THE CHANGE IN THE STATUS OF JAPANESE WOMEN, 1945-1952

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PREFACE

This study is concerned with the impact of the American occupation of Japan upon the status of women. It was the intention of occupation officials to raise women's status to a point which would make them able to contribute to the democratization and demilitarization of Japan. This study attempts to ascertain the effectiveness of this policy and to find its sources of success or failure.

I wish to express my appreciation to the following members of the Department of History of Oklahoma State University who gave advice during the preparation of this paper: Dr. Sidney D. Brown, who served as major adviser and who was always available for guidance and assistance; and Dr. Theodore L. Agnew, whose criticisms were of great value.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Learning from the experience of an earlier postwar world, the United States looked upon the occupation of Japan in 1945 as an opportunity to reform rather than to punish that country. A fundamental part of the occupation program was the establishment of equal rights for women, and the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, General Douglas MacArthur must be remembered in history as leader of the crusade for feminine equality.[1]

But MacArthur would not have succeeded without the help of long time Japanese participants in the women's rights cause. The representatives of the indigenous feminist movement held a particularly strong position in 1945, for recent industrialization and wartime demands had substantially improved the position of women in Japan. The role of the Americans in this process of achieving equality was largely one of establishing a legal framework for promoting it and for allowing intrinsic Japanese advances to take place. That General MacArthur was an ideal leader for this can be seen in an incident General Bonner Fellers told:

> I asked General MacArthur /on the plane from Manila to Tokyo to accept Japan's surrender/ what he would do first when he reached Japan. His answer was that he would give suffrage to

[1]The initials for the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, SCAP, are standard references both to General MacArthur and the occupation personnel as a whole and shall be so used in this paper.

> the women, who must share the responsibility for building up the country for peace and democracy.[2]

Of even more importance was the reaction of the Japanese to legal reforms given women. It was they who would decide the success or failure of this aspect of the occupation. Happily for the occupation authorities, the Japanese, severely disillusioned with their militarist government, were ready for vast changes in political, social, and economic concepts and were willing to take a new look at their traditional values.

Since feudal times the Japanese had subjugated women. Therefore an understanding of the role of women in the traditional family system is necessary to appreciate the immensity of the undertaking of the occupation to improve women's rights. The continuing maintenance of the family line and name was of absolute necessity, and the family (Ie) stood superior in rank to individuals within the family. Ie was not necessarily a domiciliary unit. It was a related group, perhaps of several generations and branches, under a single head as listed in a government register. The family negotiated marriages which did not automatically involve a new branch family, although one might be set up at that time. Upon marriage the woman was the Yome of the Ie, not the man's wife. This meant that she should be closer and certainly more subservient to her parents-in-law than to her husband. Her main duty was to provide a child and continue the family line, and she could be easily divorced if she did not.[3] Japanese referred to the divorce

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[2] Kawai Michi, Sliding Doors (Tokyo, 1950), p. 86.

[3] Isono Fujiko, "The Family and Women in Japan," The Sociological Review, XII (March, 1964), pp. 40-41.

certificate as "the three and a half line note" because it was so easy for men to obtain. Even if divorced or widowed early, society expected a woman to have only one husband in her lifetime. After marriage a wife's actions were closely circumscribed. For example, if a younger wife wished to leave the house for any reason she had to have her mother-in-law's and husband's consent; and her mother-in-law even chose the kimono she wore.[4] Women's sensibilities were not legally protected. Thus, a wife had to accept illegitimate children of her husband as her own.[5] Another aspect of society which devalued the status of women was widespread legalized prostitution. Particularly disheartening to women's rights' leaders was the practice of impoverished families, usually farmers, selling their daughters in time of need.[6]

The traditional Japanese social system seemed unusually archaic to American reformers, based as it was on the Chinese ideal of the cohesive family as the source of a stable society. Any changes were made quite difficult, however, because of its important role in Japanese life. Social groups outside the family were modelled on family relationships, and as all of these relationships lead to the Emperor, the society developed an overlapping structure of unity and loyalty to the Emperor. Traditionalists appreciated the stable society this created. Also, the Japanese belief that all were descended from a common ancestor led to the desire to continue the family line despite

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[4]Baroness Ishimoto Shidzue, Facing Two Ways (New York, 1935), pp. 101, 135.

[5]Ibid., p. 119.

[6]Koyama Takashi, The Changing Social Position of Women in Japan (Paris, 1961), p. 13. Hereinafter referred to as Changing Social Position.

all obstacles. Family control over marriage and divorce, with the primary motive of providing descendants, was thus imperative.[7] So firmly established was the traditional family that native social revolutionaries, of the Meiji Era and later, could not force a change. Only the catastrophic upheaval of World War II and its aftermath could achieve any great alteration.

As a consequence of the liberating influences of the Meiji Restoration in 1868 and of the effort to codify mores of Japanese society, the Meiji oligarchs instituted a Civil Code and other laws which legally advanced women's position somewhat. Aside from education, they did not unduly affect established habits. The Ordinance of Education in 1872 gave equal rights to women. Traditionalists soon dominated the field, however, and in 1891 separated boys and girls after the second grade in accordance with Confucian ethics, which espoused the inferiority of women. High school and university education became a preserve of men.[8] As with education, the family sections of the Civil Code of 1898 were a compromise between conservatives and reformists and satisfied neither.[9] Although the Meiji Code provided that a man over thirty and a woman past twenty-five could marry without permission, many disliked this aspect because they thought it violated filial piety. Although the Code specified some equality before marriage and in marriage selection, a married woman was without rights in property ownership and had fewer rights in adultery and divorce cases.

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[7]R. P. Dore, City Life in Japan (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1958), p. 95.

[8]Koyama, Changing Social Position, pp. 18-19.

[9]Dore, City Life in Japan, p. 92.

Actually, old habits overrode the small modernization of the Code, and most women continued to be dominated by the family head.[10]

Motivated by the discrimination in the family system and influenced by the increasing democratization of Japan and the success of women's activities elsewhere, the women's movement in Japan began soon after World War I.[11] Led by the Shin Fujin Kyokai (New Women's Organization) formed by Ichikawa Fusae and Hiratsuka Raichō, it pushed for political, social and legal rights; but its efforts were largely unsuccessful. After three years of agitation, futile attempts to present petitions before the hostile Diet, and arrests of members for appearances at political rallies, one victory came in 1922 when women attained the right to attend political gatherings with the revision of the Peace Preservation police act. Passed during the premiership of the commoner, Hara Kei, the victory was significant because of the great antagonism to women's rights at that time. After this great achievement the movement seemed to collapse into complete disorganization for years after 1922.[12] The "universal suffrage" bill of 1925, which excluded women, seemed to spur greater feminist activity again.[13] In 1928 the Seiyukai even supported civil rights for women. Aided by the sympathetic Hamaguchi government, women felt confident of achieving political rights until such great reaction by the right forced the

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[10]Isono, "The Family and Women in Japan," pp. 43-44.

[11]Koyama, Changing Social Position, p. 135.

[12]Dee Ann Vavich, "The Japanese Women's Movement: Ichikawa Fusae, a Pioneer in Women's Suffrage," Monumenta Nipponica, XXII (1964), pp. 411-412. Hereinafter referred to as "Japanese Women's Movement."

[13]Koyama, Changing Social Position, p. 12.

cabinet to temper its aid.[14] Even the high point of the women's suffrage movement before the war was not a victory. It came in 1931 when a bill for civil rights for women passed the House of Representatives, but failed in the Peers. The Manchurian Incident of the same year with its concomitant emphasis on military power and traditional virtues began the demise of the movement.[15] Women began to shift attention from civil rights to problems in women's daily life. There were few successes, and with the outbreak of the China Incident in 1937, the military suppressed the women's movement activities altogether. The authorities abolished the various feminist organizations to organize one national group which became an arm of the expansionist military program.[16] Even though the government effectively stopped women's rights activities, their war had an unexpected impact upon the status of women. The necessity of employing women in defense operations gave them new economic status and independence. Such advancements could not summarily be removed at the end of the war, and they aided the reforms of the occupation immeasurably.

Into the jumble of rigid traditional habits, budding desires for political and social rights, and growth of economic rights came the American design to bring equality to women. While the American occupation primarily reflected the policy decisions of those who administered it, the United States government set certain guidelines. The Potsdam Declaration, signed by President Harry Truman, included a

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[14] Vavich, "Japanese Women's Movement," p. 420.

[15] Nippon Times, December 18, 1945, p. 4.

[16] Yamakawa Kikue, "Japanese Women Under the New Constitution," Contemporary Japan, XVII (April-June, 1948), p. 143.

reference to Japanese freedom:

> The Japanese Government shall remove all obstacles to the revival and strengthening of the democratic tendencies among the Japanese people. Freedom of speech, of religion, and of thought as well as respect for the fundamental human rights shall be established.

The Presidential Policy statement issued in 1945 contained a paragraph affecting women in agreement with the Potsdam Declaration. It said: "...changes in the form of government initiated by the Japanese people or government in the direction of modifying its feudal and authoritarian tendencies are to be permitted and favored."[17] These two statements formulated the basic policy guidelines used by SCAP.

SCAP dominated policy making even though another body in Washington, the Far Eastern Commission, composed of representatives of the allied military countries, with its advisory group in Japan, the Allied Council for Japan, supposedly had jurisdiction over the activities of the occupation. The United States maintained its special position, since the Commission had to respect existing control machinery and since the Supreme Commander could issue interim directives when the Commission had not yet reached a decision. This literally provided full power over the occupation by the Americans. Furthermore, the Commission could not pass a policy decision without the approval of the United States.[18] With Russia sitting as a member of the groups, MacArthur was determined that they should not have any authority over occupation policy. Thus, they largely became rubber stamp

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[17]E. M. Martin, The Allied Occupation of Japan (Stanford, 1948), p. 62.

[18]Hugh Borton, "American Occupation Policies in Japan," Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science, XXII (January, 1948), p. 399.

organization approving actions already taken by SCAP. The Commission's policy statement affecting women, based on a United States document, said: "All Japanese shall enjoy equal rights before the law...."[19]

After the establishment of the basic policy guidelines, MacArthur became in fact as well as name the Supreme Commander of the occupation, and he continued to control Japan's destiny from 1945 until Truman removed him in 1951. It was the good fortune of those promoting women's rights in Japan that he was a strong supporter of their cause. MacArthur's family life and the favorable influence of his mother gave him a high respect for women. In his autobiography MacArthur asserted that his close tie with his mother was one of the "dominant factors" of his life. He implied that it was his mother who instilled in him his belief in himself and his abilities.[20] An incident that occurred while he was a cadet at West Point illustrates her influence on him. A special court was investigating hazing at the school, and MacArthur was called upon to testify in a case in which he had been the victim. While explaining the circumstances, he refused to give names of the upper classmen involved. If the court should insist that he give the information and he refused to obey the order, he would be dismissed from the Point, ending all his "hopes and dreams." But his father and mother had taught him "two immutable principles--never to lie, never to tattle." While debating during a court recess whether to follow those principles or to take the easy way out, he received a note from his mother which instantly made up his mind:

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[19]Martin, <u>The Allied Occupation of Japan</u>, pp. 64-65.

[20]Douglas MacArthur, <u>Reminiscences</u> (New York, 1964), pp. 14-18.

Do you know that your soul is of my soul such a part
That you seem to be fiber and core of my heart?
None other can pain me as you, son, can do;
None other can please me or praise me as you.
Remember the world will be quick with its blame
If shadow or shame ever darken your name.
Like mother, like son, is saying so true
The world will judge largely of mother by you.
Be this then your task, if task it shall be
To force this proud world to do homage to me.
Be sure it will say, when its verdict you've won
She reaps as she sowed: 'This man is her son!'

MacArthur was released as the court found another way to get the information.[21]

The Supreme Commander's respect for Japanese women could hardly be surprising, nor could his pride in the reforms of their status. He once remarked that the success of his administration could be judged, in the long run, by whether women won the rights accorded them in the Constitution.[22] He also noted that "of all the reforms accomplished by the occupation of Japan, none was more heartwarming to me than this change in the status of women."[23] He advocated reforms, not only because he felt they aided women, but also because he felt they were essential in achieving democracy for Japan as a whole. On October 11, 1945, when MacArthur gave Premier Shidehara Kijūrō an order for political and social revolution including suffrage for women, he did so because he felt that it might introduce a "new concept of government directly subservient to the well-being of the home."[24] The General

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[21]Ibid., pp. 25-26.

[22]Richard West, "The Ladies of Japan," New Statesman, LXVI (November 29, 1963), p. 776.

[23]MacArthur, Reminiscences, p. 305.

[24]New York Times, October 12, 1945, p. 1.

is even quoted as saying that he gave suffrage to women because for many years he had believed that the intervention of American women in politics was one of the greatest stabilizing events in American political history, reflecting as it did the wisdom of the home.[25] However different other observers felt about the contribution of female suffrage to the American political scene, MacArthur's regard for them contributed significantly to his belief that emancipated womanhood was the greatest protection against future Japanese militarism.[26] This faith has been justified, as witness Japanese women's unswerving opposition to atomic or conventional warfare and to a military establishment since World War II.

Joined with MacArthur in promoting women's rights were an activist group of Japanese liberals and occupation personnel. They ranged from the Emperor's sister-in-law, Countess Otani Tomoko, who favored the gradual education of women in democratic principles and eventual suffrage, to the average American serviceman, credited by more than one observer with showing Japanese men that simple courtesies toward women were not effeminate.[27] Between these extremes there were many types of leaders of the feminist cause, and they advanced a variety of arguments for their common purpose. Mrs. Hirabayashi Taiko, authoress, stressed that a viable economic position was of prime importance, and felt that improvement must come in this area to gain the respect of society.

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[25]Fujita Taki, "The Progress of the Emancipation of Japanese Women," Contemporary Japan, XVI (July-September, 1947), p. 281. Hereinafter referred to as "Progress."

[26]Russell Brines, MacArthur's Japan (Philadelphia, 1948), pp. 48-49.

[27]New York Times, October 10, 1945, p. 22.

Thinking in a similar vein Matsuoka Yoko, an American educated journalist, urged immediate passage of rights laws to allow women time to educate themselves through practice. She felt the best way to learn was to make mistakes.[28] Ichikawa, as befitting her status as a long time suffragette, predicted that with suffrage the archaic family system which stifled women's ambitions would collapse of its own accord. Achieving suffrage, women would then attain other social and economic gains. Perhaps more realistically, Katayama Tetsu, liberal lawyer and Socialist politician, promoted social, political and economic reforms which would elevate women's role in society. With the imminent revolutionary crumbling of laws concerning the family system, Professor Royama Masamichi even urged the state to take care of women until they could stand on their own.[29] A group including Mrs. Kato Shidzue, which lauded MacArthur for directives freeing the economic and political life of women, expressed the general feeling of the activist workers concerning these actions when they exclaimed: "The freedom of thinking and action are ours. What a joy. What gratitude!!"[30] It was they who were in the forefront of trying to make legal actions a reality.

The nation's press was another influential force which, sometimes following pressure applied by SCAP, propagated the new feminine equality. In order to promote voting and the suffrage movement, occupation personnel gave press conferences which editors and politicians

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[28] Matsuoka Yoko, Daughter of the Pacific (New York, 1952), p. 216.

[29] Hani Setsuko, The Japanese Family System (Tokyo, 1948), pp. 40-41.

