“Transnational Takarazuka: Japanese Female Performers and America from the 1930s to the 1950s”

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Abstract

In 2016, an all-female Japanese theater called the Takarazuka Revue performed in New York City. American fans gathered in front of the theater after every performance, and took pictures with their favorite Takarazuka performers. Although the popularity of Takarazuka in Japan has been well known, few have examined its interactions with foreign countries. As early as 1938, however, Takarazuka had begun touring abroad and fascinating audiences outside Japan.

This project is one of the first attempts to explore the transnational history of Takarazuka by following the complex processes by which Americans and Japanese used Takarazuka to explore the contours of Japanese identity and femininity in the period from the late 1930s to the 1950s. Although Takarazuka toured in many countries during this period, I particularly focus on its frequent interactions with the US, because Takarazuka had a number of contact points with the US throughout the period. Especially, through this dissertation, I will focus on the voices of Takarazuka females whose historical voices have rarely been featured in previous research. By paying attention to these female performers, this dissertation explains the transnational flows and interactions of Takarazuka female performers with Americans. By using transnationalism as a main analytical theme, this dissertation illustrates how Takarazuka performers were active agents in control of adjusting their image as Japanese women regarding hegemonic structures underlying the expectations of both Japanese and Americans surrounding these female performers. Furthermore, I argue that these females used the opportunities for performance on a transnational stage to recreate their own identities, especially through the difficulties of negotiating boundaries during a time when the role of Japanese women was continuously transforming. By dividing this dissertation into three chapters, I follow Takarazuka females' transnational movements in mainland America, Japan and Hawaii, and their encounters with America and Americans from 1939 to 1957.

In chapter 1, "The American Tour in 1939," I feature the tour of Takarazuka's very first American tour and their participation in the World Expos held in San Francisco and New York. In 1939, the Japanese Foreign Ministry sent Takarazuka females to two international Expos as cultural ambassadors, hoping they would help reduce political conflict between the two nations by showing how these female performers represented a "safe" and "civilized Japan." Through the Expos, American audiences had expected Takarazuka females to become icons of oriental Japanese females. Given the significance of representing Japanese women at the international Expos, I investigate how Takarazuka female performers adopted and shaped their own understandings of what it meant to be Japanese women in response to hegemonic structures underlying the expectation of both the Japanese government and the American audiences. Through their very first American tour, they stayed in America and interacted with Americans and performed their repertoire in front of Americans for the first time, despite escalating war tensions between Japan and US. These experiences and communications with Americans allowed these female performers to develop transnational and cosmopolitan identities that could likewise serve the imperial and nationalistic interests of Japan.

In chapter 2, "Takarazuka under Occupation," I feature the Occupation era history of Takarazuka performers in Japan. While Takarazuka had been supervised and controlled by

male American forces, GHQ took an interest in using Takarazuka as part of its efforts to build a New Japan and promote the status of Japanese women. At the same time, GHQ gave various freedoms to Takarazuka performers, such as returning to performing male-roles and Euro-American inspired repertoires, which the Japanese government had banned during the war. Not only male GIs, but female Americans watching Takarazuka became Takarazuka fans, and admired the performers who signaled broader possibilities and opportunities for gender identity than what many American women found at home. Takarazuka's Japanese male executives also supported Takarazuka females to return to their prewar repertoire. Yet, despite the expectations of various people around Takarazuka, female performers themselves actively used their position as performers to take on a wider range of femininities. They were never passive observers, and they worked hard to perform their original repertoire in which male roles and female roles performed characters inspired by Euro-American history and stage. By introducing various voices of these female performers, this chapter examines a multilayered analysis of Japanese female experience during the Occupation era.

In chapter 3, "The Hawaiian Tour in the 1950s," I focus on Takarazuka's postwar Hawaiian tour in the 1950s. For Japanese people, including for the *Takarasienne*, postwar Hawaii was a very unique place that possessed multiple images as nostalgic, paradise and progressive America. Therefore, the *Takarasienne* regarded Hawaii as a special place to explore new identities as Japanese women living in the postwar era. People surrounding the *Takarasienne*, such as Japanese Americans who invited Takarazuka to Hawaii, and Takarazuka male executives who managed the performances, supported the performers because of their own aims and expectations. For example, the Japanese American community in Hawaii aimed to use *Takarasienne* as new icons of Japan by showing the wider range of femininities. On the other hand, Japanese male executives working in the Takarazuka company aimed to increase Takarazuka's worldwide fame. While each group tried to control the image of female performers for their own purposes, the *Takarasienne* actively participated in their own self-representation to people both at home and abroad. Simultaneously, considering their ability to travel to Hawaii, I illustrate what a Hawaiian tour meant to these female performers within the historical and political background of the postwar Pacific.

By following the transnational circulation of these female performers, this dissertation explains that these females took full advantage of the opportunity to experience and encounter America and Americans as a way for themselves to explore their own identities. Through their interactions with America, they reshaped and redefined their own identities as Japanese women living from the interwar to the postwar periods. By following Japanese women across borders, this dissertation aims to widen the historiography of Japanese women by adding a new perspective of transnational mobility.

Acknowledgements

When I started my PhD career, I did not know what I wanted to study and almost quit the PhD program. For a change of scenery, I visited Takarazuka city in Hyogo prefecture and watched Takarazuka Revue's performance. Although it was not my first time to watch Takarazuka, until then I had not realized that there were some non-Japanese fans who were talking enthusiastically about Takarazuka and the *Takarasienne* female performers. I thought it was really interesting and started seeing the connections between Takarazuka and foreign countries. As I learned its history more, I found that Takarazuka could become a fascinating study in my seminar where most of the students are studying transnational history.

Many previous studies on Takarazuka tend to focus on its most remarkable aspect: its all female performers. As a result, the great majority of previous works are located in the field of gender and sexuality studies within Japan, and most of them have ignored Takarazuka's transnational connections. Because Takarazuka constructed itself as a new form of popular culture through various interactions with foreign countries and people, I thought its transnational history would widen the possibilities of Takarazuka studies. I also thought that it could contribute to expanding the perspectives of Japanese women's transnational history, since Japanese women remain an understudied subject among transnational historians. While this dissertation is just a preliminary investigation of this complex issue, I hope it will contribute to scholarship of the historiography of transnational Japanese women's studies.

My personal debts are too many to name. I would like to express my earnest thanks to many people who helped me directly and indirectly throughout my journey to complete this project. But I would like to name some of the most significant people here.

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Introduction

In 1987 at age 71, a famous male role (called *otokoyaku*) actor in the Takarazuka Theater published an autobiography. Kasugano Yachiyo recalled her years in the all-female theater Takarazuka Revue (called Takarazuka), beginning with her entrance in 1928 until she retired in 2012. Kasugano wrote about several encounters she had with Americans during her long career, including during the interwar period, the occupation, and the postwar era. In the 1930s she traveled to the United States to perform in New York, and she recalled that, "our repertoire in New York was unsuccessful… but we were so fascinated with being able to visit and see around New York… Although the doctor was worried about my health condition, and I brought a lot of medicine with me on the tour, I did not suffer from the stomachache I always had in Japan."[1] Her excitement about the American tour overcame her longstanding health issue. During the US Occupation of Japan, she again encountered the US, this time American GIs. "When the GIs started occupying the Kansai area, many people said women and children should hide in the deep mountains because the GIs would assault them. Some *Takarasienne* also escaped from Kansai. Yet, my mother kept saying, 'they would not do such a stupid thing.' My mother had a strong faith in the American GIs."[2] Taking her mother's advice, Kasugano frequently interacted with GIs as a Takarazuka performer. And she considered the post-Occupation era an important turning point. "If we think of marriage as a kind of encounter with somebody, I did not experience

[1] Kasugano Yachiyo, *Shiroki Bara no Shō* (Takarazuka Kagekidan Shuppan, 1987), 115.
[2] Ibid., 151.

such kind of romantic encounter in Takarazuka. But through my career, especially after the war, my world was clearly expanding by meeting various people."[3] Since she participated in postwar tours to America, Kasugano appreciated the chances to encounter various people through her lifelong career as a stage performer.

Considering Kasugano's story, it is obvious that Kasugano appreciated her various experiences and encounters with America and Americans through her career as a *Takarasienne*. In spite of the struggles of the war years, during which Takarazuka's theaters were closed, and the struggles of the Occupation era, Kasugano used her opportunities to meet Americans over several decades. We can see her excitement and effort to meet the transformations of her society and her ability to continually reconstruct her identity as a Japanese woman. This dissertation takes journeying Japanese women as critical modern subjects and investigates how they fashioned themselves through transnational interactions with America. By focusing on *Takarasienne*, I argue that through international contacts and experiences, the *Takarasienne* opened for other women and for themselves the opportunity to define their female identity on their own terms, piecing together aspects of what they picked up in transnational encounters. In this way, my dissertation contributes not just to studies of Takarazuka, but to transnational identity and to the lives of Japanese women.

Previous works on Transnational History

This dissertation takes a transnational approach to Takarazuka, because it allows us to reveal the untold historiography of Japanese women from the 1930s to the 1950s who

[3] Kasugano, *Shiroki Bara no Shō*, 152.

had special opportunities to travel abroad and to interact with foreigners. An international framework adds necessary perspective as a vital impact on the process of constructing these females' modernity.

In his article, "Reflections on the Transnational Turn in United States History: Theory and Practice," Ian Tyrrell explains that "transnational history" expands the discussions of the nation state and its historiography. For example, he argues that an exclusive focus on nation-state borders and inter-state relations only illuminates the dichotomous power hierarchies between powerful nations and the rest. He points out, for instance, the purpose of the transnational label is "to focus on the relationship between nation and factors both beyond and below the level of the nation that shaped the nation and, equally important, that the nation's institutions shaped."[4] Moreover, he addresses the importance of focusing on the movements of personnel who challenged, reinforced, and negotiated the constructions and unmakings of nation-state boundaries. While he mentions the significance of paying attention to asymmetrical power hierarchies structured by the nation-state, Tyrrell also suggests tracing the life stories of individuals who crossed "borders" to see more "complex patterns of collaborations and resistance" and also the "uncharted spaces between empire and colony, nation and nation, and Western and non-Western."[5]

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[4] Ian Tyrrell, "Reflections on the Transnational Turn in United States History: Theory and Practice," *Journal of Global History 4*, (2009): 460.
[5] Ibid., 471.

