Women(B)	32	36	41	33	32	34	38	39
	B/A \times 100	1.1	1.4	1.6	1.3	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4
Municipal assemblies	Total(A)	21398	17617	17930	19502	20167	20080	19729	19599
	Women(B)	158	190	198	272	360	441	601	632
	B/A \times 100	0.7	1.1	1.1	1.3	1.8	2.3	3.0	3.2
Town and village assemblies	Total(A)	114470	63974	57023	50869	48220	47221	45293	44827
	Women(B)	455	275	311	202	217	274	390	404
	B/A \times 100	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.8	0.9
Ward assemblies	Total(A)	—	—	—	—	1088	1073	1032	1029
	Women(B)	—	—	—	—	72	73	73	79
	B/A \times 100	—	—	—	—	6.6	6.8	7.1	7.7
Total	Total(A)	138336	84234	77550	72999	72303	71207	68,911	68,266
	Women(B)	645	501	550	507	681	822	1102	1154
	B/A \times 100	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.9	1.2	1.6	1.7

Source: Ministry of Home Affairs, *Election Data*. (1990).
 In National Women's Education Center. p.197.

Appendix C-5

Educational Pathways of Women

Decision Maker	<i>Path Chosen</i>			
	Women's College	High School	University	Any Path
Father	36.1%	22.6%	3.4%	35.5%
Mother	39.7%	22.4%	1.9%	35.3%
Daughter	51.9%	39.9%	0.5%	0.7%

Source: Hasegawa, 1993, p. 2

Appendix C-6

Women's Plans After Graduation

Enter the Job Force	82.3%
Continue Education	13.4%
Other than these Paths	3.8%
Don't Know	0.4%

Source: Hasegawa, 1993, p.1

Appendix C-7

Female Career Paths Reasons for Quitting the Labor Force

Preparation for Marriage	39.6%
Lack of Drive	20.8%
Overqualified	19.5%
Job lacked excitement	17.0%
Child bearing/ raising	13.9%
Company Rule	12.7%
Uncomfortable Setting	12.1%
Low Salary	7.0%
Relocation of Husband's Work	6.4%
Continue Education	6.1%

Source: Hasegawa, 1993, p. 4

Appendix C-8

Female Perceptions of the Labor Force Market

	YES	NO	???
Need for the Equal Salary between Men and Women	73.6%	13.3%	12.2%
Promotion Based Upon Ability Rather than Gender	94.5%	1.5%	3.1%
Natural for Women to Work	65.1%	20.6%	13.4%
Affirmative Action for Minorities & Disabled Employees	85.0%	1.1%	12.9%
Experienced some form of Sexual Harassment	24.8%	75.2%	-----

Source: Hasegawa, 1993, p. 5