[30] Nippon Times, January 11, 1946, p. 3.

felt obliged to attend.[31] Thus, Mainichi hailed the extension of the right to vote as a bold stroke and urged other measures in similar fashion.[32] The Nippon Times used its editorial page as a forum for those promoting women's rights. Most themes seemed contained in the following statement: "Any suffrage which is unrelated to women's legal, industrial and social status, is meaningless."[33]

Japanese leaders recognized that suffrage without emancipation in other areas would be meaningless. While they valued the occupation policy of improving legal status and the example Americans provided of equality in relationships, they realized that only through Japanese efforts and desires could permanent changes in society be made. Therefore, the story of the improvement in women's status in Japan is the story of internal changes which complemented Japan's modernization in other areas and which were feasible within the realities of her past history, in a liberal structure provided by the American occupation.

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[31] Summation of Non-Military Activities in Japan and Korea (Tokyo, January, 1946), p. 270. Hereinafter referred to as Summation.

[32] Nippon Times, October 16, 1945, p. 2.

[33] Ibid., October 27, 1945, p. 2.

CHAPTER II

POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT

Without doubt the decision to emancipate Japanese women politically originated with MacArthur and not with the Japanese government. To be sure, Ichikawa Fusae, the long-time suffragette, has provided contrary evidence that on October 11 Home Minister Horikiri Zenjirō of the Shidehara Cabinet proposed that women be given suffrage in the Constitution, and soon afterward the government received an order for it from MacArthur.[1] MacArthur indicated that during Prime Minister Shidehara's first call on him, he gave the government leader a list of reforms which must be enacted. He headed the list with the request for "The emancipation of women of Japan through their enfranchisement--that, being members of the body politic, they may bring to Japan a new concept of government directly subservient to the well-being of the home." The Directive which contained this statement was issued October 4, which was earlier than Horikiri proposed women's suffrage to the cabinet. This refutes Miss Ichikawa's statement. MacArthur issued the directive in the form of a recommendation rather than an order because he felt changes had to come from the Japanese to be effective and long-lasting. He indicated that Shidehara received

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[1]Vavich, "Japanese Women's Movement," p. 426.

the recommendations enthusiastically.[2] For their part, Japanese at the time generally accepted the fact that SCAP was responsible for taking the initiative in emancipating women.

There had been a wide diversity of opinion among the Japanese as to the necessity for this change. Konoe Fumimaro, the deputy Prime Minister of the post-surrender Higashikuni Cabinet opposed women's suffrage because it "would retard the progress of Japanese politics."[3] In September, Prince Konoe stated that the Japanese government felt women lacked the political intelligence and understanding needed to vote.[4] The old-fashioned Prince did not speak for all Japanese, however. An editorialist for the Nippon Times, Maeda Wakao, demanded that there be no delay in granting the franchise to women. The writer urged coeducation to the university level to help women gain knowledge and felt that the right to vote would create an interest in politics among women.[5] In early October, 1945, Prince Higashikuni was quoted as saying that permitting women to vote was one of the reforms he hoped would be enacted.[6] When Miss Ichikawa appealed to the Prince, however, to give suffrage rather than have it imposed, he did not encourage her. One may surmise that the nature of his statements showed some deference to the audience to which he was speaking. The more compliant Hatoyama

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[2]MacArthur, Reminiscences, p. 294.

[3]Sakanishi Shio, "Women's Position and the Family System," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, CCCXLVII (November, 1956), p. 131. Hereinafter referred to as "Women's Position."

[4]New York Times, September 23, 1945, p. 2.

[5]Nippon Times, December 5, 1945, p. 4.

[6]New York Times, October 6, 1945, p. 5.

Ichirō of the Liberal Party was willing to include a plank for suffrage in his party's platform quite early in the occupation.[7]

All suffragettes were, of course, actively supporting the idea. In November, 1945, huge female audiences in Tokyo listened to speakers, such as Mrs. Harada Kiyoko, who said that women should not only retain the social and economic rights they had obtained during the war but should add to them. She indicated economic necessity and an awakening political consciousness would prevent many women from returning to their homes.[8] Mrs. Hirabayashi Taiko, a liberal author, felt that women must be enlightened on politics to be influential in forming a democratic House of Representatives and that women's political parties must be formed to do this.[9]

Differences of opinion concerning women's right to vote were apparent even in the cabinet itself. When Horikiri proposed that the cabinet amend the election law, the measure was adopted only after much debate.[10] Some members suggested that electoral rights should be given gradually to women.[11] While the government had reported itself in favor of suffrage after the MacArthur order, it was obvious during the Diet debate in December, 1945, that not all agreed. Asahi Shimbun reported that "...members were reluctant to give women suffrage, and prefaced their statements with 'I'm not against women's suffrage,

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[7]Vavich, "Japanese Women's Movement," p. 425.

[8]Nippon Times, November 18, 1945, p. 3.

[9]Ibid., November 27, 1945, p. 2.

[10]New York Times, October 14, 1945, p. 3.

[11]Nippon Times, October 15, 1945, p. 1.

but....'" Asahi explained this attitude by the fact that SCAP had ordered the granting of women's suffrage and that, personally, the members objected.[12] In the end the Diet did extend the vote to women.

Miss Ichikawa voiced the thoughts of politically advanced women when she applauded the change of law, but indicated she thought it would not be until a new generation of women reached voting age that it would be used effectively. She felt, however, the Japanese women were beginning to shake off the shackles of timidity in a great psychological change because they had proved their ability during the war. With this background and the corresponding respect men had for them, she thought that women would have won suffrage eventually even if Japan had won the war.[13] Nevertheless, she observed: "Without the Occupation or defeat of Japan, the realization of the Japanese women's constitutional rights would not have been achieved so quickly."[14]

While legal enfranchisement was a major accomplishment, it was not the last obstacle women had to overcome to achieve equal rights with men. The Home Minister illustrated this fact when he stated in the Diet, after the passage of the franchise law, that women's place had not changed much under the new laws. This statement served to increase discussion by women of their place in the traditional family system and emphasized the need for the revision of the Constitution and Civil and Criminal Codes.[15]

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[12] Vavich, "Japanese Women's Movement," p. 426.

[13] New York Times, October 28, 1945, VI, p. 10.

[14] Vavich, "Japanese Women's Movement," p. 426.

[15] Summation, December, 1945, p. 46.

The next step in attaining equal status took place with the writing of the new Japanese Constitution in 1946 and the incorporation in it, among other new rights, of the election law of 1945. Without dwelling on the origins of the Japanese Constitution of 1947, it should be noted that from its inception it was almost completely an American document. This meant that Americans rather than Japanese initiated articles regarding women's rights. It was obvious to the Japanese that Americans had conceived the Constitution, even though the government presented it as their own proposal. The Diet approved it "amid funereal gloom."[16] One cause of the gloom was probably Article 44 of the Constitution, providing that: "The qualifications of members of both Houses and their electors shall be fixed by law. However, there shall be no discrimination because of race, creed, sex, social status, family origin, education, property or income."[17]

Since this new Constitutional provision invalidated many clauses in the old Civil Code, a new code had to be written quickly. This need produced a provisional code which went into effect with the new Constitution on May 3, 1947. The government issued the final, more elaborate New Civil Code on January 1, 1948. At the time of the discussion of the Constitution in the Diet, officials were inclined to interpret the family sections conservatively, and Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru equivocated over its meaning. He said provisions concerning families rested "on the inherent equality of individual authority and of the

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[16]Kawai Kazuo, Japan's American Interlude (Chicago, 1960), p. 53.

[17]A Brief Progress Report on the Political Reorientation of Japan (Tokyo, December 31, 1949), p. 63. Hereinafter referred to as Progress Report.

two sexes, and their principal objective is to sweep away what might be regarded or interpreted as the so-called feudalistic relics." In another sentence, however, he seemed to indicate that the traditional right of the family head to preside over decisions of other members of the family would not be changed. Minister Kanamori said the Constitution did not mean to lead to a loss of rights of the family head. Thus, when disucssing the changing of the old Civil Code in accordance with the new Constitution, the government talked confusingly on both sides of the issue.[18]

After judging the conservative statements of government officials, women realized that they must work for real changes in the Civil Code to achieve a practicing democracy. Using their new political freedom, female lawyers, politicians and educators made suggestions for the New Code and popularized proposed revisions.[19] Organizations proposed many methods to promote their drive for greater rights. Some of the most widely used were radio programs, personal appeals to legislators and government officials, lectures and large meetings. Also, women's parties sponsored candidates for office. In a Radio Tokyo program Miss Watanabe Michiko, one of the eleven women lawyers in Japan, told women that to gain improvement in their welfare they must learn the contents of the old Civil and Criminal Codes. Then numerous women should become members of a committee to change the law. Women, she felt, must form

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[18]Kurt Steiner, "The Revision of the Civil Code of Japan: Provisions Affecting the Family," Far Eastern Quarterly, IX (February, 1950), pp. 174-76. Hereinafter referred to as "Revision."

[19]Summation, May, 1946, p. 238.

the vanguard of the force demanding legal change.[20] Three women Diet members did win appointment as members of the Ministry of Justice's commission to revise the Civil and Criminal Codes. These women were especially vigilant in questioning government officials' stand on the effect of the draft Constitution on the family system.[21]

Women's organizations also worked to inform the masses of the full significance of all Articles in the Constitution relating to the fundamental equality of women with men. Many leaders toured the country giving lectures on women's rights and the proposed changes in the family system. Radio information programs presented topics concerning coeducation, preparation for marriage or a career, and the degree of freedom of thought and action girls deserved.[22] Other programs encouraged discussion of current problems of women. Films extolled the lives of famous Japanese liberal women, emphasizing self reliance and equality.[23] Organizations released 200,000 pamphlets to help stimulate interest in politics on the elements of parliamentary law. Also, they held institutes throughout the country for women leaders. These discussed new legislation, education, housing, public health, land reform, and related subjects.[24] The Social Education Section of the Tokyo Metropolitan Area sponsored a meeting to discuss procedures for democratic organizations. The conference, attended by the heads of 200 women's

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[20] Nippon Times, January 28, 1946, p. 2.

[21] Summation, July, 1946, p. 243.

[22] Ibid., November, 1946, p. 282.

[23] Ibid., March, 1946, p. 241.

[24] Kan Shina, "Japanese Women Move Forward," Far Eastern Survey, XIX (June, 1950), p. 122.

organizations and ward chiefs, demonstrated that women could work together to gain their rights and to eliminate outside control.[25]

At other times the ability to cooperate was not apparent. Miss Ichikawa was one of those Japanese purged in 1946 for their war activities. She, however, had protested the totalitarianism of the Japanese government during the war. She and Tanaka Jun, a women's rights worker, both suspected the reason for the purge was that a former compatriot in the women's movement became jealous and falsely reported her to the Americans.[26] This is indicative of problems that hindered cooperation in the movement. Early in the occupation SCAP found increasingly sharp division between views of leftists and rightists. For instance, Communists disparaged the Emperor system while others rigidly upheld it.[27] There was even trouble because some women felt organizations should not promote equality so actively. For example, Kume Ai, a past president of the Women Lawyer's Association, studied law before the war and felt no concern about her rights. She believed if a woman were professionally competent her status would be automatically raised.[28]

Most educated women, however, pushed for equal rights; and with the support of SCAP they converted these activities into revisions of the Civil Code which helped to make them socially and economically independent. Consider, for example, the vast changes in family law.

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[25]Summation, December, 1946, p. 241.

[26]Vavich, "Japanese Women's Movement," p. 427.

[27]Summation, December, 1945, p. 176.

[28]Vavich, "Japanese Women's Movement," p. 434.

A principal aim of the New Civil Code was to reduce the power of the head of the house or a husband and to increase the rights of the individual. Most changes in the Code reflected this aim. After reaching majority, children no longer needed consent of parents to marry.[29] A woman was no longer specifically penalized for adultery, and women's rights in divorce were equal to those of men. Also, a wife kept control of her property after marriage, and in this and other areas, such as inheritance, she became an equal partner in marriage. Finally, mothers gained parental power equal to that of the father.[30] Kawai Kazuo, editor of the Nippon Times during this period, summed up the changes in the Codes when he said they helped make the emancipation of the individual possible. He noted an increase of activity by women in the areas of politics and business and in initiating action in social matters.[31]

The part played by organizations in promoting changes in the Constitution and Codes underscored their importance on the feminist scene after the war. Both women leaders and officials were aware of this situation and of the influence they could have on the female populace. The government at the first meeting of Vice-Ministers after the war and at a later Cabinet session had considered how women could be used to help solve postwar problems. Officials considered a comprehensive women's organization, but women rejected this idea. Ministers finally decided to form the All-Japan Women's Committee to inform the government of women's ideas. Its central and local committees, to be

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[29]John Whitney Hall and Richard K. Beardsley, Twelve Doors to Japan (New York, 1965), p. 514.

[30]Arthur Taylor von Mehren, ed., Law in Japan (Cambridge, 1963), pp. 374-75.

[31]Kawai, Japan's American Interlude, p. 232.

chosen by city, ward, and village committees, were opened to women only after the growth of opposition to the government's original plan. In the end this Committee still seemed too regimented, and it did not win the support given the Women's Bureau which later emerged.[32]

Women's organizations flourished with the end of restrictions on them. One estimate indicated 10,000 groups sprang up with approximately 6,000,000 members. These organizations had no government backing, and in order to keep them from being unduly influenced by the right or left, several prominent women's leaders attempted to educate women in political and social fields.[33]

The New Japan Women's League, organized in November, 1945, corresponded to the League of Women Voters in America and was the most influential pressure group organization.[34] It hoped to liberate women from their feudalistic shackles by promoting their economic, legal, and social status. It planned to promote political consciousness of women, especially so they could contribute to world peace.[35] The League planned to give guidance for voting by condemning election through bribery and personal consideration and to compare and discuss political platforms and to promote candidates of good character.[36] It ran candidates, but did not side with any political force. It also arranged

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[32]Nippon Times, October 3, 1945, p. 3.

[33]Baron E. J. Lewe van Aduard, Japan from Surrender to Peace (New York, 1954), p. 53.

[34]Nippon Times, April 13, 1949, p. 4.

[35]Ibid., November 4, 1945, p. 3.

[36]Ibid., November 27, 1945, p. 3.

lectures throughout Japan so that women could become acquainted with various political parties and factions.[37]

Young women under Mrs. Ichikawa organized the New Japan Women's Union in November, 1945. It proposed to gain female suffrage and to educate women politically. Besides these general objectives, it had specific ones including having women participate in regional autonomous organizations and securing their appointment to government posts. It also hoped to abolish laws discriminatory against women in order to reform the education, social and labor fields.[38]

An additional listing of organizations shows their diversity. The Women's Labor Union organized different women's sections to study problems of working women.[39] The YWCA of Japan tried to acquaint Japanese with American social customs. It also contributed to enlightening women about politics and raising their cultural level with lectures and at least one night school.[40] By 1949, the YWCA had 20,000 members and was working to do something for working girls before they were attracted by leftist organizations.[41] The Women's Democratic Club hoped to help women "participate actively in society." Methods of achieving this goal included activities for rural women and radio programs. A nonpartisan organization, its leaders included Mrs. Miyamoto of the Communist

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[37]Ibid., November 18, 1945, p. 3.

[38]Ibid., November 3, 1945, p. 2.

[39]Ibid., February 18, 1946, p. 3.

[40]Ibid., January 18, 1946, p. 3.

[41]Ibid., April 14, 1949, p. 3.