A transnational perspective also gives voice to often ignored actors, and shows us a broader range of interactions among peoples.[6] In her book, *Writing History in the Global Era*, Lynn Hunt mentions that focusing on individuals crossing national boundaries give us a "bottom-up" perspective that brings into focus "long-neglected transnational space" and those who inhabit that space.[7] Like Tyrrell, Hunt also addresses how the concept of "transnationalism" will widen current historiography that previous scholars have often ignored. In particular, she points out that featuring long neglected agency such as Japanese women leads us to see the "space" where Japanese women interacted and negotiated with people outside Japan. This perspective is essential in this dissertation, which argues that the identity of mobile women like the *Takarasienne* created a sense of themselves not only within their nation state but also through their encounters with "the foreign." While some scholars illustrate the transnational historical Japanese movement, such as immigration, migration and transnational movements such as missionaries, most of them have followed the footsteps of men, and barely focused on the ways women inhabited transnational flows and cross-cultural engagement. [8] As a result, even under the paradigm of transnationalism,

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[6] See, Frank N.Pieke, Pal Nyiri, Mette Thuno, and Antonella Cebbagno, *Transnational Chinese: Fujianese Migrants in Europe* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004); Sucheng Chan, ed., *The Flow of People, Resources, and Ideas between China and America During the Exclusion Era* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006); Gregor Benton and E.T. Gomez, *Chinese in Britain, 1800-2000: Economy, Transnationalism, Identity* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Adam McKeown, *Chinese Migrant Networks and Cultural Change: Peru, Chicago, Hawaii, 1900-1936* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).
[7] Lynn Hunt, *Writing History in the Global Era* (New York, London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2014), 64.
[8] See, Hidetaka Hirota, Nando Sigona, Nobuko Nagai, "Migration to and from Japan and Great Britain to 1945," *IRiS Working Paper Series* 22, (November 2019), (accessed 2/28/20); Shichinohe-Suga Miya, "Japanese Interracial Families in the United States, 1870-1900: What the Census Manuscript Population Schedules Reveal population Schedules," *The Japanese Journal of American Studies* 26 (June 2015), 75-97; Ikehata Chikako, "'But Our Citizenship Is in Heaven': Making Christianity 'Japanese' and Transnational, 1895-1945," (Ph.D. diss., Doshisha University, 2019).

women's experiences are often overlooked, and they cannot represent their own transnational experiences.

Transnational historians, women, and especially Japanese women, remain an understudied subject, which makes these previous works even more valuable as an insight to women who have otherwise been overlooked in favor of men who seemed to "control" them. In short, by following the mobility of Japanese females, this study challenges the tendency to put Japanese men at the center of studies featuring Japanese transnational mobility.

Transnational Takarazuka Revue

The Takarazuka Revue is an all-female theatrical company in Kobe, Japan, established in 1913 by Kobayashi Ichizō, a founder of the Hankyu Railway Company, who had an enthusiastic interest in creating modern forms of culture.[9] Inspired by the all-boy *Mitsukoshi-Shōnen-Ongakutai* (Mitsukoshi Boys' Band) at Mitsukoshi department store in Osaka, Kobayashi recruited girls from middle-class families and composed an all unmarried-girls' band as entertainment for visitors to *Takarazuka Onsen* (hot spring). Although this was only one of many projects he pursued, it quickly became an icon of middle-class Japanese popular culture, and one of the nation's most famous theatrical companies. Particularly exciting, some Takarazuka female performers played the roles of men (called *otokoyaku*), while others play *musumeyaku* performing the role of women. Together they are known as "*Takarasienne*," after Parisiennes, in recognition of the early

[9] Makiko Yamanashi, *A History of the Takarazuka Revue since 1914: Modernity, Girls' Culture, Japan Pop* (Boston: Global Oriental, 2012), xxii.

influence of the French revue. Their productions included Japanese-themed productions, European-style revues, and Broadway-style performances, and on the stage, *otokoyaku* and *musumeyaku* generally play love romantic stories.

Since the Japanese Takarazuka was a particular version of revue not frequently seen abroad, both Japanese and non-Japanese scholars have tended to pay attention to what seems its most remarkable aspect: it's an all-female Japanese revue company. As a result, though some scholars from sub-culture and fan studies have investigated Takarazuka, the great majority of previous work treats Takarazuka only within Japan and defines it in the field of Japan Studies.[10] This is a problem because Takarazuka had reconstructed itself through the continuous interactions with foreign countries especially Euro-American countries, and locating Takarazuka in the global contexts will lead us to see wider range of significances of the revue. Transnational Takarazuka helps us look beyond Japan's borders, to see how this iconic form of popular culture often studied as a Japanese phenomenon is in fact rooted in transnational connections.

As early as the 1920s, Takarazuka dispatched several male stage directors to Europe and the United States to watch and learn about repertoire and stage techniques. Kishida Tatsuya, a Takarazuka stage director, went to Paris to study the famous Parisian revues. When Kishida visited, revue styled repertoires which contained music, acrobatic

[10] For sub-culture and fan studies, see Nakamura Karen and Matsuo Hisako, "Female Masculinity and Fantasy Spaces: Transcending Genders in the Takarazuka Theater and Japanese Popular Culture," in James Roberson and Nobue Suzuki, eds., *Men and Masculinities in Modern Japan: Dislocating the Salaryman Doxa* (Routledge Curzon, 2003), 59-76; Miyamoto Naomi, *Takarazuka fan no shakaigaku sutā ha gekijō no soto de tsukurareru* (Seikyu sha, 2011); Kotani Mari, "*Sumireno Gendā,* " in *Bungei Besattsu Tokushū Takarazuka* (Kawadeshinbōshinsha,1998), 88-93; Okukawa Yuika, "Takarazuka fan no jittai: Kareina Butai no Shirarezaru Uragawa," in *Takarazuka to iu souchi*, ed. Seikyusha, (Seikyusha, 2009); Leonie R. Stickland, *Gender Gymnastics: Performing and Consuming Japan's Takarazuka Revue* (Melbourne:Trans Pacific Press, 2008).

performances, dances and sketches were very famous in Paris. For example, Mistinguett, a chanson singer and Josephine Baker, a jazz singer were performing at the theaters, such as Moulin Rouge and Folies Bergère.[11]

Inspired by these French revue styled performances, after returning to Japan Kishida composed the Takarazuka's very first revue, "Mon Paris," in 1927. The story of the revue was a travelogue of a Japanese tourist from Kobe to Paris by way of Shanghai, Egypt and Marseille. In fact, this was the same route Kishida had followed. In every scene, female performers, who wore costumes imitating those in Paris, sang the songs popular in Paris and danced line dance for the very first time on the Japanese stage. After "Mon Paris," Shirai Chūzo composed "Parisette" in 1930 whose story is about the love romance of a Parisienne. In "Parisette," Shirai used pastel colors such as light blue and light pink to show a romantic image of Paris to the Japanese audience. He also used the same melody of popular songs imported from Paris, translated the lyrics into Japanese and sometimes added new lyrics that differed from the original. For example, he changed the French song "Qui Je suis de Paris" into "Hanazono Takarazuka." By connecting the image of Paris and Takarazuka through the staging, Shirai represented Takarazuka as a "romantic utopia" that Japanese audiences had never seen before.[12]

After the success of these two performances, Takarazuka continuously imported Euro-American music, such as operetta, jazz, tango, dance styles, and stage costumes and introduced Japanese audiences to "Euro-American" stage elements.[13] Moreover,

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[11] "Kindai Nihon to Furansu," (https://www.ndl.go.jp/france/jp/column/s2_4.html), (accessed 2020/09/09).
[12] Ibid.
[13] Watanabe Hiroshi, *Takarazuka Kagekino Henyō to Nihonkindai* (Shinshokan, 1999), 91.

Takarazuka planned to send the *Takarasienne* to Paris for their very first tour abroad in 1926. Although the plan fell through, in the next year Takarazuka arranged to tour the US. This was cancelled as well, but it clearly shows the way that even in its earliest period, Takarazuka thought of itself as part of an emerging global modernist popular culture.[14] Unable to travel abroad, Kishida still remained interested in making transnational connections, and in 1928 he invited an American Broadway producer to watch Takarazuka and offer professional advice.[15] It would not be until 1938 that *Takarasienne* traveled abroad, but as early as the 1920s Takarazuka was enthusiastically trying to adopt a repertoire, staging and costumes inspired by contacts with Europeans and Americans.

These transnational connections form a vital focus for this dissertation. Although the majority of scholars investigate Takarazuka within the framework of Japan, some have pointed out Takarazuka as an example of cross-cultural communication, and examine its transnational connections. Reappraising Takarazuka's social role and mentioning its representation of modernity, in his books, *Takarazuka kagekino henyō to Nihonkindai* and *Nihonbunka Modan Rapusodī*, Watanabe Hiroshi features Takarazuka's performances in the pre-war era and explains the transformation of the repertoire to meet audience expectations. For example, Watanabe writes that while Takarazuka offered a "Western" element to Japanese audiences, for Euro-American audiences they intended to represent themselves as oriental and exotic.[16] Following Watanabe, in "*Takarazuka kageki to Ibunka kōryū*," Hirota Masaki also examines Takarazuka's modernity and cross-cultural communication by

[14] Kobayashi Ichizo, "Takarazuka Shojo kagekidan tobei no hanashi," *Kageki* no.87, June 1927, 2.
[15] Kishida Tatsuya, "'Mon Pari' Saijōen nit suite," *Kageki* no.91, October 1927, 25.
[16] Watanabe Hiroshi, *Nihon Bunka Modan Rapusodi* (Shunjū Shuppan, 2002).

investigating Takarazuka's postwar tours to the US, Europe and other parts of Asia. By featuring Takarazuka and its relationship with foreign countries, Hirota illustrates while Takarazuka has changed its representations depending on the audiences outside Japan, it has continually added various features being inspired by the interactions with foreigners to their repertoires, and reconstructed their own stages within the context of Japanese society.[17]

Both Watanabe and Hirota's perspectives allow us to widen the possibilities of Takarazuka studies that have otherwise stayed mostly within Japanese studies more broadly. However, although they introduce the Takarazuka Revue's attitudes towards global outreach, as well as the voices of audiences outside Japan, they describe each tour only in several sentences. None really focus on the interactions between Takarazuka performers and the places they toured and performed. Furthermore, both overlook the *Takarasienne* themselves, and instead highlight Takarazuka male executives, such as Kobayashi Ichizō and some male stage directors. This is a problem because not paying attention to *Takarasienne* who performed and interacted with foreign audiences limits the possible perspectives, and sidelines the actual female performers.

One book does in fact examine Takarazuka's tours abroad from the 1930s to the 1960s. In her book, *Teikoku to Sengo no Bunkaseisaku*, Baku Sonmi traces these tours as an example of Japanese cultural diplomacy.[18] Baku positions Takarazuka's oversea tours as cultural representatives and argues how the Japanese government used Takarazuka's

[17] Hirota Masaki, "Takarazuka Kageki to Ibunka Kōryū," in Hirota Masaki and Yokota Fuyuhiko, eds., *Ibunka Kōryūshi no saikentou* (Heibonsha, 2011), 372-73.
[18] Baku Sonmi, *Teikoku to Sengo no Bunka Seisaku* (Iwanami Shoten, 2017).

theatrical presentations as a means of re-branding Japan's position in the world from the pre-war to the post-war era when Japan's international position underwent rapid change. Compared to Watanabe and Hirota, Baku's work leads us to see Takarazuka outside Japan and permits us to see not only the cross-cultural but also the diplomatic cultural flow of Takarazuka. However, similar to Watanabe and Hirota, her work also mostly focuses on the voices of Japanese men, such as government officials, politicians and Takarazuka executives, and never features *Takarasienne*. In short, in works of historiography about Takarazuka outside Japan, most scholars often center their studies on men. Historical accounts of female performers do exist, but even these works are generally written under the assumption that men have shaped transnational Takarazuka history, and they do not highlight the voices or the movement of the *Takarasienne*.

However, considering Kasugano's anecdotes mentioned in the beginning, we clearly see the limits of the views of previous studies. As shown above, Kasugano was never simply a subjugated and "backwards" woman at the mercy of male manipulation. Rather, she actively employed the opportunities she had to imagine for her own sense of identity during a time when the role of women in Japanese society changed dramatically. This dissertation examines the transnational flows and interactions of *Takarasienne* with Americans from the inter-war to the post-war period. By using transnationalism as the main concept of analysis, I illustrate how *Takarasienne* were active agents in control of adapting their images of Japanese women in response to hegemonic structures underlying the expectations of both Japanese and Americans surrounding these female performers. While their choices were circumscribed, I argue that they used the given opportunities to reshape and redefine their own identities, particularly through the modern dilemma of negotiating

national boundaries during the time when Japanese society was shifting. To collect female performers' voices, I rely on Japanese language magazines like *Kageki*, *Takarazuka Gurafu* and *Kyakuhonshū*, all published by the Takarazuka Company, as well as the diaries written by *Takarasienne* and by Takarazuka executives. These rich resources allow us direct access to the voices of the Takarazuka women. I also introduce multiple Japanese and American newspapers, magazines, and official government reports about its cultural diplomacy and about the postwar Occupation

This project is one of the first attempts to explore the transnational history of Takarazuka female performers and their interactions with mainland America and Hawaii from the 1930s to the 1950s. Although *Takarasienne* toured and made connections in many countries, especially Europe, I particularly focus on its frequent interactions with the US, because Takarazuka had a continuous contact points with the US throughout the period. Through this research, I offer a more nuanced and multilayered analysis of Japanese females' experiences by focusing on the perspective of the *Takarasienne*, given their ability to inhabit a wider range of roles across the gender spectrum. Attending to the voices of these performers affords a more complex picture of Japanese women's role in shaping the transnational landscape of cultural encounters between Japan and the US. By introducing the voices of *Takarasienne*, I investigate the question how these women reshaped their own national, ethnic and gender identities, and cultivated their modernity by selecting, adopting and negotiating with people around them, both Japanese and Americans.

Although the concept of "modernity" is hard to define, in my paper, I use it to illustrate these performers' ways of negotiating and cultivating their identities as new women who were continuously inspired by something "American" while still tied to a

sense of their own national identity. In her book, *Longfellow's Tattoos: Tourism, Collecting, and Japan*, Christine M.E. Guth notes that, encounters with other cultures play an important role in understanding and appreciating who we are.[19] She writes, for instance, "encounters with other cultures were understood to play an important role in producing enhanced understanding and appreciation of what it meant to be an American."[20] Following Guth's idea, in my research, I argue that national identities have been defined in relation to transnational encounters. Far from passive observers, then this research explores how these female performers approached their encounter with America as a turning point in rethinking their own identities as Japanese females in the period between the 1930s to the 1950s.

Timeframe and Place

By dividing this research into three parts – the war years, the Occupation, and the postwar period – I follow *Takarasienne*'s transnational movements in mainland America, Japan and Hawaii, and their interactions with various Americans, such as White Americans, African Americans, Japanese Americans, and Native Hawaiians from 1939 to 1957. Although the timeframe I feature in this research witnessed striking transformations, especially after the war, by investigating the timeframe from the 1930s through the 1950s, this research examines not only the conversion but also the continuity of the desires and admiration towards America, which also impacted how *Takarasienne* thought about their own national identity. By following how *Takarasienne* seized the opportunities created

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[19] Christine M.E. Guth, *Longfellow's Tattoos: Tourism, Collecting, and Japan* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2004), 9.
[20] Ibid.

through their stage careers, I investigate how they expanded their chances and horizons through transnational encounters.

During the war, while Japan started its militaristic expansion within Asia, the Japanese government wanted to improve its image abroad and also to justify its position as a leader of Asia. I will trace *Takarasienne*'s travel and performances in mainland America during a time when anti-Japanese sentiment was spreading and fears of war were reaching new heights, to show how *Takarasienne* understood the meaning of a tour in America under such tension. The Occupation period, on the other hand, was a crisis of a different kind, as Japan tried transforming itself into "new" and democratic country. Women's rights were a frequent and contentious topic in the constructing of a New Japan. I will set Japan as a place where *Takarasienne* and Americans interacted with each other, to show the untold communications and relationships between Japanese women and American GIs. As it emerged from the Occupation era, Japan started a campaign to reconsider its image as a bridge between East and West. Japanese and American cultural exchanges became stronger than ever. Keeping this background in mind, I will show the complex and competing images of Japan that emerged during the Takarazuka tour in Hawaii and its reception among the large Japanese American population.

Following the transpacific circulation and interactions with various Americans, I will clarify the process of how *Takarasienne* considered and manipulated their own Japanese-ness in response to the expectations of American audiences including Japanese Americans. By performing not just the roles they played on the stage, but as "Japanese women" and by interacting with various Americans, they also considered their own identities as modern women while continuously reconstructing national identities. Although

male executives and organizers created and supported the chance to go abroad and to communicate with Americans, the *Takarasienne* nevertheless seized on the moment for their own purposes. Considering the sociocultural context of Hawaii right after the war, their movement and engagement around the Pacific offers a new historical narrative of Japanese women who seized on the chance to cross borders of many kinds.

Chapters

In chapter 1 "The America Tour in 1939," I focus on the tour of Takarazuka and their participation in the World Expos held at The Golden Gate International Exposition and New York World's Fair in 1939. While the anti-Japanese movement was spreading around the US, the Japanese Foreign Ministry assigned *Takarasienne* to become cultural ambassadors, and these women got an opportunity to explore America and perform in front of American audiences. Considering the significance of representing Japanese women at the international expo in the 1930s, I approach the *Takarasienne* as active agents in control of adapting their image as Japanese women in response to hegemonic structures underlying the expectation of both the Japanese government and the American audiences. *Takarasienne* adopted and shaped their own understandings of what it meant to be Japanese women and thus performed Japanese womanhood differently depending on the situation. While they claimed a national dignity and pride as members of the Japanese empire, however, their rich experience of America along with direct communication with Americans allowed them to develop transnational, cosmopolitan identities. In fact, so complex was their understanding and representation of Japanese national identity that, as I show in this chapter, the Japanese government suddenly enforced censorship on

Takarasienne after they returned from the American tour, and treated them as betrayers of the country. However, even under this criticism, *Takarasienne*'s aspirations towards America did not change. These stories help us to see the *Takarasienne*'s continuous admiration for America despite fears of an approaching war with the US. This chapter, then, aims to introduce a new figure of wartime Japanese womanhood. By featuring these females' experiences in the US, I investigate how *Takarasienne* actively controlled their positions as performers and took on a wider range of femininities and modernity through their interactions with Americans.

In chapter 2 "Takarazuka under Occupation in Japan," I feature the Occupation-era history of Takarazuka and *Takarasienne*. Having been unable to perform during the war, the US Occupation eventually marked a turning point for *Takarasienne* in allowing them to return to the stage. In this new era, however, their performances were subject to censorship by Occupation authorities, as well as the pressures of a new racial and cultural hierarchy introduced by the American presence. This chapter aims to offer a nuanced and multilayered analysis of Japanese female experience during the Occupation era by focusing on the views of *Takarasienne*. Given their ability to inhabit a wide range of roles across the gender spectrum, attending to the voices of these performers affords a more complex picture of Japanese females' role in shaping the transnational landscape of Occupation culture. Moreover, given their experience in performing Euro-American style repertoires dating back to the 1920s, I argue that *Takarasienne* took on far more active and collaborative roles in advancing their careers than has been acknowledged in existing scholarship. By introducing *Takarasienne*'s various communications with not only American male GIs and their female family members, I will also trace Japanese men who

performed on the same stage as *Takarasienne* and who enthusiastically supported the rebirth of the Takarazuka revue. Although they were required to follow the commands from both Americans and Japanese men, this chapter explores how these performers approached the Occupation era as a turning point in reconsidering their own identities as Japanese women living in a New Japan.