Party, Mrs. Kato of the Social Democrats and Mrs. Hani, a well known educator.[42]

The fruit of these many organizations to educate women was often shown in an awakening social consciousness. The Japan Women's Society for Cooperation, launched soon after the war, worked for the establishment of a peaceful Japan.[43] The Tomo-no-Kai gave household and vocational guidance and provided badly-needed nurseries for working mothers. American influence contributed to the formation of the Christian Women's Temperance Union which had five thousand members by 1949. The temperance women, perhaps convinced of the futility of their mission to eliminate sakē, developed interest in a secondary purpose--aid to prostitutes.[44] Because of their occupational requirements and traditional conservatism, rural women were less involved with advancement of their rights than those in the city. Many organizations, however, made efforts to acquaint rural women with and to involve them in the process of changing women's rights.[45] There were instances where energetic women managed to help farming women indulge in new activities, but these generally had small significance politically.

Besides women's organizations, leading women also took advantage of continuing legal changes to form political parties. In December, 1945, a group of women under Mrs. Kudo Yoshiko formed the New Japan Women's Party as an instrument to democratize Japanese women and to

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[42] Summation, March, 1946, p. 39.

[43] Nippon Times, November 1, 1945, p. 4.

[44] Ibid., April 13, 1949, p. 4.

[45] John B. Cornell, "Buraku Social Organization," in Bernard Silberman, ed., Japanese Character and Culture (Tucson, 1962), p. 54.

help establish peace in the world. The New Japan Party, a small political group which her husband headed, sponsored the party.[46] It marked the first time women had organized politically for a national election, and hoped to have one candidate for each prefectural precinct. It advocated the establishment of permanent peace; the elimination of social evils; and equal treatment in social, economic, legal, and political fields. It also supported promotion of ideal Japanese womanhood, increases in food and fuel production and improvement of railroad transportation.[47]

The Women's Liberal Party, organized in January, 1946, advocated that laws handicapping women should be abolished, that the social status of women should be promoted, and that facilities should be made available for working mothers.[48] Groups made great efforts to give women a rapid education in political matters before the national election in April, 1946. In addition to many radio programs and speeches all over the country, all women's organizations held a rally in Tokyo which explained all political party platforms.[49] During each of these programs speakers attempted to outline the position of each faction, but there was a major emphasis on the need for women to raise their voices concerning their desires for peace and equal rights.

The number involved in these activities, especially in the rural areas, was small. Moreover, those who were active defied convention.

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[46] Nippon Times, December 29, 1945, p. 2.

[47] Summation, December, 1945, pp. 26-36.

[48] Nippon Times, January 10, 1946, p. 2.

[49] Summation, December, 1945, p. 176.

In 1951, a survey in Tokyo found that, when asked what their family would think if they worked in the election, 47 per cent of the women replied definitely that their family "would hate it." Only 33 per cent answered that their family "would support it."[50] Altogether by 1949, women's groups had somewhat stabilized into a number of 4,568 with a total membership of 4,661,029. These groups did not continue to work in harmony for women's cuases, despite earliest expectations that they would. By 1949, the problem with all groups, from top to bottom, was that the women fought because of jealousy and other causes. Even the Friday Club of Diet women disbanded as they discovered there was no single point of view concerning women's needs and thus found they could not work well together.[51] The controversy, however, was much more complimentary to the democratic ideas SCAP was trying to impress upon the Japanese than a regimented type of organization would have been such as the government forced women into during the war.

Some women felt that the growth of separate women's political parties would contradict their desire for equality. They deemed that it would be better to promote their rights in established political parties. SCAP encouraged women to work with men, accept responsibility with them, and avoid a women's bloc.[52] Most of the established parties, aware that the potential women voters outnumbered the men, made some sort of move to appeal to women. They drafted some women candidates for the Diet and wrote special sections of their platforms to appeal to them.[53]

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[50]Koyama, Changing Social Position, pp. 66-67.

[51]Nippon Times, April 13-14, 1949, p. 4.

[52]Summation, April, 1946, p. 266.

[53]Ibid., February, 1946, p. 6.

By December, 1945, the Social Democrats set forth their program of equal rights for working women and equality in wages and education. In order to accomplish this goal, laws restricting women had to be abolished; and, as an added measure for women's equality, they urged the prohibition of prostitution.[54] The more conservative Liberal Party also advocated coeducation, revision of unequal laws and greater political education for women. The Social Democrats seemed to have a more concrete platform to equalize women's rights in all areas. The Socialist Party's platform was similar to that of the Liberals, advocating most of the same points. The Communist Party had a women's division, and the minor political parties also had separate sections and planks concerning female rights.[55]

In November, 1945, Mrs. Kato became the first woman candidate for the general election of the following April. She ran with the party headed by her husband, the Social Democrats, and was a strenuous promoter of planned parenthood and of a democratic life for Japanese women.[56] She thought planned parenthood would raise general living conditions, give women an opportunity to enjoy life, and give offspring a happier childhood. By March other women candidates for the Diet had increased to eighty-three, representing all major parties.[57]

The effects of the promotion campaigns and activities of women candidates varied in influence upon the general female population.

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[54] New York Times, December 29, 1945, p. 5.

[55] Nippon Times, March 5, 1946, p. 4.

[56] New York Times, November 15, 1945, p. 2.

[57] Summation, February, 1946, p. 35.

They particularly had an impact upon those who were psychologically, mentally, and economically ready to be influenced. Thus, urban women responded to the greatest extent. A nation-wide survey made by the All-Japan Agricultural Association in late 1945, showed 57.1 per cent of farm females were not at all interested and only 1.5 per cent classified themselves as interested in the coming political events and in their new rights. Most regarded the latter group as eccentric. From these results the Association drew the conclusion that farm women were too busy to be interested in political issues or to be actually aware of their new rights. The lack of political consciousness stemmed from a lack of political training that was encouraged by the feudalistic family system and from the fact that government and politics had no direct bearing on daily life.[58]

Following the release of surveys such as the above, predictions concerning the number of women voters in the April election varied greatly. They ranged from the optimistic opinion of Hirano Rikizo of the Social Democratic Party, who said that 70 to 80 per cent would vote, to the pronouncements of seasoned political observers who felt that no more than 20 per cent would go to the polls. Surveys found the vast majority indifferent to all political issues save the status of the Emperor system, which they supported.[59]

The results of the turn-out for the election on April 10 astounded political observers. Approximately 67 per cent, or 13,780,369 out of 20,557,564 registered voters, actually cast ballots. Thirty-eight of

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[58] Nippon Times, November 22, 1945, p. 3.

[59] Ibid., February 14, 1946, p. 4.

the final seventy-one women candidates were elected.[60] Women who won Diet seats included Mrs. Kato, Mrs. Kuboshiro Ochimi, a pioneer suffrage leader, and Mrs. Yamaguchi Shizue, a Socialist.[61]

In the election following 1946, the number of women elected to the Diet dwindled even though women voters continued to turn out in large numbers. In the election of April, 1947, 2,397 women ran for national and local offices and 848 were elected, ranging from twenty to the Diet to 707 in town and village assemblies.[62] In the third election held in January, 1949, more than one-half of the women candidates received the endorsement of political parties--a new high. Changes in the election law which restricted campaigning and the lowering prestige of the Social Democratic Party contributed to the fact that smaller numbers were elected to the Diet and prefectural assemblies.[63] The number of women in municipal and ward assemblies increased, indicating that women had a better chance to accomplish something in local groups than in the national Diet.[64] The Nippon Times noted that while only forty-four had announced for national office instead of the approximately one hundred

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[60]Progress Report, p. 38.

[61]New York Times, May 12, 1946, p. 15. Another new Diet member's former occupation apparently caused some embarrassment to the Japanese. MacArthur related that soon after the election a legislative leader called on him and without preliminaries immediately said: "I regret to say something terrible has happened. A prostitute, Your Excellency, has been elected to the House of Representatives." MacArthur: "How many votes did she receive?" Legislator with a sigh: "256,000." MacArthur: "Then, I should say there must have been more than her dubious occupation involved." Legislator: Laughter. "You soldiers!" End of conversation. MacArthur, Reminiscences, p. 305.

[62]Progress Report, p. 28.

[63]Kan, "Japanese Women Move Forward," p. 122.

[64]Nippon Times, January 1, 1949, p. 2.

that were expected, the greatest interest was among women in their twenties. Perhaps the new generations were learning a greater interest in politics.[65] In the 1949 election 68 per cent of the number eligible voted. This compared with 62 per cent in the 1947 election, perhaps showing a gradual awareness of the importance of politics.[66]

At first the Diet segregated women into separate sections, symbolizing early attempts of women of all parties to work together on common problems. Mrs. Kato recognized this policy in her opening speech for the feminine club in the Diet:

> You members belong to your political parties, which committed themselves publicly to various platforms. But for the settlement of problems common to women it is necessary to concentrate the power of women by overthrowing party differences. We wish to take up any problem...the settlement of which the power of women alone can accomplish and this we intend to do without reference to party positions.[67]

Speaking for the Dietwomen in a meeting to thank MacArthur, she elaborated:

> we shall particularly emphasize the article in the Constitution for the permanent abolishment of war. We certainly shall stand for peace; we shall never have war again: Then secondly we are ready to work for various legislation protecting women and children. However, we are sure that all our efforts shall be stressed to eliminate feudalistic family system..

The initial policy of concentration on the unique interests of women produced critics who felt that women would accomplish more in the long run if they joined with men in studying interests common to all.[68]

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[65]Ibid., January 20, 1949, p. 4.

[66]Ibid., February 3, 1949, p. 4.

[67]New York Times, June 2, 1946, p. 56.

[68]Mary R. Beard, The Force of Women in Japanese History (Washington, D. C., 1953), pp. 176-77.

One woman commentator maintained that the Diet Women's Club accomplished little because there was no "woman's point of view" on most subjects. Their main object seemed to be to blame men for all wrongs.[69] Also, Diet men ignored them because their prime concern was women's problems. When they began to integrate with the parties of their choice and broaden their interests, they were called to serve on such committees as budget, labor, welfare, education, justice, and foreign affairs.[70] By December, 1946, new seating arrangements in the Diet ranged women with their party, showing a greater acceptance of them and their realization that they could accomplish little as a separate bloc.[71] With time and this realization, women achieved positions in the legislature. In February, 1949, Mrs. Nakayama Masa became chairman of the Committee on Acceleration of Repatriation in the Representatives and Miss Koro Mitsu chaired the same committee in the House of Councillors. The first woman vice-minister was Ashibara Chiyo, who was Parliamentary Vice-Minister of Justice in the Katayama Cabinet. All later cabinets had one woman vice-minister.[72] Exactly how much of the new position of women in the Diet was a tribute to their abilities and how much was tokenism to please the Americans can only be surmised. One Speaker of the House remarked when forming a committee in the Diet, "Let's put a lady in. That would please GHQ."[73]

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[69]Matsuoka, Daughter of the Pacific, p. 218.

[70]Kan, "Japanese Women Move Forward," p. 122.

[71]Summation, December, 1946, p. 211.

[72]Kan, "Japanese Women Move Forward," pp. 122-23.

[73]Matsuoka, Daughter of the Pacific, p. 219.

The executive portion of the government corresponded with the legislative in accepting women's abilities. Ministries concerned with women's problems began to use them as advisors in both national and local government.[74] In September, 1947, the Katayama Cabinet instituted a Women's and Minor's Bureau in the new Ministry of Labor, headed by Mrs. Yamakawa Kikue as the first woman bureau chief. The Bureau promoted the interests of women and children, information and educational work, and research concerning women.[75] Branch offices were set up in each of the forty-six prefectures to help women improve their social and legal status. The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry established a Home Demonstration Section to provide a rural extension program for village women.[76] The Ministries of Agriculture, Education, Welfare, and Labor appointed women as heads of departments. Thirty-nine women were elected to the newly established boards of education in 1948, and women were also appointed to Public Safety and Child Welfare Commissions.[77] SCAP's hopes that even more women could obtain jobs in top civil service positions failed in 1950 as only one woman was among the leading 200 candidates in a comprehensive examination of government workers. Altogether, only nineteen passed technical tests and twenty-five the administrative sections.[78]

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[74] Summation, June, 1946, pp. 273-76.

[75] van Aduard, Japan from Surrender to Peace, p. 54.

[76] Kan, "Japanese Women Move Forward," p. 123.

[77] Hara Kimi, "Women's Status in Modern Society," Contemporary Japan, XX (October-December, 1951), p. 501.

[78] Harry Emerson Wildes, Typhoon in Tokyo (New York, 1954), p. 99.

The results of the civil service examination pointed to both the successes and problems in increasing feminine status in the general political and governmental arenas. Women started from such a low position in 1945 that, no matter how monumental the gains, they still compared quite unfavorably with men. But, they had improved their status to a point where cooperation and work with men was a viable goal. This, in itself, was a tremendous advance; and it was conceived in the increasing modernity of Japanese society, in the fight of emancipated women to attain equal status, and the prodding of the occupiers. In this area, as much as or more than any other, the heavy hand of the occupation was instrumental in producing not only legal but actual improvements in the equality of women. In this area the occupation provided not only the legal framework, but was also in the position to see that that framework was implemented in the Japanese government. Both of these factors provide the reasons for grateful support from Japanese feminist organizations.

CHAPTER III

EDUCATION

In 1945, SCAP found an educational system in Japan that was in some ways quite advanced--particularly in that it had universal education to the sixth grade and also higher education of excellent quality. But it also found a system that had been designed to indoctrinate militaristic policies and regiment the young and that discriminated against women. The basic purpose of the educational system, instituted in 1872, was to produce "useful servants to state and society," not a participant in democratic society. Women's education, alone, made half the populace unequipped to function well in the post-1945 atmosphere. Their education after the first six grades was inferior to that of boys, or even virtually non-existent. A few women attained admission to private university level education, but the number was almost insignificant.[1] The major emphasis of female schooling was in areas which would benefit a housewife, such as flower arranging and the tea ceremony.

In making changes in education, SCAP hoped not only to build a system that would contribute to a democracy but, as a corollary, to promote coeducation for its own sake. In this purpose it had the support of the more progressive educators in Japan. For example, in

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[1]Kawai, Japan's American Interlude, pp. 185-86.

October, 1945, Maeda Wakao, head of the Senzoku Girls High School, urged that women receive equal education to gain cultural strength. She felt that to aid recovery Japan must build up women's education--particularly in the scientific and religious areas.[2] The women's organizations were also advocating political education of women.

The first official statement concerning women's education, released in December, 1945, by the Ministry of Education, was "The Women's Education Renovation Plan." This statement had been introduced at the behest of SCAP, and it contained a policy "to reform the education of women for the purpose of promoting equal opportunity of education, equal level of teaching and mutual respect between both sexes."[3] The measure was to promote women's higher education by building new women's universities, and let women enter universities previously established for men by elevating the status of women's preparatory colleges. In order to prepare women for higher schooling the ministry hoped to elevate the course of study in girls' high schools to equality with that of boys' higher schools. This would be done by making textbooks, subjects, and the number of school days equal to those of men.[4] If this reform were completely followed, the whole character of women's education would begin to change. The proposal did not, however, actively promote coeducation throughout the school system.

SCAP felt that in order to enact other changes experts from the United States should visit Japan to study the system and make

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[2] Nippon Times, October 23, 1945, p. 4.

[3] Koyama, Changing Social Position, p. 26.