Chapter 3, "The Hawaiian Tour in the 1950s" examines the transpacific history of Takarazuka as a way to explore cultural encounters between Japan and Hawaii. Considering the historical and political background surrounding Japan and Hawaii, and investigating the cross-cultural communications between the Japanese and Japanese Americans during the postwar era, I introduce *Takarasienne*'s experiences in Hawaii, interactions with various peoples, and also their daily lives after going back to Japan. By performing as the cultural representatives of Japanese women and interacting with various ethnic peoples, such as Japanese Americans, White Americans and Native Hawaiians, I argue that these female performers used the Hawaiian tour to reshape and redefine their own identities as modern women. In particular, I show how they absorbed and consumed Hawaii as a place the Japanese treated differently from mainland America. For these performers, postwar Hawaii was an exotic paradise, one that hearkened back to Japan's imperial ambitions, and its aspirations towards America. In turn, I show how for the *Takarasienne*, transnational perspectives helped to clarify an emerging possibility of combining modernism and exoticism that could serve Japan's continued nationalistic ambitions. Therefore, I argue that featuring postwar Hawaii permits us to open up a different perspective of seeing the American tours, because Hawaii shows us a unique picture of the *Takarasienne*'s understandings that are completely different from mainland America in the late 1950s.

By narrating the transnational circulation of *Takarasienne*, each chapter demonstrates that while their choices were circumscribed, the *Takarasienne* appreciated, adopted and utilized the special opportunities to experience and encounter America, one they used to reconstruct their own identities as Japanese women. Focusing on *Takarasienne* who were performing both male and female roles helps us to understand the wider visions of Japanese womanhood who actively and continuously performed, consumed and imagined America.

Note: In this paper, Japanese names are written with the family name first followed by the first name. Translations into English are my own unless otherwise noted.

Chapter 1. The American Tour in 1939

Introduction

On April 5, 1939, forty performers of *Takarasienne* embarked from the port of Kobe on their very first tour of America. It was to be a three-month long tour traversing the US from coast to coast. To showcase Japan's civilized status among nations, the Japanese Foreign Ministry chose the *Takarasienne* as cultural ambassadors and assigned them to perform at the international exposition held in San Francisco and New York 1939.

A *Takarasienne* named Sabo Mihoko posted a message in the magazine *Kageki* stating, "I have seen America in films and theater productions. Now I can go there for myself. It seems just like a dream!"[21] Her reaction expressed a mix of high expectations, pleasure, and excitement about traveling to America. Meanwhile, another performer named Tamaba Teruko emphasized the importance of the identity she would be performing, writing, "I will do my best to maintain the dignity and pride of a Japanese woman."[22] Taken together, these voices reveal that while Takarazuka female performers enjoyed their American tour, they did not act merely as free-floating cosmopolitans. Rather, this chapter illustrates how they adopted and performed images of an "ideal" Japanese womanhood caught between the competing powers of imperial Japanese ideology and its American reception.

Moreover, they traveled during a time of dramatic transformations for women in Japanese society. In her book, *Becoming Modern Women: Love and Female Identity in*

[21] Sabo Mihoko, "*Tobei wo saisite minasama wo okuru,*" *Kageki* no.229, 1939, 114.
[22] Tamaba Teruko, ibid.

Prewar Japanese Literature and Culture, Suzuki Michiko explains that "for women, as for men, the discovery of a true self and the fulfillment of its potential was a significant way of constructing modernity."[23] Suzuki explains that one of the most important Japanese feminists, Hiratsuka Raicho, recognized that the ultimate goal of female progress was the "realization of selfhood."[24] This meant that Japanese women experienced modernity as a period in which they fashioned themselves as active agents. In a similar way, the edited volume, *The Modern Girl Around the World: Consumption, Modernity and Globalization,* offers a nuanced analysis of how global commodity and cultural flows shaped "modern femininity" across the globe.[25] The book's contributors observe that women used consumption to be "creative actors, meaningfully presenting and defining themselves through purchase and use."[26]

Borrowing this analytical framework, in this chapter I examine how *Takarasienne*'s travels in the US allow us to see how, through participation in an American consumer culture, they actively reconstructed their own identities as Japanese women. By unraveling their voices and experiences in America I examine how they consumed American fashion and theater culture in ways that helped them explore their own identities as New Women. Because they could play with gender through travel and stage performances, *Takarasienne* were one of the most well-known icons of modern women in the 1930s.

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[23] Tamaba,"*Tobei wo saisite minasama wo okuru*," 7.
[24] Michiko Suzuki, *Becoming Modern Women* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010), 4.
[25] The Modern Girl Around the World Research Group, *The Modern Girl Around the World* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2008), 5.
[26] Ibid., 20.

Most previous research on Japanese New Women or the Modern Girl tends to focus on Japanese women within Japan, and very few scholars have paid attention to Japanese women who crossed national borders. I argue, however, that this transnational context gives a new perspective to the New Women discussion within Japan. *Takarasienne* used the tour in America to shape and redefine their own identities as both Japanese and as women, particularly in the ways they navigated existing nation-state boundaries. In turn, I hope to show how their transnational perspectives helped to clarify an emerging possibility of a cosmopolitanism that could likewise serve the imperial and nationalistic interests of Japan. In short, I propose that the tours helped *Takarasienne* envision a transnational modern womanhood, though one that did not require them to abandon Japanese identity.

Although *Takarasienne* traveled through Honolulu, San Francisco, Sacramento, Los Angeles, New York, Portland, and Seattle, in this chapter I focus on their participation in two 1939 international expos: the Golden Gate International Exposition and the New York World's Fair. This focus allows us to analyze the significance of *Takarasienne* not only for the Japanese government but also for how they were received. During the Victorian era, Japan's Meiji government used international expositions to show its technological advancement and modernity. These demonstrations consistently had to address questions of gender and national identity. For example, at the Chicago Exposition in 1893, Japan displayed both modern masculinity and traditional femininity at the divided places, called the Phoenix Hall and the Lady's Boudoir.[27] At the Phoenix Hall, there was a display

[27] Krystal Messer, "Dainty Distractions: the Japan Pavilion at the Golden Gate International Exposition," (California: University of California, California Digital Library, 2014), https://escholarship.org/uc/item/3ms3t9s3 (accessed June 3, 2019).

showing a trajectory of historical progress and political legitimacy of the Meiji government. The Lady's Boudoir, however, showcased Japanese heritage and culture by presenting Japanese women.[28] At both the 1939 exposition in San Francisco and fair in New York, Japanese males were completely absent, leaving Japanese women the responsibility for portraying both "ancient" and "modern" Japan. This allows us, therefore, to explore why *Takarasienne* became a symbol of Japan in the late 1930s. Previous research on these two World's Fairs emphasize the passive, symbolic role Japanese women played. In this chapter, however, I feature the voices of the *Takarasienne* and how they actively represented Japan through this chapter.

Historical Background of Cultural Diplomacy and Takarazuka Tours in the 1930s

After the Manchurian incident in 1931 and Japan's withdrawal from the League of Nations in 1933, Japan was expanding its territory in Asia and representing itself as a leader of Asia with no less power than its Euro-American counterparts.[29] As anti-Japanese movements spread around the world, Japan established various government-run cultural institutions in order to promote the worth of Japanese culture and deflect its militaristic and imperialist image abroad. For example, in 1934, KBS (The Center for International Cultural Relations) became one of the biggest state-sponsored cultural institutions to promote

[28] Lisa K. Langlois, "Japan- Modern, Ancient, and Gendered at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair," in *Gendering the Fair: Histories of Women and Gender at World's Fairs* (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2010), 56-71.
[29] Baku, *Teikoku to Sengo no Bunka Seisaku*, 15-18.

Japanese culture in other powerful countries.[30] At that time, Europe and America measured the levels of its civilization by advertising how their own culture was flourishing. In so doing, the government's financial assistance increased "from 200,000 yen in 1934 to 340,000 yen in 1937; 500,000 yen in 1939; and 700,000 yen in 1940" under the economic restrictions.[31]

After the Sino-Japanese War and the Nanjing Massacre in 1937, the anti-Japanese movement escalated dramatically in the US. In order to maintain legitimate relationships with the country's allies and justify their dominance of the rest of Asia, Japanese civil and military officials planned a celebration of the first anniversary of the Anti-Comintern Pact among the allied countries of the Tripartite Pact (Italy, Germany and Japan). Under such political conditions, the Japanese government decided to send *Takarasienne* to the ceremony as cultural ambassadors.[32] Takarazuka willingly accepted the opportunity and selected thirty girls to undertake a European tour from November 1938 to January 1939. Although Takarazuka did not make a remarkable profit by touring Europe, various Japanese newspapers reported the success of Takarazuka's tour very positively and celebrated the performers as "*Tōa no Furisode Shisetsu*" (*Furisode* delegation of East Asia).[33]

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[30] Kokusaibunka Fukkokai, *KBS sanjūnen no Ayumi* (Kokusaibunka Fukkokai, 1964), 1-14.
According to Kokusaibunka Fukkokai, the contents of KBS's activities were, 1. Translation and publishing 2. Dispatching and communications among the lecturers 3. Organizing the Exhibition and Performance 4. Exchanging the documents 5. Inviting *Bunka jin* (cultural people) from abroad, 6. Assisting Oriental Studies abroad 7. Establishing the system of exchange program 8. Helping the communications among cultural institutions and people 9. Supporting the productions of films 10. Management and establishment of libraries and research institutions.

[31] Baku, *Teikoku to Sengo no Bunka Seisaku*, 20

[32] Ibid., 24.

[33] Ibid., 30.