[4] Robert King Hall, Education for a New Japan (New Haven, 1949), p. 421.

suggestions that would ensure schooling congenial with a democracy. Early in 1946 the United States Educational Mission, a diverse group of American educators, came to Japan for three weeks to make suggestions for reforms in Japanese education. The Ministry of Education appointed a group of Japanese educators to consult with with the Commission and give reports to them.[5] Kawai Michi was one of the two women in the group, and her report was indicative of the thought of progressives. She urged that women's education be made equal to men's and that separate training and textbooks be abolished. She also thought that women should teach boys in order to promote a spirit of equality.[6]

After reviewing the recommendations of the Japanese educators and making a cursory study of Japanese education, the Commission issued a report that was similar to SCAP's views on the subject as seen in the Ministry of Educations's Education Renovation Plan. Basically, the suggestions promoted a system that would be a copy of American education. Several of the points dealt with women's education. The Americans urged that education be reformed with a view to "giving equal opportunity" to men and women. This would be accomplished by raising the level of women's education to further the "mutual respect among men and women."[7] Another suggestion was that in order to achieve these goals there be established a three year lower secondary school for both boys and girls providing "fundamentally the same type of curriculum" with compulsory attendance. It urged that there be

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[5]Catalogue of Directives to the Japanese Government, Vol. I (Washington, D. C., November 30, 1951), p. 79.

[6]Nippon Times, April 16, 1946, p. 3.

[7]Ibid., February 20, 1946, p. 3.

established a three year upper secondary school which would be coeducational and open to all who desired to attend on a merit basis.[8] This would mean that women should be admitted to men's schools, and that women's high schools equal to men's should be established. It also urged the construction of more coeducational and women's universities.[9] Despite these suggestions, the Educational Mission's recommendation that coeducation be enacted was tempered with a realization of the inherent problems in the change. While stating that it was a goal to be achieved, the educators admitted the difficulties involved:

> Here again, coeducation would make possible many financial savings and would help to establish equality between the sexes. However, separate schools might be used at this level during the transition stage provided equal educational opportunity could be guaranteed.[10]

In the 1946 school year the government implemented some of these suggestions. The school system changed from twenty years to sixteen on the basis of six-three-three-four.[11] To promote equality the Japanese Ministry of Education appointed the first two women officials at the policy making level in the School Education Bureau and the Social Education Bureau. To help upgrade female education the Association of Japanese College Alumnae undertook the unofficial task of accreditation and curriculum supervision of women's schools.[12]

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[8]Koyama, Changing Social Position, p. 26.

[9]Nippon Times, February 20, 1946, p. 3.

[10]Koyama, Changing Social Position, p. 28.

[11]Nippon Times, January 1, 1947, p. 3.

[12]Hall, Education for a New Japan, p. 422.

Official textbooks for girls were made the same as the boys, and the number of classroom hours of both sexes was made identical.[13]

Not until after the inauguration of the new Constitution in May, 1947, (after extreme pressure by SCAP) and the subsequent new laws it necessitated, did the major changes in education come. The Constitution, with its supreme authority, was an important ally of those who promoted progressive education. Article Twenty-six of the Constitution stated:

> All people shall have the right to receive an equal education correspondent to their ability, as provided for by law. All people shall be obligated to have all boys and girls under their protection receive ordinary education as provided for by law. Such compulsory education shall be free.[14]

The Constitution reflected the feeling of authorities that only through education could the idea of equality be thoroughly instilled.[15]

In order to carry out basic new policies in education as stated in the Constitution, the Japanese Education Reform Council issued statements which the government incorporated into the Fundamental Law of Education and the School Education Law, both passed in March, 1947.[16] The discussion that surrounded its enaction into law suggests the staying power of traditional philosophy and the instrumental role of SCAP in making any direct legal changes. Conservative lawmakers could not help but register their disapproval of an innovation that was bound to contribute to a revolution in the old family system and society of

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[13] Ibid.

[14] Progress Report, p. 61.

[15] Koyama, Changing Social Position, p. 18.

[16] Post-War Developments in Japanese Education, Vol. I (Tokyo, April, 1952), p. 1.

Japan. An example is the statement of one who said:

> Above everything else, is not coeducation, as prescribed in Article Five of the Fundamental Law of Education, premature? In view of actual conditions of our country, is not coeducation a superficial imitation of the West? I would suggest that the committee should be more thoughtful and deliberate in the matter of women's education.[17]

Despite such views, and there were many who were afraid of changes in society that coeducation would bring, the bill passed comfortably with SCAP's support. The Preamble of the Fundamental Law stated that it was to establish "the foundation of education for new Japan" where culture and individuality would spread. In regard to equality the Law stated in Article Three that: "The people shall all be given equal opportunities of receiving education according to their ability, and they shall not be subject to educational discrimination on account of race, creed, sex, social status, economic position, or family origin." Two other Articles promoted equal education. Article Four stated that: "The people shall be obligated to have boys and girls under their protection receive nine year's general education" without paying tuition and Article Five specifically called for coeducation. It read: "Men and women shall esteem and co-operate with each other. Coeducation, therefore, shall be recognized in education."[18] Thus, the Law called for a reversal of the basic Japanese attitude of women's low status to be implemented through education. The Far Eastern Commission sent a directive to MacArthur on April 11, 1947, after the passage of the law, calling for educational reform that would achieve equality of education

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[17]Koyama, Changing Social Position, p. 27.

[18]Post-War Developments in Japanese Education, Vol. II, p. 127.

regardless of sex or social position.[19] Such a delayed reaction further signified the control the United States held over the Commission.

As in the case of most reforms regarding the status of women, the laws were not completely enforced. Liberalization of the educational system, however, was one of the more successful innovations of SCAP. In 1947 the Ministry of Education issued a pamphlet, "Guide to Prepare Practical Occupation of the New School System," which called for positive action to enforce coeducation in primary and junior highs, but not in senior high schools. Actually coeducation had long been a fact in most primary schools. School administrators enacted the recommendations for junior highs quickly. By December, 1947, 99.6 per cent of these schools followed the instruction of the law. Only a few of these had female principals, however. Coeducation in the next higher level of education came more slowly. In this same year only 57.9 per cent of the senior highs were supposed to be ready to begin coeducation.[20] A survey in April, 1949, by the Ministry of Education showed that expectations for coeducation in senior highs in 1947 had been fulfilled, but not increased. Over 98 per cent of public lower secondary schools were coeducational in all grades. In senior high schools only 36.5 per cent were coeducation, and the same number were semi-coeducational. In 1949, males exceeded females in continuing upper secondary education 42 to 23 per cent. Thirty-one per cent of males studied full time and 11 per cent part-time as against 20 per cent of females who studied full

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[19] New York Times, April 12, 1947, p. 8.

[20] Koyama, Changing Social Position, pp. 26-28.

time and 3 per cent part-time.[21] During the years 1950-1953, the number of girls in senior high school increased proportionately much more than the number of boys. Girls in high school increased from a base of 100.0 in 1950 to 140.0 in 1953, while the boys's base increased only to 126.6. Women in college increased from a base of 100.0 to 205.9 while the men's base increased only 24 points.[22] The ratio of men to women in university education after the war was so great, however, that the large proportionate increase of women in higher education was not very significant in numbers. The number of women teachers had also increased. By 1949, they constituted 6 per cent of the total in universities and colleges, 18 per cent in secondary schools and 50 per cent in primary schools.[23]

The reaction to this new coeducation was varying. The more conservative rural districts were especially reluctant to accept it. Niiike, a village in the southwestern part of Honshu, is characteristic. At first parents disliked the American innovation of having boys and girls sit together in school. During this time segregation was still the rule in activities outside the school, but parents' opinions were beginning to change as a result of the new system. Eventually parents even supported girls' education, only for a somewhat shorter period than boys. In January, 1954, a local newspaper, Sanyo Shimbun, illustrated the change in an editorial comment on what coeducation had brought:

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[21]Walter Crosby Eells, "Coeducation in Japan," School and Society, V (September 22, 1951), p. 184.

[22]Koyama, Changing Social Position, p. 30.

[23]Progress Report, p. 28.

> Coeducation shocked many adults, who were raised on the maxim: 'Separate children by sex after seven.' Parents of seventh to twelfth graders worried about sex and adolescent problems, but no great harm came of it, and children placed with the opposite sex got a competitive spirit and improved marvelously. Girls' achievement rose astonishingly under the stimulus of classes with boys, and classes as a whole did better. Some parents and brothers, however, comment that girls are becoming 'unfeminine' in language and manner.[24]

In other parts of the country there were also examples of positive reaction to coeducation. For example, in Fukuoka and Kyoto students of both sexes requested permission to attend a school formerly for the other sex when it was closer to their home.[25]

There were also cases of those who worked actively against coeducation or who complained about the results--particularly if it involved senior highs. In Tokyo authorities made a prestigious boys' school coeducational by integrating two-thirds bright boys and one-third dull girls while an old girls' school integrated in reverse proportions. This division caused much dissension, and students of both sexes became resentful and disdainful of their opposites because of the vast intellectual differences. Apparently by this method the municipal officials hoped coeducation would not work.[26] In Kurusu buraku, where school activities were the only ones in which men and women worked together, coeducation was not popular. Students had some small complaints, but it was the older people who were most critical of it in middle school

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[24]Richard K. Beardsley, John W. Hall, and Robert E. Ward, Village Japan (Chicago, 1959), pp. 300-01, 306.

[25]Verna A. Carley, "Teacher Preparation in Japan," Educational Leadership, VI (October, 1948), pp. 49-50.

[26]Dore, City Life in Japan, p. 236.

because they thought it lowered the morals of youth and led to trouble later in arranging marriages.[27]

Female teachers also had to fight attempts to circumvent their improving status. In some cases principals asked women to resign from their positions. Since teaching had long been considered one of the more appropriate female occupational activities, women felt if this pressure were successful it would have a great influence on their general status. Mobilizing their forces of teachers' unions and related agencies, they were only sometimes able to fight effectively against this tendency.[28]

The Ministry of Education conducted a survey in 1949 which indicated the overall feelings of students, parents, and teachers concerning coeducation. The results of the survey seemed rather surprising in that teachers and parents favored coeducation more than students. This is understandable partially because it was parents rather than grandparents who were interviewed and also because the survey extended over the whole of Japan and not just to rural areas. The majority of pupils disliked coeducation partially because they were influenced by old customs. Other reasons centered on difficulties encountered at school. A difference in aptitudes between sexes--boys seemed to be better at mathematics and physics while girls excelled in languages--caused dissension, as did inadequate physical facilities in schools.[29]

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[27]John B. Cornell and Robert J. Smith, Two Japanese Villages (Ann Arbor, 1956), p. 75.

[28]Fujita, "The Progress of Emancipation of Japanese Women," p. 9.

[29]Uyehara Shigeru, "Co-education in Japan," Democratic Japan (March, 1950), p. 10.

Statistics on literacy and number of school years completed showed an improvement in the education of women. By 1949, girls in urban areas usually completed upper secondary education, and in rural areas girls usually attained a lower secondary education. Mothers were beginning to appreciate the value for their daughters of an education that made them economically independent. An educated girl sometimes had difficulty in finding a husband in rural areas, however, both because they were choosier and because the husband's family was afraid such girls would not be hard workers.[30] The average number of years of study effected was the subject of a survey in December, 1949, which showed that younger females were catching up with the men in their age group. By 1951, the Commission of Research on Literacy found that at age fifteen, 77 per cent of boys and 80 per cent of girls were functionally literate. By twenty, 88 per cent of men and 84 per cent of women were. Women continued to decline in comparison to age sixty-four when the figures were 26 per cent for women and 63 per cent for men.[31]

Despite arguments against coeducation, the practice grew in a few short years in the urban areas particularly. Coeducation, practiced in the first six grades before the war, extended to the first nine grades after the war. By 1951, practically all elementary and lower secondary schools were coeducational and a majority of upper secondary schools were. The Ministry of Education acknowledged growing acceptance when it said in September, 1950, that local populations "who entertained

[30] Nippon Times, January 14, 1949, p. 4.

[31] Koyama, Changing Social Position, pp. 24-25. See Table I.

some anxiety about this new system due to their long established customs, gradually have come to show approval of it." Even as early as October, 1948, a conference on the problems of the reorganized education voted not to include a discussion of coeducation because it felt that this did not constitute a real problem.[32]

TABLE I

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF THE JAPANESE PEOPLE

Age Group	Whole Population	Male	Female
16-19	10.88	11.01	10.74
20-24	10.91	11.18	10.75
25-29	10.37	10.55	10.31
30-39	9.76	10.53	9.72
40-49	9.02	9.99	9.33
50-up	8.76	9.28	8.37[33]

In upper levels of education equality of women's schooling with men's was far from being accepted although some advances were made. It was in these higher levels, which most directly contributed to the equality of women's status with men's after the educational experience ended, that discrimination against women was most apparent. The

[32]Eells, "Coeducation in Japan," p. 184.

[33]Jean Stoetzel, Without the Chrysanthemum and the Sword (New York, 1955), p. 72.

occupation authorities hoped to make better university training more readily available to qualified females. In 1945, as far as higher education was concerned, those women who were able to attend were largely relegated to second-rate institutions taking domestic science courses. In 1946, women constituted one per cent of the graduates of universities, and 17 per cent of high schools (approximately junior college level). Only 6 per cent of the graduates in teacher training schools were women.[34]

The number of women graduates from other than exclusively female institutions in 1946 was 454 from universities, 31,886 from colleges, 19,424 from normal schools, and 391 from temporary teacher training institutions.[35] Before emancipation, of the women who graduated from colleges, the vast majority majored in domestic science or literature.[36] By 1950 figures for women in higher education had changed somewhat. There were 3,927 women in national universities or 9 per cent of the total; 413 in prefectural or municipal universities or 8.4 per cent of the total; and 3,861 in private universities or 8.7 per cent. In July, 1950, 1 per cent of the students in the seven former Imperial universities (most prestigious in Japan) were female even though they had totaled 6 per cent of the admission applicants.[37]

A review of the varied types of institutions of higher learning shows how they responded to education laws. One type of institution

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[34]Lulu Holmes, "Women in the New Japan," Journal of the American Association of University Women, XLI (Spring, 1948), p. 138.

[35]Summation, October, 1946, p. 338.

[36]Yamakawa, "Japanese Women Under the New Constitution," p. 143.

[37]Eells, "Coeducation in Japan," p. 184.

was the girls' school which may have combined high school and higher education courses. One of these, a Christian girls' school, Keisen, met the changing status of women by becoming accredited as a junior college from which women could go on to universities. It also started new fields of learning including horticulture.[38]

Before the occupation there were fifty-five regular normal schools or teacher training institutions. While fifty-two had women's departments, not more than half had these departments in the same city. The course lasted three years for men and two for women. By 1947-1948, this had changed to 140 teacher training institutions with a staff that was one-eighth female and 27,000 women students compared to 55,000 men. Officials reorganized and accredited the teacher training schools as four year institutions for both sexes, and the Ministry of Education promised that there would soon be one nationally supported four year school for both men and women in each prefecture.[39]

Women's colleges had been of inferior status. To help equalize women's education with men's, many of these colleges tried to raise their status to that of a university. Out of forty-two women's colleges which applied for university status in 1949 only seventeen passed the first examinations.[40] By 1950, this number had increased to twenty-four.[41] Women's colleges and universities also expanded the type of courses they offered. For example, in 1945, Ryukoku Women's University

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[38]Kawai, Sliding Doors, p. 162.

[39]Carley, "Teacher Preparation in Japan," pp. 45-47.

[40]Nippon Times, February 17, 1949, p. 4.

[41]Kan, "Japanese Women Move Forward," p. 124.

began to offer ethics and a medical, pharmaceutical and domestic science three year course.[42]

The various types of men's universities also made changes because of the new policy of coeducation. Admission to Tokyo University almost assured a successful career. In 1944, forty women were studying in Imperial universities compared with 29,600 men. Only two of the twelve government universities admitted women.[43] In 1946, all tax supported universities became coeducational, and the Imperial universities admitted fifty-one more women. Tokyo led the field, taking thirty of 121 women applicants, and an official at Tokyo asserted that deans and faculty were anxious to teach women.[44] In all government universities the number of women increased from 116 in 1946 to 227 in 1947 and 417 in 1949, but this number was insignificant against the enrollment of 84,617 men. The relatively small increase indicates that prejudice existed even against this small number. An example of the continuance of traditional thought concerning the abilities of women came from one student who complained that women memorized but did not digest what they learned.[45] The general survey of statistics and various representative institutions indicates that the equality of higher education was still only a hope at the end of the occupation. Female enrollments were small, discrimination continued, and universities did not usually make any provision for the welfare of their students, which

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[42] Nippon Times, October 25, 1945, p. 3.

[43] Hall, Education for a New Japan, p. 418.

[44] Nippon Times, April 25, 1946, p. 3. Hall in Education for a New Japan suggests that only nineteen were accepted.

[45] Ibid., January 14, 1949, p. 4.

caused problems especially for females. Some women did use the right to enter prestigious universities to study in fields similar to men's rather than take the old domestic science route. This could provide considerable advancement for an intelligent, ambitious women, but the number which was able to take advantage of this new offering was small.

During the period of the occupation women increased their activity in areas of education other than that related to public schools. The occupation sponsored adult education projects to prepare people for good citizenship. These courses were sometimes more successful than officials dared hope. In Shiga Prefecture women attended the course in such numbers that officials in Osaka and Kyoto complained the course was not a success. The military government had to point out that women, too, were citizens. Osaka later reported that the "feudalistic prejudice against participation of women in community affairs was gradually changing due to the program."[46] Even with the aid of government projects such as the one in Shiga Prefecture, the problem of educating the general female populace was so large that advances seemed small. One editorial writer summed up the general situation in 1948 when he said: "While a number of women are eagerly participating in the new life, the women masses are still looking indifferently on the things happening outside their homes."[47]

One method for a woman to promote equal rights was to gain some control over the educational process. By 1950, fifty-eight women had

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[46]Ronald S. Anderson, "An Adult Education Project in Japan," School and Society, LXXI (June 3, 1950), p. 341.

[47]Shiraishi Tsugi, Nippon Times, January 3, 1948, p. 4.

been members of school boards.[48] With difficulty, women even infiltrated the Parent-Teacher Association. The American-educated Matsuoka Yoko encountered discrimination in her first PTA meeting which the traditional women's attitude compounded. After the woman next to her suggested women should not get involved in the discussions because: "Women don't understand such things as a constitution. That is men's business.", Mrs. Matsuoka felt compelled to make minor suggestions. As a result of speaking up, the group (approximately one-half female) elected her vice president, much to the consternation of the male officials--particularly the ones over forty years of age--who had formerly controlled the PTA. One woman teacher summed up the reaction of many women to this situation when she said: "This could never have happened before. It gives us hope, too, that we may be able to improve our status in the teaching profession."[49]

The occupation put emphasis upon equality in education because education was necessary before the overall aspect of women's status could improve significantly. The overwhelming American political force in Japan after the war assured that equality in education would become law. The influence of Americans with the Japanese government aided the enforcement of these laws in the lower grades. Increasingly in the upper grades and at the university Japanese subterfuge, buttressed by the traditional culture, managed to block the implementation of much of the spirit of the law. Equality of education in the lower grades was important because it proved that women could compete on the same level

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[48]Eells, "Coeducation in Japan," p. 184.

[49]Matsuoka, Daughter of the Pacific, pp. 242-43.

as men and because it contributed to the breakdown of established ideas concerning segregation of the sexes. Of greater importance in promoting women's status was equality in higher education, and in this area the occupation forces were not very successful. Society was generally not willing to allow women to have the necessary education to compete on the same economic level as men. In this case it was the old story of the Americans setting guidelines which the Japanese might or might not follow.

CHAPTER IV

LABOR

Female employment opportunities improved dramatically in Japan during the 1940's. This was a consequence of both the shortage of manpower during the war and of reforms enacted during the American occupation. Before World War II some women worked outside the home, but most of their jobs were low paying and discriminatory in character. This small start, and the wartime use of women in areas from which they had previously been barred, provided an important foundation for occupation policies. Reforms that coincided with the direction of social change assured that the implementation of laws would be more effective.

The importance of the shortage of Japanese manpower during the war upon the economic emancipation of Japanese women cannot be over emphasized. Women had to work to support the war effort; and, by doing so, overcame many prejudices against activity outside the home. Equally important was the fact that necessity proved to large numbers of women that they could perform well in varied types of occupations. By the end of the war they were trained for many types of employment; and, furthermore, they were enjoying the freedom economic independence entailed.[1] Necessity also directed that women continue to work after the war. As prices rose faster than wages, the family system lost its

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[1]Hall, Education for a New Japan, p. 420.

economic foundation. Women whose husbands had been killed or were not yet repatriated had to work. Women soon found they liked this experience, and derived a pleasure from their new importance and self-sufficiency.[2]

SCAP's policy of promoting women's status fit comfortably with the economic situation in Japan. The Diet approved the legislative innovations at a time when economic conditions required women workers and conservative forces were unable to campaign effectively against working women. The first labor law affecting women, the Labor Standards Law, passed on April 7, 1947, helped all workers by raising the level of protective legislation to at least the minimum standards recognized by the International Labor Organization.[3] The bill would not have been passed without the influence of SCAP, as is apparent from the comment made by Prime Minister Yoshida that the government felt the act was not in keeping with the impoverished state of the country, but that "GHQ exercised the same close vigilance over the drafting of this law as it did in the case of the others."[4]

Considering the complexity of the Japanese wage structure, abnormal postwar conditions, and the weight of tradition, the government did not expect this law to change conditions immediately. Through the law and activities of trade unions, officials did expect better conditions eventually.[5] The law contained portions that contributed to the

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[2]Koyama, Changing Social Position, p. 100.

[3]Miriam Farley, Aspects of Japan's Labor Problems (New York, 1950), p. 79.

[4]Yoshida Shigeru, The Yoshida Memoirs, tr. Yoshida Kenichi (Boston, 1962), p. 214.

[5]Kan, "Japanese Women Move Forward," p. 123.

physical welfare and civil rights of females, but it also circumscribed types of work and limited hours. While ultimately protecting their welfare, the law seemed at times to reduce legitimate job opportunities by making it illegal or too expensive for employers to hire them. The law stated that women could not be employed overtime more than two hours a day, six hours a week, or 150 hours a year; and they could not be employed on rest days. On certain occasions they could work twelve hours a week overtime, but not twenty-four hours in two weeks. Women could not be employed in dangerous jobs around machinery, underground, or overnight from ten to five. The law also gave women time to nurse children and special days off each month, if they desired.[6] Certain laborers protested parts of the law that restricted their right to work. Female stevedores, for instance, objected to weight restrictions that would force them out of a job. Others realized the extra holidays meant that employers would be less willing to hire them. If the law were followed completely, however, its main effect would be to improve working conditions of women.[7]

Even though women made advances in the labor field before the law of 1947, there were examples of violations against women and children which showed the need for new laws. The most frequent violations were in the contract labor system which compelled workers to complete a contracted term of employment, and the dormitory confinement system which often deprived the worker of the freedom of movement outside working

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[6] Official Gazette, No. 303 (Tokyo, April 7, 1947), pp. 6-7.

[7] Nippon Times, April 1, 1946, p. 2.

hours. This occurred most frequently in the textile, ceramic, and amusement industries.[8]

The law was needed even more than before the war as unskilled job opportunities for women arose in many new areas. This compared strikingly with the prewar opportunities. As late as the 1930's, an extreme feudalistic prejudice prevailed against involving women in any type of commercial activity. Mrs. Kato, then Baroness Ishimoto, encountered severe criticism and prejudice when she began a knitting business during that period, particularly as she was a member of the peerage.[9] Women were favored for work only in certain businesses where conditions were terrible and employers took advantage of their poverty and need. Women worked half naked in mines where conditions were so primitive that thirty lives were lost for every million tons mined.[10]

The primitive conditions in which miners worked was the subject of a study by authorities soon after the occupation began. In 1945 regulations permitted women over twenty years to work in coal mines and those over twenty-five to work in mineral mines subject to the permission of the Chief Inspector of the local Mining Bureau.[11] Female coal miners soon became aware that SCAP intended to change regulations which permitted them to work underground. They anticipated this would put them out of the only jobs they could obtain and protested to the Vice-Minister of Welfare, urging the government at least guarantee their

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[8] Summation, October, 1946, p. 166.

[9] Ishimoto, Facing Two Ways, pp. 209-11.

[10] Ibid., p. 161.

[11] Summation, January, 1946, p. 180.

livelihood.[12] They feared new rights which would subject them to extreme poverty.

In March, 1946, the government again began enforcing protective labor standards not used since 1937 in the mining field. The result of this enforcement was that women above ground were to be transferred from night to day shifts immediately. Five thousand were to leave coal pits within five months and 3,500 others were to leave within eleven months. Coal operators were also to begin giving special and maternity leave with pay.[13] In order to help protect women's jobs following the above order the Ministry of Commerce and Industry sent instructions to prefectural governors to make every effort to transfer women affected by the ban on night and underground work to daytime surface work and to give priority in re-employment through the unemployment exchange to women unavoidably discharged from mine employment. If women were unavoidably discharged, the Ministry ordered employers to give one month's pay plus separation allowance, other special relief provisions to those unable to find re-employment, and permission to live in company homes until the ex-employees found other dwellings.[14]

Before the occupation female employees in the textile industry also worked in a feudalistic atmosphere. Women lived in confinement in dormitories where employers rigidly regulated their lives. Their salaries were miniscule. After the passage of the Labor Standards Law, the situation rapidly changed. Women worked an eight hour day, six day

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[12] Nippon Times, April 1, 1946, p. 2.

[13] Summation, March, 1946, p. 171.

[14] Ibid., April, 1946, p. 189.

week with a starting salary of Y1500 compared with the national average salary of Y2800. Dormitory occupants could lead a free life and had self-chosen committees to operate their residences. The meals were good and medical and educational facilities were available.[15]

Farm workers were by far the largest group of female unskilled laborers. Since this industry was unregulated there were practically no changes in working conditions. The change that did occur was due to the new economic conditions that had not reference to specific legislation. Mrs. Kasahara En, Progressive member of the Diet from Iwate Prefecture, reported in 1946 that most farming women were overworked and had no cultural and recreational diversions. As farm girls became aware that they could get more appealing jobs in cities there were fewer who were willing to marry farmers.[16] Of those who remained on the farm, some managed to find time for infrequent diversions, but for the majority this was not true. Farming continued to be the arduous occupation it had been before the war. Even most of those who had temporary jobs before marrying, soon settled down to work at home or in the fields.[17] At the end of the occupation the life of the farm workers was still generally the same as before the war.

An examination of labor unions shows in microcosm most aspects of the struggle for rights in the economic area. It shows how women contributed to the implementation of rights; and, also, how the new rights they had sometimes overwhelmed them. The study shows, in effect, the

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[15]Nippon Times, January 20, 1949, pp. 1-2.

[16]Ibid., June 6, 1946, p. 3.

[17]Beardsley, Hall, and Ward, Village Japan, p. 181.

complexities of a situation where traditionalists, progressives, the government, the occupation personnel, and others were sometimes all pulling in different directions. Despite this, advances occurred in female union rights. Women had been the object of some discrimination in union activity, and leaders felt it important to achieve equality and to see that unions looked after their interests. In this both the government, supported by SCAP, and some union officials aided them. Finally, an Amendment to the Trade Union Law of June 1, 1949, helped their cause. It stated in part: "In no event shall any one be disqualified for union membership because of race, religion, sex, social status or family origin."[18]

Even as early as 1945-1946 about 25 per cent of union members were women, but the majority of these were not active.[19] They worked in primary industries such as agriculture and mining, and in secondary industries such as manufacturing, commerce and teaching.[20] By 1949, 51 per cent of all women workers were union members; however, this dropped to 30 per cent in 1950.[21] A poll in 1949 by the Investigation Section of the Prime Minister's office found that while 52.7 per cent of unionized women were interested in union activities, only 25 per cent wanted to be actively involved. Of the non-unionized workers, over 50 per cent were eager to become members.[22]

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[18] Official Gazette, Extra No. 68, June 1, 1949, p. 3.

[19] Farley, Aspects of Japan's Labor Problems, p. 79.

[20] Summation, October, 1946, p. 166.

[21] Koyama, Changing Social Position, p. 121.

[22] Nippon Times, February 20, 1949, p. 3.

Union leaders relegated women to special departments which promoted their particular interests only. Under these conditions, however, women slowly increased their activity and participation in unions. Men gave greater recognition to them in December, 1945, when the new Planning Committee for a National Federation of Labor Unions included four women. A 1952 survey showed that female members of unions elected to senior posts were at a rate of two per thousand versus twenty-five per thousand for men.[23] And in the area of union activities few females participated in strikes. An exception was nurses in a few hospitals, who succeeded by striking to obtain wage increases.[24] Women employees of Nihon Woolen Mills in February, 1946, concluded the first successful negotiation for special paid leave for female workers. This negotiation foretold the special rights women gained in the Fundamental Labor Law of 1947.[25] Later in 1946 the Japan Federation of Labor included in its platform a provision calling for equal pay and opportunity for women and maternity leave.[26]

Changes in employment practices in skilled labor and professional fields were numerous. One of the most widely discussed was the institution of police jobs for women in Tokyo. That 920 applicants applied for the first sixty-five jobs shows the great interest this new project generated. The new policewomen trained for varied activities including administrative seats on the traffic and peace preservation sections of

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[23]Koyama, Changing Social Position, pp. 121-22.

[24]Summation, December, 1945, p. 110.

[25]Ibid., February, 1946, p. 193.

[26]Farley, Aspects of Japan's Labor Problem, p. 72.

the Metropolitan Police Board and duties as traffic controllers on congested streets. Other jobs included giving advice to women and boys; inspecting recreation houses, dance halls and cabarets; attending venereal disease patients at hospitals and attending trials involving women.[27] Later in a new tactic to help prevent rampant juvenile crime, the force assigned women to jobs designed to prevent it.[28] For their work the women drew as much pay as the men,[29] and the public so favorably received them that a few months later ninety others were admitted for police work.[30]

In one professional field, a SCAP official found that women librarians experienced discrimination in promotions and wages. The impact of the occupation did little to change the situation. Most librarians were men, and those who had been employed during the war felt insecure with the increasing unemployment. The SCAP official intervened in the case of one highly competent woman who was still making a starting salary after five years' employment. Her salary was later raised, and she obtained an administrative position which was almost unheard of--particularly since most high positions were political appointments. The personal intervention of occupation personnel was rare, however; and in most cases the position of female librarians was low and insecure.[31]

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[27] Nippon Times, April 23, 1946, p. 3.