Following the "success" of the European tour, the Foreign Ministry, the *Kokusai Kankōkyoku* (The International Tourism Bureau), and KBS decided to dispatch the *Takarasienne* to the US to let them participate in the New York World's Fair later that year.[34] Although a US tour seemed more challenging than Europe because of the increasingly anti-Japanese atmosphere, Japanese officials hoped that sending young, beautiful girls would improve the Japanese government's chances for success. According to a letter from Sakai Yoneo, a New York-based correspondent for the *Asahi Shinbun*,

> The anti-Japanese movement in the US is very serious. If America finds that something closely related to the Japanese government comes to the US, they would be wary of us... Yet, if we Japanese take young and beautiful Japanese women and make them perform a show that Americans have never seen, it would be great, and Americans would surely be pleased. It will be crucial in weakening the anti-Japanese movement in the US...[35]

Similar to the case of the European tour, the main purpose of sending the *Takarasienne* to the US was to improve the image of "imperial Japan." Japanese officials felt that using beautiful Japanese women such as the *Takarasienne* as cultural ambassadors would help to dispel the aggressive colonialist image of Japan that many abroad had begun to form.

Another reason for choosing Takarazuka was that the women were considered suitable icons of New Women. At that time, the representation of a civilized and modern female was one means of measuring the level of a nation's enlightenment, progress and strength. As such, the sight of the *Takarasienne* performing Westernized male roles could be taken as an appropriate representation of how far Japanese modernization had

[34] Baku, *Teikoku to Sengo no Bunka Seisaku*, 31.
[35] Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, "Bungaku, Bijutsu oyobi Engeki kankeizattken 32 Tōhō Kagekidan no Kinmon Hakurankai Kankei," file I-041, Gaikō Shiryō Kan.

proceeded.[36] Simultaneously, however, the state portrayed *Takarasienne* as immature by emphasizing their femininity and orientalism. As Michiko Suzuki points out, women in the 1930s were regarded as "flexible" symbols juxtaposing conflicting ideas.[37] For example, they could represent not only "modern" values and technologies, but also "pre-modern" innocence and nostalgia.[38] This combination was taken in turn to represent the flexibility and harmonious creativity of Japanese culture, and the *Takarasienne* were thus suitable to advertise Japan as a peaceful and progressive country.[39]

On April 5th 1939, forty *Takarasienne,* along with Takarazuka's male staff, embarked on their US tour from the port of Kobe. In his diary, *Takarazuka tobeiki,* Shibusawa Hideo, the general manager of the tour, stated projecting the bright future and bridge of US-Japan friendship that the *Takarasienne* would form by touring the US. Although Shibusawa was aware of the limited influence of Japanese culture in America, he joined Japanese officials in striving through the *Takarasienne* tour for a stronger bond between both countries. Shibusawa added that, "Beautiful Takarazuka *otome* girls' gentle smiles have more 'power' to move Americans than discussions between Statesmen"[40] Moreover, he also regarded *Takarasienne*'s femininity, gentility, and dignity as a suitable means of promoting good relations between Japan and the US.

> In 1856, Harris said that the relationship between America and Japan would deepen politically and economically. Harris would not know that once playing golf

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[36] Sydney L. Gulick, *Evolution of the Japanese: Social and Psychic* (New York, Chicago, Toronto: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1903). In his book, Gulick, an American missionary, highlights Japanese women and associates them with Japan's advanced society and bright future. Simultaneously, however, Japanese women were not always the symbols of "strong" Japan.
[37] Suzuki, *Becoming Modern Women,* 4.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Baku, *Teikoku to Sengo no Bunka Seisaku*, 25.
[40] Shibusawa Hideo, *Takarazuka Tobeiki* (Shunyōdōkan, 1939), 33.
During the tour, Shibusawa kept a diary every day and detailed the American tour of Takarazuka.

> and baseball becomes famous in the U.S., the Japanese would eagerly play these, too. Once Hollywood stars become famous in the U.S., Japanese would love them too. But, I am not like a Harris who had political authority. I know it would be challenging that forty girls will sail for his country, America.[41]

The *Takarasienne* on the American tour also expressed their enthusiasm in *Kageki.* As seen in the introduction, most of them expressed their excitement about the trip, and their admiration for America. For example, Asagumo Teruyo mentioned that, "I was chosen as a member of the American tour... When I told my mother about my trip to the US, she looked so happy... We were holding hands with each other. I was crying with joy and could not move for a while."[42] Asagumo's words suggest that she and even her mother were looking forward to the tour and positioned America in high regard. Even with increasingly severe restrictions against things "American" in Japan, her words clearly tell us that some Japanese women still continued to admire America. Yet while the majority of *Takarasienne* showed their appreciations for going to the US, they also insisted in other interviews upon their identities as Japanese women. For example, Hibiki Chisuzu declared that she would realize the "real beauty" of Japan after coming back from America.[43] Hibiki continued, "Like a cherry blossom woman born in 'a land of the rising sun,' I will perform for audiences living faraway from here. With the heart of a Japanese maiden (*yamato otome*), I will definitely do my best."[44] Hibiki was attentive to American audiences and showed her willingness to perform in front of Americans. Furthermore, by calling herself "*yamato otome*," she celebrated her own oriental Japanese beauty. On the other hand, another *Takarasienne*, Yume Tazuru noted, "Just as with male soldiers risking their lives at the front

[41] Shibusawa, *Takarazuka Tobeiki*, 13.
[42] Asagumo Teruyo, "Amerika he okuru nihon no hana,"*Kageki,* no. 229, 1939, 120.
[43] Hibiki Chisuzu, "Amerika he okuru nihon no hana,"*Kageki,* no. 229, 118.
[44] Ibid.

lines, we will take up the charge of our nation."[45] Yume's voice finds her positioning herself in the male role of a soldier, assuming a high degree of responsibility in shouldering the mission of imperial Japan. These various statements of the *Takarasienne* reveal their multiple identifications as representatives of Japan, through which we find a complex array of interpretations and negotiations involved in showcasing themselves for the reception of both Japanese officials and American audiences.

The Golden Gate International Exposition

For the *Takarasienne*, the main aim of traveling to America was to attend the international expo held on manmade Treasure Island in the middle of San Francisco Bay. The theme of the Golden Gate International Exposition was the "development of the transportation and communication."[46] Over thirty countries participated in the expo, and many from Pacific Rim Nations such as New Zealand and Japan. Japanese Pavilion was called "placid lagoons," which produced, "a vivid image of the contrast between its past and present age of the industrial advance."[47] In the Japanese pavilion, there were numerous exhibitions devoted to Japanese women. For example, in the "Silk Room" decorated with Western furniture, three Japanese female mannequins, a mother and her two daughters all wore traditional kimono.[48] Women in kimono were also used in advertisements for events

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[45] Yume Tazuru, ibid, "Amerika he okuru nihon no hana,"*Kageki,* no.229, 120.
[46] *The Golden Gate International Exposition Official Guidebook* (San Francisco: The Crocker Company, 1939), 87.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Messer, "Dainty Distractions,"11.

at the Japanese pavilion. The main aim of showing these pre-modern Japanese women was to satisfy the desires of American fairgoers to see an exotic "old Japan."[49]

At the same time, however, Japan showcased its modernity by illustrating the progress of Japanese women. The film called "*supōtsu nippon*," for instance, showed modern and active Japanese women playing "Western" sports like tennis, baseball, boxing and skating.[50] In addition, other films like "*Nihon Bekken*" and "*Tokyo Koukyōkyoku*" introduced Japanese women working as bus conductors, typists and department store girls in the metropolitan cities.[51] Together, these images showed that Japanese women were just as active as Euro-American males.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the American papers preferred quaint "old Japan." When the *San Francisco Chronicle* profiled the Japanese Pavilion, it only emphasized the images of Japanese "geisha." Moreover, *Time* magazine illustrated the Japan Pavilion as "an imaginative, quasi-Oriental 'Never-Never Land.'"[52] In her book, *Embracing the East*, Yoshihara Mari notes that considering the US and Japan's relation during the 1930s, Americans interpreted Japan and Japanese women as a "melodramatic construction of Orientalism."[53] As many have shown, the Orientalist ideology is a way to understand and represent the "Orient" based upon the inequality and difference between the west and Japan.[54] It is therefore important to point out that many Euro-Americans understood these

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[49] Yamamoto Sae, *Senjika no Banpaku to Nihon no Hyōshō* (Shinwasha, 2012), 167-174.

[50] Ibid.,122-123.

[51] Ibid.,124.

[52] "Pacific Pageant," *Time*, 2 January, 1939, 25.

[53] Mari Yoshihara, *Embracing the East: White Women and American Orientalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 3.

[54] Yoshihara, *Embracing the East*, 3.

differences in gendered terms, with the powerful and masculine West, compared to the subjugated and feminized East.

The Reception in San Francisco

Americans frequently portrayed the *Takarasienne* as geisha. All *Takarasienne* wore kimono while they were on official duties, such as meeting with the mayor of San Francisco, and standing in front of the cameras of American newspaper companies.[55] Americans were fascinated with the *Takarasienne*'s kimono as an icon of oriental Japan. Shibusawa illustrated the reactions of the Americans when they first saw the girls wearing beautiful *hakama* and *furisode*. A white American elderly woman praised the *Takarasienne* by saying "Oh, beautiful. It's beautiful." But later, she asked Shibusawa whether they were from the Salvation Army, because they all were wearing the same *hakama* and *furisode* as if it were a uniform.[56] The *San Francisco Chronicle* emphasized Americans' interests in kimono, and Shibusawa noted his experiences that numerous Americans crowded towards beautiful *furisode Takarasienne*. "Although western clothes are now familiar in Japan," he wrote, "Americans still dream of exotic Japanese kimono."[57] Takarazuka posters posted in the San Francisco trains called Takarazuka performances "Takarazuka Ballet," and described the performers as "40 of Japan's Most Beautiful Girls." It also emphasized the phrase, "DIRECT FROM JAPAN."[58] Although there was no picture in the advertisement, the text highlighted the beautiful, feminine girls coming from oriental Japan.

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[55] *Tobei Kinen Arubamu*, (Takarazuka Shōjo Kagekidan, 1939), 17,18.
[56] Shibusawa, *Takarazuka Tobeiki*, 24.
[57] Ibid., 3.
[58] "Furisode Angya,"*Esuesu* no.4, July, 1939, 126 (emphasis in original).

In addition to *Takarasienne*'s kimono and femininity, some Americans were also amazed by *Takarasienne*'s feminine and gentle behavior, which further exoticized Japanese women. For example, an American named Walter Borton wrote a letter to the captain of the ship *Kamakura maru* about the *Takarasienne* boarding from Honolulu to San Francisco with him. "It has been a pleasant surprise to find that the Takarazuka girls were well behaved and delightful and I think may give a very good example to our American girls," he wrote.[59] By comparing American girls with the *Takarasienne,* Borton confirmed a stereotype of Japanese females' tranquility and femininity, and expressed his dislike of modernizing trends among women in America.

Takarasienne performed the "Grand Cherry Show" at the San Francisco Opera House on April 26, 1939. The program was composed based on traditional Japanese themed repertoires. They also used words frequently associated with Japan, such as titling performances "Ukiyoe," "Geisha," "Tokyo," and "Kyoto." Whereas most of the repertoires were Japanese inspired, for some parts, Takarazuka included Western inspired elements, such as tap dance while wearing Western-inspired gorgeous costumes. Furthermore, some *otokoyaku Takarasienne* performed male roles such as *samurai.* Takarazuka performance

[59] "Ogyōgi no ii Takarazuka no Seito tachi," *Kageki* no.231, 1939, 174.

showcased the various styles of Japanese women who were both oriental and occidental, females and males.[60]

The audiences coming to see Takarazuka's repertoires in San Francisco were various. For example, while White Americans were surprised watching a new aspect of Japanese women through the *Takarasienne*, Japanese Americans were reminded of their ancestral home. As the war terrors between America and Japan loomed ever larger, Japanese Americans, especially the first generation, Issei were likely to hide their patriotic feelings for Japan. Instead, they showed their loyalty to the US and claimed their allegiance to "Americanism" and their good relationship with White Americans.[61] Even under such a situation, Japanese Americans supported Takarazuka tour as brokers working between Japanese and Americans. They organized a party in which *Takarasienne* and Takarazuka staff could interact with Americans directly and helped work as translators. Furthermore, according to an interview with six male staff accompanying the American tour, Kōmoto Yutaka mentioned his appreciation for Japanese American's supports who upgraded their tickets for the journey over.[62] Moreover, the wives of Japanese Americans took care of *Takarasienne* and sometimes accompanied them to the department store for shopping.[63]

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[60] Shibusawa, *Takarazuka Tobeiki*, 50. Programs were divided into five, and the lineup of the program was below, Dance Takarazuka "Takarazuka-Ondo" (Cherry Dance), Prelude (Three Celebrants), At the Riverside (Stage Reproduction Of Ukiyoe), Puppet Show When my Ship comes Home (Fishermen's Festival), Kabuki "Soga" (Showing The Elegance of Kabuki Play), Nikko (At The Most Famous Temple Of Japan), Ancient Martial Frolic (Comic Dance), Miss Tokyo (Osayo: Depicting The Sentiment Of Old Edo), Harvest Dance, Spring Twilight (Ballet), Miss Osaka (Osome: Dance with Rich Local Colour), Chanson Nippon (Japanese Folk-Songs), Dance Snow Flakes, (Wandering Musician With Popular Japanese Instrument), Kyoto (Sword man And "Geisha": Meiji Restoration Era), Battledore & Shuttlecock (New Year's Recreation), Finale (Cherry Festival)./<Intermission>/2. Demon and Knight/ 3. They Fooled the Boss/ 4. Ukiyoe ("Hikone Byobu")/ 5. Musume DŌZYŌZI (Five maidens at the Dōzyōzi Temple).

[61] Eiichiro Azuma, *Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2005),183-186.

[62] Kōmoto Yutaka, "Amerika Kōen no Hōkoku," *Kageki* no.233, 1939,77.

[63] Shibusawa, *Takarazuka Tobeiki*, 27,48.

Outside San Francisco, the Japanese American community in the places Takarazuka toured, such as Honolulu and Los Angeles, also worked as mediators between Takarazuka members and Americans. While Japanese Americans helped Takarazuka people, they also showed various faces to *Takarasienne* and Takarazuka staffs through the communications. Kasugano Yachiyo mentioned that some Japanese Americans cried with the joy while watching the *Takarasienne* perform. While showing their loyalty to the US, for many Japan still persisted in their hearts. As another example, a Takarazuka male staff, Komatsu Sakae illustrated the continuous Japanese patriotic spirit among some Japanese Americans, and noted, "Japanese Americans staying in the US have a strong patriotic spirit for Japan. Especially, the consciousness of Issei people was very strong."[64] Not only supporting Takarazuka people, interacting with them made Japanese Americans realize their other identity as Japanese.
These examples show how Issei engaged with both their "adopted" country and their native land, Japan.[65]

Moreover, Shibusawa introduced a letter written by an Issei Japanese American, Suzuki Takashi, a school principal at the Golden Gate school, who watched the Takarazuka repertoire.

> Thank you for all of your efforts for *kokumin* (national) diplomacy under the bad relationship between Japan and America. Seeing Sayo Fukuko's dance, one of the female teachers came to like Japan suddenly and began traveling in Japan... It is only for some Americans whom I know, but they became interested in Japan, including the female teacher. I personally think that Takarazuka's American tour left a great impression on the Americans as a great national work... I deeply appreciate that you introduced the beauty of the Japanese people.[66]

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64 Kōmoto, "Amerika Kōen no Hōkoku," 77.
65 Azuma, *Between Two Empires*, 4.
66 Shibusawa, *Takarazuka Tobeiki,* 72-73.

For Japanese Americans, especially for the Issei, watching Takarazuka reminded them of their ancestral home. Not only Issei but Nisei also enjoyed Takarazuka. As Suzuki said, a Nisei woman who disliked Japan suddenly became interested in Japan and visited Japan after watching the Takarazuka performances. A *Takarasienne* named Amagi Tsukie also told the story that she got a flower bouquet and a love letter from a Nisei male, but she could not read the letter because it was written in English.[67] Although they learned Japanese language and culture from Issei and were encouraged to keep it as part of their identities, some Nisei barely had interest in Japan since they were born and grew up in the US and were forced to show their loyalty to the US. Under such circumstance, Takarazuka performance became one of the means to understand their complex loyalties to both America and Japan. While Japanese American audiences enjoyed watching the show, they did not treat *Takarasienne* as "New Women" possessing both modernity and pre-modernity. Rather than that, many of them gazed at *Takarasienne* as icons of their nostalgic home country, Japan.

***Takarasienne* in San Francisco**

Besides the interactions with Japanese Americans, some *Takarasienne* talked about their involvements with Americans who were interested in feminine and oriental Japanese girls. Kasugano noted that, after the performance at the Opera House, some Americans came backstage to see *Takarasienne*s' makeup. "They said that Takarazuka's makeup was

[67] Amagi Tsukie, "Hōbeino omoide," *Kageki* no.283, 1949, 28-31.

very beautiful. They came to see us closely and took a lot of pictures of us."[68] Her interactions with Americans clearly illustrated Americans' interests in the *Takarasienne*'s indigenous traditional kimono and makeup. Furthermore, Miura explained her experience communicating with Americans in a different way during her stay in San Francisco. She said that, "When I told a clerk that I wanted to buy something, the clerk said, 'It was not for a baby.' I could not find any word to answer that."[69] Analyzing the clerk's word, "baby," it was clear that the clerk emphasized the *Takarasienne*'s immaturity. Furthermore, Miura wrote that, "When I was invited at the San Francisco port by the America- Japan Society, some Americans warned us that our hands were dirty, because we did not use nail polish. They never tried to understand Japanese elegance and cleanness. It was frustrating to me."[70] Her words implied that an American clerk treated *Takarasienne* as immature girls under the ideology of cultural supremacy. However, Miura showcased her frustration and insisted on the beauty of being Japanese. That is, rather than passively accepting this cultural hierarchy easily, Miura clearly demonstrated her opinion that "Japanese beauty" had its own valid standards that were worthy of respect.

The *Takarasienne* were not content to be looked at and judged. They seized on the opportunities to experience San Francisco and interacted with Americans. Many were particularly interested in American fashions as a way to explore new ways of presenting themselves. For example, Miura Tokiko talked her shopping trip.

> I went to one of the major department stores in San Francisco, but everything was too expensive... My new finding in San Francisco was that people bought the same colored accessories, such as shoes, belts, hats and gloves. I saw some people

[68] Kasugano Yachiyo, "Saisho no Kōen," *Tobei Kinen Arubamu*, 1939,7,8.

[69] Miura Tokiko, "San Fransisuko nite," *Tobei Kinen Arubamu*, 1939, 7.

[70] Ibid.

> put on red blush and red nail polish, and the same color red lipstick. I heard if people here were not fashionable enough like those I saw, they could not go out because of embarrassment.[71]

Examining her words leads us Miura's curiosity of learning American fashions by observing Americans in her daily life. Not only Miura but also other *Takarasienne* enjoyed fashioning themselves like Americans. For example, Tsuru Makiko talked about her experience of shopping in San Francisco. "For my first shopping in San Francisco, I bought some lipstick. I also bought some hats and shoes. I finally became an American style woman and went back to the hotel." [72] Her words clearly demonstrated her admiration for the fashions of American women. She continued, "After that, we started our fashion show! Some girls struggled with wearing the fashionable hats that we could not find in Japan, others managed to wear high heeled shoes... During that time, we did not think about the US tour at all. Being elegant and beautiful was the thing that made us the most excited."[73] Through fashion the *Takarasienne* forgot about being representatives and cultural ambassadors of the nation, and instead explored their connections to modern women in America. They looked beyond existing nation state boundaries and built a "space" to share with other modern women. For *Takarasienne*, sharing fashions with their American sisters was one way to rethink their responsibility to represent traditional Japanese womanhood, and to explore the possibilities as both modern and cosmopolitan.