[28] Ibid., May 20, 1946, p. 3.

[29] New York Times, June 2, 1946, p. 3.

[30] Nippon Times, May 20, 1946, p. 3.

[31] Philip O. Keeney, "Meet the Japanese Librarian," Library Journal, LXXIII (May 15, 1948), pp. 768-70.

In some other professional areas, even though their steps were tentative and their positions often insecure, women did make progress. In 1946, about thirty women became principals of public elementary or junior high schools. In 1948, the first female prison officers and labor standards inspectors appeared. In 1949, the Japan Broadcasting Corporation acquired its first woman section chief, and the telephone office hired the first women senior clerks. In 1950, the first woman passed the diplomatic service examination and the first woman public accountant received certification.[32] Other new jobs included those for the first female horticulture graduates, who helped to compile a botanical dictionary, worked in a hothouse, and served in an agricultural experiment station.[33] One woman became governor of a prison for 500 women and 150 men and was highly respected by male sub-wardens. In 1950, two women showed their advancement in the business field when the Tokyo Chamber of Commerce elected them to its membership.[34]

The number of women teachers increased by 1949 to 6 per cent of the total in colleges and universities, 18 per cent in secondary schools and 50 per cent in primary schools; but their position was not always secure.[35] The Board of Education of Oita Prefecture asked a thousand women teachers to resign at the end of the semester in 1949 to make room for new normal school graduates. They were told to give "family

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[32]Koyama, Changing Social Position, pp. 143-44.

[33]Kawai, Sliding Doors, p. 162.

[34]Ibid., pp. 175-76.

[35]Progress Report, p. 28.

reasons" as the cause of resignation.[36] This was only one example of a continuing policy of business to force older women to retire so new ones could be hired at cheaper salary rates. Teachers' unions and other groups opposed this policy, often to no avail.

Women leaders hoped that government positions, both elective and appointive, would be open to women and serve as an example to other industries. The election of the thirty-nine national legislators in April, 1946, started the process. According to the testimony of Takeuchi Shigeyo and Mrs. Kato, at first male legislators ignored their female counterparts and regarded them as "nuisances."[37] Eventually, however, some women did achieve positions of influence in the Diet. In 1948, a woman became Parliamentary Vice-Minister of Justice.[38] Women regularly attained the post of Parliamentary Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs.[39] Koro Mitsuko of the House of Councillors became the first woman chairman of a special committee in 1949.[40] Besides the hundreds of women in prefectural and local assemblies, there were also women mayors beginning in December, 1945, even before the law revision.[41]

The vast majority of women in government work were in appointive positions. A reform of the civil service system which included removing all legal barriers against women became effective April 1, 1946; but,

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[36] Nippon Times, March 10, 1949, p. 3.

[37] Ibid., April 27, 1946, p. 2.

[38] Koyama, Changing Social Position, p. 144.

[39] Enomoto Toshi, "The New Women of Japan," World Outlook, XL (July, 1950), p. 950.

[40] Nippon Times, February 24, 1949, p. 4.

[41] Summation, December, 1945, p. 36.

of course, it did not immediately stop discrimination.[42] Only a few months later the government dismissed 1,500 female workers. Despite the protestation of the chairwoman that: "It is not only improper but a grave insult to our sex to mark us as the objects of dismissals," the firings stood.[43] Similar incidents indicated the impossibility of immediately changing long established habits by fiat.

By the end of 1948, the number of women in a variety of government posts and central offices totaled 11,788 out of 55,978.[44] This number had increased two and a half times since prewar days; however, only a few, 880, held responsible positions.[45] In 1949, 850 were members of local governments in cities, towns and villages. Two or three thousand women were working part-time as counsellors, mediators and business consultants in Family Courts.[46] In the Domestic Relations Courts 863 or 14 per cent of all counsellors and 1,434 or 10 per cent of all mediators were women.[47]

When Yamakawa Kikue became the first director of the Women's and Minors' Bureau, she achieved the highest government position of a woman. At the same time, the government appointed more than fifty women to various official posts in the Bureau including labor supervisors over millions of women--a position that had formerly been held only by men.

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[42]Ibid., April, 1946, p. 48.

[43]New York Times, August 28, 1946, p. 9.

[44]Progress Report, p. 28.

[45]Nippon Times, March 24, 1949, p. 4.

[46]Kawai, Sliding Doors, p. 174.

[47]Progress Report, p. 28.

Other new women appointees in government included Yoshimi Shizue, chief of the Child Care Section in the Children's Bureau; Hara Seki, chief of the Nursing Section in the Medical Bureau; and the chief of the Welfare Section in the Attorney General's Office.[48] Miss Ishiwata Mitsu achieved the distinction of becoming the first woman judge.[49]

Statistics show not only where women worked, how many worked, and their salaries; but, also, what they felt about working, and the distribution of workers. A survey of 1,724 female clerks in Tokyo in 1948 indicated economic need to be the prime motive for working. Only a few (16 per cent) worked for other than monetary reasons, such as to gain a knowledge of society.[50] It is notable that none worked simply because they enjoyed it; or at least, they did not think it a plausible reason to give.

Many soon accepted the idea that a young woman should work outside the home before marriage to gain a knowledge of society. People did not as readily accept the idea that a wife should also work, but statistics show opinions about this were changing. In an investigation in 1948 by the National Public Opinion Research Institute, 41 per cent of women interviewed said they were against the employment of married women. One-seventh gave this reason because they felt it was detrimental to family life.[51] Four years later in 1952 the same Institute conducted the same type of survey and found the results had changed to feelings

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[48] Yamakawa, "Japanese Women Under the New Constitution," p. 142.

[49] Enomoto, "The New Women of Japan," p. 950.

[50] Koyama, Changing Social Position, p. 110.

[51] Jean Stoetzel, "Personal Relations," in Silberman, Japanese Character and Culture, p. 268.

of greater approval. Then only 25 per cent of Japanese men and women were opposed to a wife working outside the home.[52] The Nippon Times reported that as the living cost spiraled, men changed their minds about their wives working after marriage. Whether from necessity or new conviction, they would rather marry a woman who could help provide household expenses.[53]

A comparison of wages paid to women and to men gives an indication of the type of jobs they had and their computed worth. In October, 1945, in the twenty-three to twenty-five year range, the average monthly earning of men was Y100.39 compared to Y69.50 for women.[54] From October, 1945, to the middle of 1946 wages of women increased at a higher rate than men's, but were less than half their average earnings.[55] The following statistics will show that this rate of growth did not keep pace, partially because women did not stay in jobs as long as men. Another reason was that in the same job even though women's wages might begin at the same low rate as men's, they did not rise as fast. The following, which gives the average annual wage of males and females and the ratio between them for several years, shows that women's maximum pay was almost half men's.[56]

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[52] Koyama, Changing Social Position, p. 65.

[53] Nippon Times, August 7, 1947, p. 4.

[54] Summation, January, 1946, p. 178.

[55] Ibid., October, 1945, p. 170.

[56] Stoetzel, Without the Chrysanthemum and the Sword, p. 73.

TABLE II

WAGE LEVELS OF MEN AND WOMEN

Year	Male Mo. Wage	Female Mo. Wage	Ratio
1948	Y6133	Y2460	43.0%
1949	9980	4488	45.0
1950	11143	5184	46.5
1951	14051	6496	46.2
1952	16872	7533	44.9

Were the women who worked an important segment of Japan's populace? In what areas were they actually employed? Statistics indicate that a large percentage of Japan's female populace worked, but the majority labored in menial occupations. A much greater percentage of males than females, above the age of fourteen, worked. For example, in 1947 83.9 per cent of males and 45.1 per cent of females worked and in 1952 83.3 per cent of males and 49.9 per cent of females worked. The percentage of female workers rose steadily after 1952.[57] Married women provided only 9 per cent of the total female force in 1950.[58] The distribution of male and female workers according to the 1950 census shows that both were primarily employed as farmers or laborers. According to Table III a greater percentage of prestigious jobs belonged to men. After the 1950 census the number of women in

[57]Koyama, Changing Social Position, p. 112.

[58]Ibid., pp. 101-07.

agriculture and factory work decreased to 55 per cent of the employed female population within two years. Women in 1950 were in every occupational area save thirteen forbidden to them by law. In 1930, fifty-two occupations were without women workers.[59] Since the majority of women were in rural oriented occupations, only in groups under twenty and over sixty years did urban females approach rural females in the number who were employed. The majority of those under twenty worked in the textile industry.[60] From 1948 to 1952 the number of unpaid family workers decreased in comparison to the number of self-employed, wage earning, and salaried workers; however, they were still in the majority. Most of these were involved in farming.[61]

TABLE III

JOB CATEGORIES OF MEN AND WOMEN

Job Category	Men	Women
Professional and technical workers	5.0%	3.6%
Managers and officials	3.0	0.1
Clerical and related	9.9	6.5
Sales workers	8.5	8.2
Farmers, lumbermen, fishers, etc.	39.7	60.8
Craftsmen, production process workers & laborers	29.2	14.3
Service workers	2.7	6.3

[59]Ibid., pp. 103, 105.

[60]Thomas O. Wilkinson, The Urbanization of Japanese Labor, 1865-1955 (Amherst, Mass., 1965), pp. 102-03.

[61]Koyama, Changing Social Position, p. 107.

During the occupation women's legal rights in employment increased, as did the numbers of working women and job opportunities. Other factors involved showed that women still needed to accomplish much. Mrs. Tanino Setsu, Chief of the Working Women's Section of the Women's Bureau, emphasized this in September, 1947, when she said the status of working women had not improved despite the Labor Standards Law.[62] Even though her Bureau tried to inform women about the law, the Investigation Section of the Prime Minister's Office found that in 1949 while 85.4 per cent of women workers had heard of the Labor Standards Law, only 50 per cent had a rudimentary knowledge of its provisions.[63] Women's lack of information about their rights and the opportunities they could pursue was only part of the problem. Women had lower wage scales, less responsible positions, and less opportunity for advancement than men. As long as society regarded women as inferior to men, a manifestation of which was that American-trained women were criticized for being too "insensitive" to their proper social position, women would always have to continue their fight for quality jobs and employment rights.[64]

The inferiority of women was demonstrated by the fact that even with their growing economic independence, opportunities for employment were decreasing, particularly for those from the university level. And, it showed itself in the morale of Japanese women. This was illustrated by a despondent waitress who commented on the situation:

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[62]Nippon Times, September 25, 1947, p. 4.

[63]Ibid., February 20, 1949, p. 3.

[64]John W. Bennett, Herbert Passin, and Robert McKnight, In Search of Identity: The Japanese Overseas Scholar in America and Japan (Minneapolis, 1958), p. 74.

"In three years I'll be twenty-five. Girls are often retired at that age. That is what life in Japan is like. All is hopeless."[65] Those who fought for equality, however, could take some solace in the fact that her statement was overly dramatic. While the door to full equality had only been partially opened by wartime necessity, the habits of an industrial society, and new legal rights, it had been opened. For female leaders this was both a comfort that their past efforts had shown some result and a spur to continue trying.

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[65]Millicent Pommerenke, Asian Women and Eros (New York, 1958), p. 239.

CHAPTER V

SOCIAL RELATIONS

The occupation, in its effort to democratize and demilitarize the country, promoted far-reaching changes in the structure of society. To institute improvements in women's status in social relations alone was an undertaking of monumental dimensions. Under the old Civil Code *Ie* put women in a markedly inferior position. *Ie* had vast areas of difference from the Western idea of a family, and the Americans designed changes to minimize this difference, making the Japanese family similar to the Western one. Critics of the immense legal changes planned by SCAP to legalize a democratic, single unit family wondered what effect they could have, imposed from the outside as they were. The answer lay in the adaptability and desire of the Japanese people to build a society which would be peaceful and democratic, and, most importantly, in the changing currents of Japanese life which would make people accept the new laws as manifestations of this inherent development.

The first major document of the occupation concerned with familial relations was the Constitution. The New Civil Code reinforced changes written into the Constitution. In the draft Constitution Article 24 instructed the Japanese nation that henceforth:

> Marriage shall be based only on mutual consent of both sexes and it shall be maintained through mutual cooperation with the equal rights of husband and wife as a basis.
>
> With regard to choice of spouse, property rights, inheritance, choice of domicile, divorce and other matters pertaining to marriage and the family, laws shall be enacted

> from the standpoint of individual dignity and the essential equality of the sexes.[1]

Thus, the Constitution abolished the legal foundations of a family system based on inequality, but not without discontent from the conservatives. For example, Ketaura Keitarō said in the House of Representatives:

> This draft bill is aiming at the wholesale destruction of the family system of our country centered on the rights of the head of a house to be replaced by the individualism based on the idea that husband and wife is the center of the house.... After all, I fear that the revision of our Constitution will shake the foundation of the rights of the head of a house and those of parents.... I feel that this will greatly affect the filial piety which forms the foundation of all morals.[2]

Indeed, the new individualism which he feared was exactly what the liberal forces thought necessary.

Ketaura and other conservatives knew that it was only a hope that the family system would not be changed. Not only did occupation officials hope to dispense with Ie; but, also, many Japanese were happy to take advantage of the foreign presence to push for greater rights. Scholars regarded the family system as a hindrance to social progress and as being close to a state of collapse. Hence, they eagerly supported a Constitution and revision of the Civil Code which would undermine the family system.[3] Liberal politicians also wanted the provisions of the new Constitution to become an actuality in everyday life. Katayama Tetsu, quoted in Asahi Shimbun in June, 1946, said in opposition to government members who were against the familial section

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[1] Progress Report, December 31, 1949, p. 61.

[2] Steiner, "Revision," p. 173.

[3] von Mehren, Law in Japan, p. 373.

of the Constitution: "By establishing an improved family system a new Japan will be born."[4]

There was also evidence that many women were looking forward to new familial laws with great expectation. Nearly half the correspondence sent by women to the Women's Hour Section of the Japan Broadcasting Corporation during the period of January-March, 1947, was related in some way to the family system. The most frequent comments were caused by troubles experienced by young wives and widows, and women always wrote in appreciation when there was a radio comment against the family system.[5] Thus, conservative forces backed by tradition and liberal forces backed by economic, political, and social developments clashed.

Concurrent with the controversy over legal changes, women were beginning to take advantage of the new vocational and educational opportunities engendered by the growth of Japanese technology. For example, growing numbers divorced their husband instead of vice versa because they had finally attained a degree of economic independence. Kawai Kazuo concludes that legal reforms concerning women took hold to the extent that they did because they reflected a real change already occurring in Japanese society.[6] The occupation, with its idea of making great changes in the status of women, had occurred at a felicitous time. The necessity of employing women during World War II had given them responsibilities and opportunities they did not wish to forfeit. The New Civil Code helped to accelerate changes the Japanese

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[4]Steiner, "Revision," p. 174.

[5]Hani, The Japanese Family System, pp. 34-35.

[6]Kawai, Japan's American Interlude, p. 244.

were making. Thus, the Code was not a completely alien idea to be carried out by a foreign power, but a complement and a spur to Japanese progress.[7]

The old Civil Code with its traditional character concentrating on an over-emphasis on "house" spelled out the legality of Ie with its subjugation of women. In the New Code legislators changed the arbitrary right of the head of the house to remove a family member from the family register to include "without any proper reason" as a condition for the exercise of the right.[8] Supposedly, the head of a house could not get rid of a wife quite so easily. A wife had few rights in such areas as selection of mate, marital arrangements and business decisions. She could not conduct any business alone, and if she were so daring as to do so, it could be cancelled by her husband. A wife could not even "accept or refuse a donation" without her husband's permission.[9]

The New Code drastically changed much of this system. Article 737 stated that consent to marriage by parents was not necessary except in the case of a minor, and Article 731 terminated minority at age eighteen for a male and sixteen for a female. Article 739 stipulated that a new husband and wife set up their new registration which meant that no other member of the family need give approval for the marriage to take place.[10] Legally parents would no longer plan their children's

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[7]Dore, City Life in Japan, p. 120.