While *Takarasienne* showed their admiration for American culture, they showed their national pride as representatives of one of the great nations. Moreover, they sometimes

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[71] Miura Tokiko, "Amerika de Nani wo Mitaka," *Takarazuka Gurafu* no.40, 1939, np.
[72] Tsuru Makiko,"Omohideno tabiji," *Kageki* no. 283, 1949, 23.
[73] Ibid.

manipulated the American's Orientalist perceptions of Japanese womanhood. For example, when the interviewers asked *Takarasienne* about their impressions of San Francisco, Sayo Fukuko talked about the port of San Francisco, "How small the port was! I think it was the same size as Kobe port."[74] Responding to her, Sabo Mihoko said, "We all have very strong hearts. That's why we were not so surprised."[75] Hanazato Isako continued, "Since I did not understand what they were saying in English at the Customs in the airport, I just smiled and it finished very easily. As I heard, American men are really indulgent to women."[76]Analyzing their words reveals that while Americans such as Bordon who were on the same ship with the *Takarasienne* praised their oriental beauty and behavior, *Takarasienne* such as Hanazato and Sabo considered themselves as rather impudent girls who had "strong hearts." Besides them, Hanazato's experience at Customs indicates that she understood the common perception of her "oriental" beauty, and used that to ease her way with the American customs officers. This gap of understanding between American men and *Takarasienne* themselves shows how American men exoticized Japanese women as the ultimate in femininity.

Among the *Takarasienne*, however, some contested the ideal images Americans had of feminine Japanese women. For example, some *Takarasienne* especially those who played male roles (*otokoyaku*) identified themselves by more mannish behavior. In San Francisco, according to a biography of the *otokoyaku* Kasugano, a female guide at the theater kept saying that "I heard the revue was composed of all women, but there were two

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[74] Sayo Fukuko, "Amerika no Tabi," *Kageki* no. 233, 1939, 50.
[75] Ibid.
[76] Hanazato Isako, "Amerika no Tabi," 50.

men in the group!!"[77] Kasugano continued that, "The two males they were talking about were Sabo-san and me. As a handsome *otokoyaku,* I was glad that even Americans regarded us as males."[78] Considering Kasugano's words, she showed her pride as an *otokoyaku* and was glad to be acknowledged as a real man by Americans. Identifying herself as a handsome and mannish *otokoyaku,* her gender identity was far from the "feminine" and "oriental" stereotype. Moreover, although the majority of the *Takarasienne* were wearing kimono while walking around the city, Kasugano was the only one wearing Western clothes whenever she was on her own. This shows that Kasugano rejected the identity of a traditional "oriental" woman. Rather, she turned herself into powerful agent empowering herself as a New Woman.

Furthermore, the *Takarasienne*, including Kasugano, talked about their significant responsibilities as representatives of Japan. Kasugano explained the prestige of performing at the Opera House as the first Japanese (including Japanese Americans) being on the theater stage. Following that, Shibusawa explained why the reputation of the *Takarasienne* in San Francisco was high, and each of them had their own responsibility to shoulder the name of "Japan."[79]Analyzing the *Takarasienne*'s responsibilities and their emphasis on their Japanese nationality, the *Takarasienne* were not controlled by the government controlled, but were instead critical subjects showcasing the authority of Japan by performing on the stage.

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[77] Kasugano Yachiyo, *Shiroki Bara no Shō,* 113.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Shibusawa, *Takarazuka Tobeiki*, 10-12.

Both Japanese and US media highly evaluated the performances at the Golden Gate International Expo. For example, a Japanese newspaper, *Kokumin Shinbun* appraised the importance of Takarazuka's role as a cultural representatives.[80] American media, such as *The San Francisco Call Bulletin*, admired Takarazuka's repertoire for mixing both oriental and occidental elements. It also said that when *Takarasienne* were dancing in Western-inspired costumes, they did not look like Japanese women at all.[81]Another local paper, *The San Francisco Examiner* classed the Takarazuka not as a "Grand cherry show" but as a "revue" more like the Ziegfeld Follies, a famous American female revue.[82] Furthermore, *San Francisco News* mentioned how skillfully the *otokoyaku* performed as "real" samurai. A reporter appreciated how well the Takarazuka choreographers had instructed the *Takarasienne* to perform "real" male roles. The *San Francisco Chronicle* also highly evaluated the style and repertoire as a new form of the theater.[83] While the feminine "geisha" elements were advertised before the Takarazuka performance, some Americans enjoyed the striking combinations of "modernity" and "tradition," and "Occidental" and "Oriental." Through these performances, the *Takarasienne* displayed an intriguing range of Japanese womanhood.

Responding to these reviews of the Takarazuka show, Shibusawa talked about his dream of visiting New York. He said,

> Japanese Americans warmly welcomed us at each place, that's why Takarazuka easily bloomed. We got 'new sand' in San Francisco. Yet, how about New York?...

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[80] "Takarazuka no Shōjo Kagekidan wo Kangei Sanfuranshisuko de Ninki wo Yobu," *Kokumin Shinbun*, 21 April, 1939.

[81] Marie Hicks Davidson, "Nippon Ballet Welds Old, New Japan: Fun, Color, Rhythm Delight Audience at U.S. Premiere," *San Francisco Call Bulletin*, 27 April, 1939.

[82] Ada Hanifin, "Japanese Ballet Opens Its Engagement Here," *San Francisco Examiner*, April 27, 1939.

[83] Claude A. La Belle and Marjory M. Fisher, "Takarazuka Girls Charm Capacity Audience at Opera House," *San Francisco News*, April 27, 1939.

> Traveling from Yokohama to San Francisco was not going to the U.S., but from San Francisco to New York, that was a real 'going to America,' and that's our main purpose of performing in America. [84]

Not only Shibusawa but also the *Takarasienne* admired New York. According to Kasugano, "Because we made enough profits through our performances on the West Coast, Mr. Shibusawa asked me whether I wanted a watch or perform in New York as a reward. Of course, I chose going to New York without any doubt."[85] On May 18, they left for New York from Chicago and arrived at Grand Central station the next day. They had finally arrived at their adored destination: New York.

The New York World's Fair of 1939

Japanese officials sent Takarazuka to New York specifically because they regarded New York as a hub of global culture and thus the most authoritative place to show Japanese culture to other great nations. Following the example of Germany, Italy, France, Great Britain and the Soviet Union, in 1938 KBS established a cultural center at Rockefeller Center in New York called the Japan Institute. Its responsibility was to promote Japan's image and cultural diplomacy in the US.

According to an official KBS document, the government had three reasons for these kinds of government-run cultural institutions. One was that the Japanese government needed to sponsor communication of academia, arts, films and sports with other nations to promote Japan as a progressive nation. The second reason is that they could help define and contain

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[84] Shibusawa, *Takarazuka Tobeiki*, 70. Through the tour in San Francisco, Takarazuka made a profit, 4,600 yen at that time.
[85] Kasugano, *Shiroki Bara no Shō*, 113.

growing trends in Japanese nationalism. The Japanese people needed to show their culture to other nations and work with them for a better world-wide cultural welfare. The last reason for establishing KBS was that as "civilized country," a huge facility was necessary to present Japan as an equal to other "civilized" global powers.[86] In addition to the New York office, they dispatched expatriate employees to Paris, Buenos Aires, Berlin, Geneva, Rome and Melbourne, and had international interactions with foreigners. For example, KBS financially supported Japanese scholars and students to study in foreign countries, and invited exchanges from other nations.

The New York World's Fair of 1939 was conceived to showcase the accomplishments and future of women in the world, thus making women's participation central in the planning of the fair.[87] With such background in mind, KBS's decision to dispatch the *Takarasienne* as cultural ambassadors to the exposition suggests that the government and KBS assumed that they had the potential to symbolize a civilized Japan on par with the world's great nations. Meanwhile, the fair itself, lasting for 185 days, was the largest of its kind prior to WW II. In addition to its emphasis on women, the fair also ran under the banner of "Building the World of Tomorrow."[88] As such, the participating countries aimed to showcase the future roles of women in their pavilions. For example, according to the chapter "The New Soviet Woman at the 1939 New York World's Fair," Alison Rowley considered the competition between the Soviets and the US, and examined the Soviet Pavilion displaying Soviet women as "New Women" who both had pre-

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[86] Kokusai Bunka Fukkokai, *KBS 30nen no Ayumi*, 10-12.
[87] David Gelernter, *1939: The Lost World of the Fair* (New York: Free Press, 1995), 129.
[88] Ibid.

modernity and modernity by analyzing the pamphlets distributed at the fair. The Japanese Pavilion also had many of the same features as the Soviet Pavilion. In the Japanese pavilion, there were arts, photos, and films introducing a complex representation of Japanese womanhood: feminine, masculine, pre-modern and modern. In the pavilion's "silk room," for instance, Japanese women wearing kimono called "silk girls" performed the task of silk weaving to the delight of American audiences. The "silk room" was indeed quite famous among American attendees, and was always crowded with those hoping for a glimpse of real Japanese girls wearing traditional kimono.[89]

The common point in both pavilions was both the governments of the Soviet Union and Japan schemed to show their civilizations to Americans directly by displaying the transformation of their nation's women. This allowed them to demonstrate the nation's social, economic and political transformation and its prosperity. The *New York Times* featured Takarazuka as early as 1936, well before the Japanese government had decided to dispatch the *Takarasienne* on their US tour. In an article explaining the modern theater of Japan, it introduced the history of Takarazuka, its unique repertoire, male roles, and Japanese fans.[90] This shows an American interest in Takarazuka as a form of Japanese modern theater even before the international fair. Three years later in 1939, *New York Times* once again featured Takarazuka on occasion of their visit to New York as cultural ambassadors. They described the "Cherry Blossom Ballet" revue and its repertoire as combining "both the old and the new theater of Japan."[91]

[89] "Nūyōku banpaku no Nihonkan Kidome no seikyō," *Tokyo Asahi*, 2 May 1939.
[90] "On the Modern Theatre of Japan," *New York Times*, 1 November, 1936.
[91] "Ballet from Japan To Appear at Fair Cherry Blossom Organization to Start Next Sunday," *New York Times*, 15 May, 1939.