[8]Hani, The Japanese Family System, p. 39.

[9]Ibid., p. 17.

[10]Hall and Beardsley, Twelve Doors to Japan, p. 514.

marriages or be able to force them into one. In the area of property ownership and controls, women's powers under the New Code increased greatly. Article 762 provided for complete separation of the wife's property from the husband's. The wife now had title and power to manage and receive profits from her assets, and transfer of property no longer required the consent of the husband. Consequently, as former limitations on the legal capacity of women were gone, husbands and heads of houses lost power. Under the old Civil Code property ordinarily passed from house head to house head (usually the eldest son). Unless there were no descendants, the wife never succeeded to individual property. With the abolition of Ie as a legally encouraged system, upon death of the owner the spouse was entitled to an intestate share. Under Article 900 this share ranged from one-third to the entire estate. Also, all children would equally share the inheritance rather than it going to the eldest child alone.

Just as a woman gained rights under the New Code, she also gained responsibility and problems. Articles 760 and 761 stated that the wife now had to contribute to the expenses of married life and was responsible with her husband for debts incurred with respect to daily household matters. In this and in other areas the wife attained the status of a full and equal partner in marriage. Provisions were made for the couple to select either the husband's or wife's family name and residence. And, in one of the most widely discussed changes, a husband's adultery constituted grounds for a judicial divorce just as a woman's did. No longer could a woman and her lover be punished while the man and his partner were immune to the law. In the New Code mothers also gained parental power. Under Article 818 parental power, once almost

exclusively reserved for the father, was to be exercised jointly with the mother over children who had not yet completed their twentieth year.[11]

Under the aegis of the American occupation, the legal changes in the family system and the rights of women in the family were far reaching. To what extent did the legal changes correspond to intrinsic developments in Japanese society? Isono Fujiko of the Women's University of Japan held that the revolutionary change in the family system was made possible only by the occupation. The Ministry of Education, however, instituted a frantic program of indoctrination during the war because it thought industrialization was weakening Ie.[12] Mishima Sumi, a feminist, felt that the economic situation after the war which required women to work helped democratic tendencies and was a principal factor in changing the traditional family system.[13] Ariga Kizaemon, a professor of sociology at Tokyo Kyōiku University, noted in agreement with others that the development of women's participation in the economy and legal reforms weakened the rule of the head of the family under the old system of Ie. He found that areas where economic conditions had not changed sustained the family system.[14]

Numerous investigations into the actual status of Japanese women reveal a kaleidoscopic pattern. They also help determine an assessment

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[11]von Mehren, Law in Japan, pp. 375-77.

[12]Isono, "The Family and Women in Japan," p. 45.

[13]Mishima Sumi, The Broader Way: A Woman's Life in New Japan (New York, 1953), p. 133.

[14]Ariga Kizaemon, "The Family in Japan," Marriage and Family Living, XVI (November, 1954), p. 363.

of the occupation's legal changes upon Japan. A large segment of the population in the rural communities was not involved with the movement of women to work in paying jobs outside the home. Farm women had always worked in the fields for their family and did not receive pay. The work only added to the drudgery of their life.[15] Thus, rural areas in particular lagged behind the legal change, and the small enterprise farming families, for both social and economic reasons, remained a preserve of Ie.[16] The peasant family on a small farm with many dependents provided the conditions which encouraged the family system to continue. Shiraishi in the Nippon Times in 1949 agreed that the family system had changed little, particularly in the rural areas. For example, husbands did not allow their wives to attend meetings to learn of their rights.[17] An intensive study of the rural area, Kurusu, in 1952 yielded the same impression of the entrenchment of the family system, even though legal changes had weakened the family's hold somewhat.[18] Various individual Japanese reported the same phenomena.

In the urban environment, while the actual familial relationships did not unfailingly correspond to the family system of the statutes, vast changes occurred from 1940 to 1952. The changes in law seemed to give women confidence to pursue them in fact. In many cases husband and wife relationships, which were a bellwether of other advances, had undergone an entire transformation of attitudes. The story of a

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[15]von Mehren, Law in Japan, p. 373.

[16]Ibid., p. 379.

[17]Nippon Times, January 11, 1949, p. 4.

[18]Cornell and Smith, Two Japanese Villages, p. 107.

diplomat who was found mysteriously dead in the late 1920's shows this development. Officials finally decided the death pointed to suicide rather than murder partially because he carried a picture of his dead wife in his pocket. In a newspaper essay Tamotsu Takata commented upon this in 1949:

> I don't suppose it would seem odd to anyone nowadays for a man to carry about with him a photograph of a dead wife whom he had loved. Today it is a commonplace and not in the least peculiar. But at that time this...was counted among the causes of the very extraordinary action of suicide. And this only twenty years ago. Was there ever a place where relations between husband and wife have changed as much as they have in Japan?

The reaction of an Osaka professor of psychology to the realization of what married life entailed is another poignant account of these changing relations. He had been presented the Asahi prize for research, and Asahi related that he thanked the gathering for that and then continued:

> There is one thing I must say. For twenty years I have lived a life of research. The laboratory has practically been my home. Until I saw this invitation card it had never occurred to me to question my way of life--that was how things were. But when I came to the words 'and Mrs.' Kurotsu, I was brought up with a jerk. Looking back over these twenty years--there have been children, there was the war with all its troubles and all the difficulties of the post-war period. Everything I have left entirely to those around me. When I read those words 'and Mrs.' I was suddenly overcome. Ah! I do not know what to say.

Asahi reported that Professor Kurotsu was unable to continue and joined his wife in the audience, "together for their first trip a deux in twenty years of married life."[19] An example such as the above one was not unique nor was it universal. Studies indicated that it simply illustrates something of the situation in postwar Japan. Before the

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[19]Dore, City Life in Japan, pp. 163-64.

occupation public opinion was ahead of the law regarding family relations and marriage. After the legal changes of the occupation, it lagged behind. A few advances were quickly made. A survey in the late 1940's showed that 85 per cent approved of husband and wife going out together.[20] This was an advance for husband-wife relations, since during the war it was so shameful for a couple to walk together that an Imperial University professor who was traveling with his wife to visit her father's grave was arrested for the indiscretion.[21]

While many said that life was easier because husbands were more co-operative and not ashamed to be in love, other evidence indicates little marital attachment. Not only wifely responsibilities, but wifely freedom (or lack of it) indicated the strong influence of traditional ideas in some homes. One woman exploded in anger against this concept in an interview:

> Japanese men are tyrants. A wife isn't allowed to do anything or to have any interests without her husband's permission. I was fond of going to flower and tea classes, but one evening I got held up and it was ten o'clock before I got back. My husband was furious and for about six months he wouldn't let me go anywhere at all.

One pollster found that many women's husbands did not come home at night, nor did the wife know where they were. One woman related an amusing instance of male supremacy when she was asked whether her family celebrated birthdays. She indicated they did "and then added as as the most natural thing in the world, 'but only my husband's of course.'"[22]

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[20] Ibid., p. 150.

[21] Ibid., p. 159.

[22] Ibid., pp. 171-72.

Illustrations can also be found on the other side of the coin to show changing family relationships. One reason was that the change in household size was an important cause of increased attachment. As city families separated into the single conjugal family unit of the Western world, there was more privacy and opportunity to achieve an emotional relationship, and no other adult at home with which to achieve one.[23] Other reasons include the legal impetus and the general tenor of the times. Thus, some of the "tyrants" apparently were unintentionally changing with the events surging around them. One executive's wife related that when her husband came home the entire family and staff had to line up at the door and bow. He had to have help to do anything. The situation, however, had improved somewhat. Since the war he no longer lost his temper over small things so often. Of this his wife said, "I think it is due in part to the changing times. He is unconsciously being influenced and is adapting himself."[24]

A survey conducted by the National Opinion Research Institute in 1951 gave an indication of the percentages of those homes in which the husband was more involved in household affairs. The Institute asked: "Do you approve or disapprove of a man assisting in kitchen work?" Married and older people tended to disapprove while single and younger people tended to approve. Overall 33 per cent approved men's involvement in household affairs and 45 per cent disapproved. The others were undecided.[25] More urban couples approved of helping with

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[23]Ibid., p. 157.

[24]Earl Herbert Cressy, Daughters of Changing Japan (New York, 1955), p. 270.

[25]Koyama, Changing Social Position, p. 65.

housework than not, and younger husbands helped more frequently than older men. The Civil Code and the growing numbers of independent working women might seem to have nothing to do with dishes; but particularly in younger, urban Japan they seemed to have a common relationship.

Handling of money and friendships of the couple also are indications of the amount of freedom in marital relationships. In matters of finance wives seemed to have more responsibility than in other areas. In 45 per cent of households, the wife got all the husband's paycheck and then gave him spending money. In 51 per cent of households the wife had a fixed allowance, sometimes with the possibility for more. Only in 4 per cent of households did the wife have to ask the husband for money every time she needed it. When questioned about friends invited to the home for meals, the answers of the urban Japanese indicated in the largest number of homes only the husband had friends to meals. Only in a small percentage of homes was the visitor a friend of both husband and wife.[26] These answers show a lack of the social life which is found in Western homes.

Infidelity of their husbands was a cross Japanese wives had to bear for generations. Sociologists wondered if the provision in the Civil Code which eliminated punishment for a wife's adultery and the general situation which promoted greater understanding between spouses had in any way changed this situation. Toward the end of the occupation, a government approved text for social studies in secondary schools said: "It cannot honestly be said today that mistresses have

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[26]Dore, City Life in Japan, pp. 173-75.

entirely disappeared. Nor can it honestly be said that marriages no longer take place in which the wishes of the individuals concerned are ignored." It went on to urge monogamous and equal marriages.[27] Studies indicated the assessment in the social studies book was accurate. In Shitayama, a section of Tokyo, replies were about evenly divided by both sex and age as to whether a man could have a mistress. About two-thirds did not think he should. As may be expected, these answers came from people who showed the most respect for a wife's rights as a person.[28] In rural Kurusu, husband's infidelities were generally tolerated if they were not completely flagrant. An adulterous woman, however, would be divorced and sent back to her own family as under the old Civil Code.[29] These men were operating on the same principle as the husband who said: "You see...we cannot just throw away our ancient Japanese traditions. If they were so bad they would not have lasted so long."[30]

The Japanese woman traditionally had little to do with her mate selection even though both old and New Codes indicated marriage should be by mutual consent. This article had no effect in the old Code, however, because other articles dealing with the family system overrode it. The New Code laid the basis for the development of freedom of selection.[31] Time would tell if the populace would put it into effect.

27Ibid., p. 164.

28Ibid., pp. 180-81.

29Cornell and Smith, Two Japanese Villages, p. 69.

30Cressy, Daughters of Changing Japan, pp. 303-04.

31Steiner, "Revision," p. 179.

Studies of marriage selection indicate that legal change provided something of a prod but did not force actual change. Other conditions provided a major force in the freedom of marriage selection. In Kurusu, for instance, all marriages except one in the fifty years before the occupation had been arranged. After the surrender it became easier for a young person (particularly a man) to make his wishes known, and several of the arranged marriages simply validated the choice a couple had already made.[32] The vast majority agreed that the individual should have the major responsibility for mate selection, and if the parents disliked the choice most said they would talk their child out of the intent rather than dictatorially prevent it.[33] After the war, then, a rural young person had increased chances to make an individual choice.

Shitayama provided an urban assessment of the same subject. Parents there felt a son should be able to select his own wife, but were divided about equally concerning girls. Parents restricted daughters because they had no power of judgment and were "shy" and "negative." One parent illustrated this situation when asked what she would do if her daughter did not like the selected fiance. "What, our Suzuko!" was the response.[34] The comment represents a manifestation of the outcome of an upbringing that regulated girls' thoughts and activities while boys were allowed opinions and the right to express them. A survey of March, 1951, showed that 51 per cent of women would

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[32] Robert J. Smith, "The Life Cycle," Silberman, Japanese Character and Culture, p. 198.

[33] Sano Chiye, "Changing Values of the Institutional Family," Ibid., p. 134.

[34] Dore, City Life in Japan, pp. 139-40.

obey their parents' will in mate selection, 36 per cent would do as they liked and the others had no opinion.[35] Considering the above facts, it is not surprising that polls in Shitayama showed a gradual increase in love marriages from 28 per cent in the years 1931-1940 to 46 per cent during the occupation years.[36] The Institute of Public Opinion Research in 1952 found that 14.1 per cent of parents chose the son's or daughter's mate, 26.6 per cent chose their own mate, 56.1 per cent consulted with each other before the decision and the others had no opinion. In this survey more freedom existed in the large cities than in the rural areas.[37] Even so, many investigators found that romantic love did not occupy a big place in the mind of young Japanese, and many were willing to accept an arranged marriage if they could not find any one themselves.[38]

This society where values were changing rapidly necessarily caused dissension in families where some members accepted new mores while others clung to the old. One example concerns a couple who wanted to marry, but the man's father would not accept his proposed wife because she was a Christian and an office worker. When they married anyway the father disinherited the son and had his name removed from the family register. Often a widow was forced to marry a brother of her husband if the family needed a child despite any

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[35]Sakanishi, "Women's Position," p. 134.

[36]Dore, City Life in Japan, p. 166.

[37]Sakanishi, "Women's Position," p. 134.

[38]Jean Stoetzel, "Personal Relations," Silberman, Japanese Character and Culture, pp. 262-63.

objections she might have.[39] The following survey made in the early 1940's indicates that most felt the needs of the individual were more important than those of the family, but still showed strong family influence. The question was asked whether marriage should be for the benefit of the individual, the family or should satisfy both.

TABLE IV

SURVEY CONCERNING THE REASONS FOR MARRIAGE

Age	Family	Intermediate	Individual	No Opinion
Urban				
16-19	17%	24%	51%	8%
20-24	10	36	49	5
25-29	12	31	53	5
30-over	14	39	45	2
Rural				
16-19	15	30	49	8
20-24	13	39	47	1
25-29	15	36	47	2
30-over	14	47	38	3[40]
All Japan	14	39	44	3

In Japan registration of marriage does not have to be done immediately. The government requests that marriages be registered within six months and provides an incentive to do this by permitting

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[39] Hani, The Japanese Family System, p. 22.

[40] Silberman, Japanese Character and Culture, pp. 262-63.

the wife to be claimed as an income tax exemption.[41] Until the marriage is registered a wife could easily be removed from the house if she did not suit the family, and this frequently tended to be a cause of flagrant violations of marital rights. From information taken in the years 1947-1951, the results of a survey showed marriages had not been registered primarily because both were heirs to their respective households or they were waiting to see how the wife got along with the family. Others were waiting for pregnancy or were not aware of the necessity of registration.[42] As is indicated from the answers, a wife does not have a legal position until the marriage is registered. Even after equality in marriage became law, registration was often used as a method by which a wife had to prove her good qualities before the family accepted her. Two surveys, taken in 1947 and 1952, showed that early registration had increased only a little during the occupation. The number registered within a month increased from 9.6 to 13.2 per cent, but the increase after three years was actually a few points lower in 1952 than it had been in 1949.[43]

A census official in a village near Morioka City reiterated that the above information indicates about a bride's initiation into marriage. He said:

> It is impossible to get the actual number of cases of marriages and divorces in this district, because brides are married to houses; and, therefore, they are very often divorced when they are not found satisfactory to the houses, before their names are even entered in the family registers.

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[41] Cornell and Smith, Two Japanese Villages, p. 63.

[42] von Mehren, Law in Japan, p. 389.

[43] Koyama, Changing Social Position, p. 44.

Since there was usually a year or two lapse before names were registered, the office did not know the actual number of divorces in the area.[44]

As may be surmised from the fact that many wives had to prove themselves before marriage registration, the young wife was the hardest working member of an extended house. This was particularly true in rural communities where the young couple were more apt to live with the husband's family. A young wife living apart from other members of the family had a little more freedom to do as she wanted. All investigators agreed that a young wife in a family had a most difficult time. In rural Niiike a new wife had to prove her worth and loyalty to her new family by hard work, good behavior, and, most importantly, fertility. If she proved herself in these ways she was not sent home but achieved security, respect and affection, though retaining her inferior position.[45] In Kurusu, also, the wife was the lowliest member of the family although villagers said the power of the mother-in-law had much diminished.[46] As an indication of the wife's low position, she was the first to rise, the last in bed, she and her baby were the last to bathe, and she sat below every one else.[47]

If the marriage became untenable after registration had taken place, both old and New Codes provided for divorce. There was, however, a wide gulf between the two Codes. Divorce laws were made equal in the New Code, and a man no longer had to support his

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[44]Hani, The Japanese Family System, p. 16.

[45]Beardsley, Hall and Ward, Village Japan, p. 222.

[46]Silberman, Japanese Character and Culture, p. 203.

[47]Ibid., p. 153.

ex-wife.[48] The greatest opportunity for important changes in divorce law, however, involved children. Under the old Code the husband or his family could keep the children if they wanted. Under the New Code no longer did the mother have to give up her children for divorce since, if there were a dispute over their custody, the Family Court awarded them on the merits of the case. If the wife received custody, the husband had to contribute to their support. The New Code also had an article concerning property settlement which gave the couple the right to decide settlement. The husband usually paid the wife, but if they could not reach an agreement the Family Court awarded a settlement, usually modest.[49]

In a divorce by mutual consent the parties submitted a notice to the local government office. The document was examined and after one or two seconds the divorce granted. Since the introduction of the Family Courts, divorce by arbitration increased.[50] With the presentation of the New Civil Code in the Diet in 1947, the merits of divorce by consent were widely discussed. Many women lawyers felt all cases should be decided in court since in the past men had been able to free themselves because their wives were ignorant of the law. Others thought if there were freedom of marriage, there should be freedom of divorce.[51] The latter idea became law. As women lawyers feared, many divorces by consent (96 per cent of the whole in the late 1940's) happened because

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[48]Steiner, "Revision," p. 182.

[49]von Mehren, Law in Japan, p. 374.

[50]Nakagawa Zennosuke, "A Century of Marriage Law in Japan," Japan Quarterly, X (1963), p. 191.

[51]Matsuoka, Daughter of the Pacific, p. 244.

the wife had no idea of her rights. Women could not understand that suddenly they had a right to assert themselves.[52] As the wives who did assert themselves gradually increased, divorces by consent dropped.

In 1947 and 1950, 20 per cent of divorces were proposed by husbands, 79 per cent by wives and less than 1 per cent by mutual consent.[53] Husband's cases were more likely to be settled by consensus while wife-initiated action was more likely to have to be settled in court. This situation is one reason for the high percentage of action initiated by wives. As for the cause of divorce, Mrs. Ohama Hideko, arbitrator in the Tokyo Family Court, said the most frequent cause was not trouble between spouses but the centuries old problem of criticism by in-laws.[54] Mrs. Ohama made this statement in 1952, but even at that time the cause seemed to be decreasing as more families lived separately and the general outlook changed. For example, the majority in Shitayama felt that if there were trouble between wife and in-laws, the husband should side with his wife even if it meant moving out.[55] Even so, there were many cases where the husband's parents demanded and received a breakup of their child's marriage.[56] It was obvious, however, that changes were occurring when 78 per cent of older couples said they hoped the eldest son would not live with them.[57]

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[52]Dore, City Life in Japan, p. 183.

[53]Sakanishi, "Women's Position," p. 132.

[54]Stoetzel, Without the Chrysanthemum and the Sword, p. 53.

[55]Dore, City Life in Japan, p. 126.

[56]Hani, The Japanese Family System, p. 24.

[57]Dore, City Life in Japan, p. 128.

In divorce, as in all aspects of social relations, the hopes of the occupation authorities of promoting the status of women depended mostly upon actions of the Japanese. The Americans could provide a legislative framework to promote the rights of women, but they could do little to help the intent of the law become an actuality. In this area the independence and self-assurance women attained as a byproduct of their war effort, and the responsibilities the absence of males forced upon them, were of vast importance in improving their domestic rights. Without economic independence, which they were fast gaining during and after the war, women would not have had the necessary leverage ever to impose their will upon their families. Actually, improvement in equality in social relations had to be interwoven with improvements in all areas of society to achieve the respect and acceptance real equality with men would bring. Equality in education was necessary to obtain good jobs, and equal rights in the political arena were necessary to check any attempts to revoke some of the gains of females. In the area of social relations women had come a long way. For causes of this particular advancement, they could look at many areas affecting their lives including Japan's economic modernization, the necessity of employing women, improved legal rights, and increasing numbers of years in school.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

In the area of women's rights, American occupation policies germinated a seed that had been planted in part by years of industrialization and feminist activity. It was the happy coincidence that American policies and intrinsic Japanese developments coincided in a program to upgrade the status of women. Laws originated by Americans could not have eroded the practice of centuries without the aid of years of suffragette activity, decades of Japanese industrialization, and the economic and social upheavals produced by World War II. Kawai Kazuo expressed the feelings of most observers when he indicated that the extent to which the legal reforms had been implemented reflected "a change that has been taking place in Japanese society from within since before the Occupation."[1] The contribution of the United States military occupation was to provide considerable aid, in the form of laws and examples, to these inherent forces in their fight against entrenched traditionalist groups. By 1952, while not developed into full bloom, the plant of equality had begun to bud.

The impact of the occupation policy upon women's rights brought both objections and approval from the Japanese. Hara Yasusaburō, a businessman, voiced the conservative opinion when he said: "The

[1]Kawai, Japan's American Interlude, p. 244.

over-emphasis upon individualism by ignoring the family system of Japan, resulted in unforeseen strengthening of selfishness and wilfulness, increasing antagonism and conflict between parents and children, husband and wife, and old and young."[2] The feeling that individuality produced negative traits was in evidence among a large portion of the Japanese populace. In an urban survey seventy-one of 105 men and women felt that a woman should essentially conform to the Confucian ideal of feminine subordination to men. It is significant that most of those few who wanted women to have traits similar to men were under thirty-five.[3] A manifestation of the view that legal changes of the occupation had gone too far and should not be backed up by public action came from a predictable quarter. During the early 1950's the Liberal Democratic Party proposed to modify the Civil Code to revert to traditional family tenets. While this idea never passed in the Diet, it struck a chord of positive response in many.[4]

Those who spoke for advancing the rights of women found much in the occupation and the Japanese response to it to please them. Dr. Yoshikawa, literature professor at Kyoto University, spoke for many intellectuals when he said that the improvement in the status of women was a benefit the Japanese had gained through the occupation that they could not have found without it.[5] Some average Japanese also

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[2]Hara Yasasuburō, "Japan Looks Back on the Occupation," Far Eastern Survey, XXII (February 25, 1953), p. 27.

[3]Dore, City Life in Japan, pp. 184-86.

[4]Sakanishi, "Women's Position and the Family System," p. 134.

[5]Yoshikawa Kojiro, "Japan Looks Back on the Occupation," Far Eastern Survey, XXII (February 25, 1953), p. 28.

appreciated the changing conditions. The man in charge of a marriage bureau in Tokyo noted that women coming to get married after the war were older, "But they are younger in looks and spirit than their sisters of a few years back. They are more energetic and self-possessed."[6] What the conservative industrialist might call "selfishness and wilfulness," a more sympathetic observer could term "self-possession."

Confronted with the actual changes and the chorus of voices debating further change, Japanese public opinion concerning women's rights was sharply divided. For example, a survey of reactions to popular reading found that respect for women as a cultural trait of Americans appeared in both positive and negative lists of Japanese reactions.[7] In general, as long as it was confined to principle the majority agreed upon equality of status. Even though a woman might feel compelled to preserve an appearance of "passivity, submission and forgetfulness of self," the vast majority of both rural and urban women thought that social inferiority of women was not a law of nature.[8] The young were a bit more emphatic about this than their elders.[9] If the questions became more practical and the implications more personal during an interview, however, the women tended to withdraw and show indecision and astonishment. A survey taken in Kyoto and Sapporo shows the theoretical appeal of equal status. The interviewees were asked: "If you get married and have a family, who do you expect will

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[6]Enomoto, "The New Women of Japan," p. 948.

[7]Kato Hidetoshi, ed. and tr., Japanese Popular Culture (Rutland, Vermont, 1959), p. 58.

[8]Beardsley, Hall and Ward, Village Japan, p. 70.

[9]Stoetzel, Without the Chrysanthemum and the Sword, p. 175.

be more influential in the direction and control of the affairs of the family?" Sixty-six per cent of Kyoto men, 75 per cent of Kyoto women, and 82 per cent of Sapporo people answered, "Both equally." Other answers favored the husband only to a slight extent.[10]

More specific studies indicate the varied success of occupation policies. The impact of MacArthur's laws upon women had, to a varying extent, reached all areas. Some of the reactions were quite uniquely Japanese. In the Prefecture of Kagoshima the imprints of feudalism remained to such an extent that women were not allowed to use the main entrance of a house, use the same washing tub for clothing, or walk past the head of a boy's bed. After seeing American soldiers give a street-car seat to a mother and her crying baby, and noting guilty expressions on the faces of the Japanese men, the female chief of the branch of the Women's and Minors' Bureau decided to act. The result was an election of the most democratic husbands in the prefecture to support those men who dared give consideration to their wives. Surprisingly, the enterprise gained much support. Contrary to the reaction Westerners might feel, one winner said that now that he had been publicly recognized as a democratic husband, he could carry his wife's bundles without feeling embarrassed. The project had remarkable success in changing the general attitude of some men of Kagoshima Prefecture.[11]

The election was unique, but it advertised the continuing traditional attitude of rural Japan. In 1949, the Nippon Times studied farm areas and, within a wide range of individual cases, found the

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[10]Ibid., p. 177.

[11]Hara, "Women's Status in Modern Society," pp. 502-04.

general outlook to be quite conservative. The surveyor, Tatewaki Sadayo, found few changes that improved women's lot substantially. She felt that the "franchise and the revised Civil Code...stood in danger of being nothing more than changes in customs." War widows were particularly under harsh family demands. One widow who refused to marry a brother-in-law seventeen years her junior was deemed an "ungrateful and self-willed woman." Another, whose mother-in-law wanted her to give up a successful milling business for a younger son, chose death for herself and her children rather than a life of discord. Against such demonstrations of old practices the advances, such as getting one day a month off to do as women liked, did not seem remarkable.[12]

The same general social situation held true in other rural areas in the early 1950's. In Kurusu, located in southwestern Japan near the Inland Sea, women still ate after men.[13] Farmers generally found ways to disregard new property laws aiding women and those preventing primogeniture because they felt economic circumstances forced them to do so.[14] One legal innovation which was almost universally evident was female participation in suffrage. And about this few men objected even while maintaining a general air that feminine influence was negligible.[15] In the rural areas women used the right to vote to avoid ridicule; and men, rather than being angered, were amused by the idea.[16]

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[12]Nippon Times, May 5-6, 1949, p. 4.

[13]Cornell and Smith, Two Japanese Villages, p. 26.

[14]Beardsley, Hall, and Ward, Village Japan, pp. 236-37.

[15]Edward Norbeck, Takashima, A Japanese Fishing Community (Salt Lake City, 1954), p. 210.

[16]Stoetzel, Without the Chrysanthemum and the Sword, pp. 51-52.

They probably felt similar to the city ward leader who said:

> Of course, nowadays we have feminine equality and I'm beginning by now to get used to the idea that my wife has the right to go out and vote. But the old ideas are still there and I should think a lot of women wouldn't have any opinions of their own.[17]

Like others, he was willing to admit that women had a skeleton of rights; but he laughed at the thought they they might possess the muscle to be effective. Even so, women had begun to realize the close relationship between politics and daily life. This was an advance.[18]

Like it or not, the Japanese were aware that the status of women had changed somewhat in the period after the war. A survey conducted by the Ministry of Labor in 1949 indicated the general tenor of life. Concerning the position of women, 70 per cent felt that since the war "the position of women had improved a little," 14 per cent felt "the position of women has improved considerably," and 12 per cent said "I do not think the position of women has improved." The last replies seemed to be of a more personal character than the others. The Labor Ministry found that women blamed the lack of improvement in their status primarily on persisting feudalism and feudalistic customs. From this stemmed other major causes such as lack of understanding shown to women by men and women's passiveness about and unawareness of their situation. situation.[19]

Reflecting society's changing attitudes toward women's rights was the nation's news and entertainment media. Early in the occupation Japanese press and radio treatment of news and opinion about the women's

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[17]Dore, City Life in Japan, p. 171.

[18]Sakanishi, "Women's Position and the Family System," p. 136.

[19]Koyama, Changing Social Position, p. 146.

movement increased.[20] Women's journals, forced to discontinue during the war, made a reappearance. Reflecting the liberation of women's activity, the number of journals expanded from four to approximimtely thirty-five within a year.[21]

Fiction in movies, radio and comic strips mirrored the predominantly traditionalist aspect of society in Japan, but it also pictured something else that was essential to understanding the character of postwar Japan. It showed within the traditional atmosphere a yearning and sympathy for the liberation of women within certain boundaries, and it also showed the fascination of most women with the modern type. Thus, Japanese women were charmed by the story of a weak and traditional woman who endured hardships to at last find a way out of her problem by her own decision.[22]

It becomes apparent when one studies the impact of the American occupation of Japan and its relation to internal Japanese trends that the two were complementary in promoting modernization of society. The force of general economic development and the necessity of women working during World War II alone would have advanced the status of women considerably in society. It was a fitting coincidence that MacArthur's desire to improve the status of women, primarily to counteract any militarist tendencies in Japan, was concomitant with this development. Most observers agree that women's enormous legal gains after the war, which protected their actual gains, would not have

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[20] Summation, February, 1946, p. 273.

[21] Nippon Times, March 4, 1946, p. 2.

[22] Kato, Japanese Popular Culture, p. 161.

occurred without American influence. Even so, while admitting the tremendous advances women made, one must not overlook the great influence of tradition in Japan. The secondary status of women continued to be a fact because it was "uniquely Japanese" and because it was part of a system that outlined moral guidance for society. Thus, it is almost axiomatic that the old system of Ie and all it incorporated might never lose all of its influence and certainly could not be changed precipitously. The accomplishment of the occupation policy seemed to be that it provided a structure whereby indigenous advances had the necessary room to develop.

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