Even before the *Takarasienne*'s performance, however, the *New York Times* emphasized Takarazuka's traditional elements by saying, "It embraces virtually all phases of Nipponese artistry, including ancient religious dances, music of temple and tea house, folk songs, virtuoso ballet performances and pantomimes representative of racial ceremonies and traditions."[92] Furthermore, according to *Osaka Mainichi Shinbun*, *New York Herald Tribune* ran an illustrated advertisement for the "Cherry Blossom Ballet" with a picture of four Japanese women dancing in *furisode*.[93] Even though one of the main themes of the New York World's Fair was showcasing the broader possibilities of women, these representations of *Takarasienne* reveal a high expectation among Americans for traditional and oriental "Nipponese" females.

On May 19, 1939, the *Takarasienne* arrived at Grand Central Station in New York, and screamed with excitement. One exclaimed, "I am so glad to be here in New York. What should I do?"[94] Two days later, they performed at the Radio City Music Hall, one of New York's more famous and important theaters. The hall seated 2,400, with 70% occupied by a majority white audience.[95] After the first performance, Shibusawa noted in his diary that it was the best performance of the tour. A *Takarasienne*, Egawa Suzuyo also said of the performance that, "We all feel very good now after such excitement."[96]

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[92] "Ballet from Japan To Appear at Fair Cherry Blossom Organization to Start Next Sunday," *New York Times*, 15 May, 1939.
[93] "Nūyōku iri no Takarazuka ni kappatsu na senden hajimaru," *Osaka Mainichi Shinbun*, 17 May, 1939.
[94] Shibusawa, *Takarazuka Tobeiki*, 79.
[95] Ibid., 82-84.
[96] Shibusawa, *Takarazuka Tobeiki*, 85.

The Reception in New York

On the very next day, however, a number of American theatrical critics commented negatively on the Takarazuka performance. Leon Leonidov, the stage director of New York's Radio City Music Hall, spoke about the Takarazuka stage show with the Foreign Correspondent of *Asahi Shinbun*, stating, "It was very gorgeous, but did not taste anything. It was just like Japanese cuisine. They look gorgeous and delicious but they don't have much flavor."[97] Furthermore, Leonidov continued, since Takarazuka was composed of only young females, the force of the show was less powerful than that of American stage performances. Following that, Leonidov mentioned the lack of sex appeal to the audience.[98] He concluded that since immature Japanese girls were playing male roles, they were not as attractive as American female performers. Furthermore, John Martin, a critic writing in the New York *Times*, commented on Takarazuka as follows:

> It is a girl show, frankly billed as such, and whether in Nipponese or any other language, the aroma of honky-tonk is virtually the same world over. The company consists of some thirty or forty charming looking girls who wear a succession of gorgeous kimonos, changing them at times to appear in travesty as samurais, lovers, comedy servants or to become bare-legged tap dancers. Occasionally they present brief bits of traditional native movements, but more frequently they are imitating their sisters of the West strutting like Broadway chorus girls, lining up like precision troupes, waving fans with American flags on their reverse sides, and once going into an ordinary tap routine. The music is written in the Western harmonic manner and is played by an orchestra of Western instruments. Two hours of it in last night's especially extended performance... seemed virtually endless and made one want to rush home and browse in Zoe Kincaid's book on Kabuki or read one or two of Arthur Waley's Noh translations to remind one's self of some of the true glories of Japan's theatre and dance arts..."[99]

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[97] Kobayashi Ichizō, "Nūyōku iki ze ka inaka," *Kageki no.232*, 1939, 44-45.
[98] "Takarrazuka Furisodeshisetsu no Kouseki," *Osaka Asahi Shinbun*, 8 June, 1939.
[99] John Martin, "The Dance: Cherry Blossom Ballet," *New York Times*, May 22,1939.

Martin clearly had negative comments on Takarazuka's combination of traditional and modern repertoires. He especially criticized Takarazuka's imitations of American inspired styles. For example, he illustrated the similar choreography of the dance performance by American females and the Western music Takarazuka used in the show. Furthermore, by comparing Takarazuka, Kabuki and Noh, he demonstrated that Takarazuka performance was not "the true glories of Japan's theater and dance arts." His words allow us to see his expectation of seeing an "authentic" Nipponese repertoire of oriental and traditional performances. Moreover, he described the *Takarasienne* as, "charming looking girls," which contrasted with how they saw themselves and their performance.

Responding in *Kageki* to these critical reviews, Kobayashi Ichizō, a founder of the Takarazuka Revue company, explained why the *Takarasienne* looked less professional or mature than Leonidov and Martin would have hoped. He said, "The majority of Takarazuka girls do not have any dreams to be professionals, because their future dream is to become a 'good wife.' Therefore, it was natural that such American critics might condemn Takarazuka girls."[100] Although Kobayashi seemed to look for excuses to protect the girls, he nonetheless revealed the male-dominated and paternalistic system of Takarazuka. Although he supported them and gave them special opportunities, even Kobayashi agreed with the adolescent view of the *Takarasienne*. Moreover, his attitude towards the *Takarasienne* reflected the expectation of fulfilling the trope of the "good wife and wise mother" among Japanese women in the 1930s. On the other hand, as for the combination of Japanese and Euro-American styles, Kobayashi clearly mentioned that, "I will never be

[100] Kobayashi Ichizō, "Nūyōku iki ze ka inaka," 44-45.

disappointed by criticism of the Euro-American inspired repertories because we are still on our way to examining and arranging these styles."[101] His words therefore impart a persistent hope of Takarazuka's overseas expansion. In addition to the critical comments on the blending of the traditional and modern, the distant location from the pavilion and the high price of the tickets also made it harder for the Takarazuka repertoire to succeed. Furthermore, unlike San Francisco where a lot of Issei Japanese Americans knew about Takarazuka, few Americans in New York knew about Takarazuka, and audience numbers steadily decreased. Takarazuka had no choice but to end their performance earlier than they had planned.

In spite of the "failure" of the performance, however, *Takarasienne* still needed to perform at the Expo on June 2, 1939, which had been called "Japan day." The *New York Times* described "Japan day" as a special day where people could see Japanese "geisha" on "Shinto floats" parading along Fifth Avenue.[102] For the event, besides the *Takarasienne*, various Japanese women were invited as symbols of Japan by the Japanese government. The common feature among these women was that they had a "modern" or Western background. For example, Eiko Tsukimoto, the first "Miss Japan," handed the torch representing the friendship of Japan and America to the fair president Grover A. Whalen.[103] Tsukimoto was a Christian born in Vancouver and who stayed in Washington when she was an elementary school student. In the interview posted in *Asahi Shinbun*, Tsukimoto regarded herself as more mixed American and Japanese than only Japanese.[104] Her hybrid

[101] Kobayashi Ichizō, "Nūyōku iki ze ka inaka," 44-45.
[102] "45 Experts Named to Fair's Art Body," *New York Times*, 14 March, 1939.
[103] "Miss Japan to Arrive: Due at World's Fair Today With," *New York Times*, 1 June, 1939.
[104] "Gakusei Daihyō Tsukimoto Eiko Jō Ki (1)~(4),"*Asahi Shinbun*, September, 11th-14th, 1935.

background as a cosmopolitan Japanese woman was very useful for the Japanese government to showcase to the US the "safe" modernization of Japan.

In addition to Tsukimoto, other Japanese women such as Mizunoe Takiko, an actress in Shōchiku Kagekidan (Shōchiku Revue) called *danso no reijin* (a beautiful male-role woman) was invited to "Japan Day." Mizunoe was famous as a woman who had pioneered the short haircut in Japan. Her mannish character was also very useful to present the New Woman and the new modernized Japan. Furthermore, Yoshioka Yayoi, a female doctor and a founder of Tokyo joshi gakkō, the first medical school for female students, was sent to America by the government.

Including *Takarasienne*, all the females attending "Japan Day" were regarded as "flexible" symbols juxtaposing conflicting ideas of both "modernity" and "pre-modern."[105] Tsukimoto was often taken up in newspapers by American media. For example, *New York Times* posted a series called "Flame of Friendship" that featured Tsukimoto for three days in a row. Although Tsukimoto was a bilingual woman identifying herself not as Japanese but as mixed Japanese and American, every American media emphasized Tsukimoto's kimono and her oriental beauty.[106] They did not mention women's "modern" elements but rather amplified the femininity of "geisha" Japanese women. Taking the representations of Japanese women who participated in "Japan day" into consideration, we can see clear gaps in expectation between the Japanese government and American audiences. Although the Japanese state regarded these Japanese women as "New Women," within the American

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[105] Suzuki, *Becoming Modern Women,* 4. I rely heavily on Suzuki's analysis of the representation of Japanese women in the 1930s.

[106] "Japan Dedicates Pavilion with 1,500 year old 'Flame of Friendship," *New York Times*, 3 June 1939.

racial and cultural hierarchy, these Japanese women were just the same as pre-modern and traditional Japanese "geisha" wearing kimono.

Asahi shinbun described "Japan day," writing that "people from all around the world using Japanese folding fans and umbrellas were gathering at the park... Around 3 pm, Tsukimoto wearing a beautiful *furisode* appeared. The audience was so excited... At this moment, the problems about Sino-Japan relations seemed to disappear, and the friendship of Japan and America looked very calm and strong. In the next performance, Takarazuka performed their songs and dances. The audience looked fascinated with the distinctive Japanese beauty."[107] Although the *Asahi shinbun* portrayed "Japan day" very positively and declared that Americans enjoyed watching Japanese girls parade, it also illustrated Americans' expectations of Japanese women and emphasized "Japanese beauty," meaning feminine and oriental Japanese women.

The *Takarasienne* in New York

Even though Takarazuka's performance in New York ended in failure and financial deficit, with Americans expecting more feminine "geisha" presentations, the *Takarasienne*'s curiosity towards America grew throughout the national tour. They were pleased with the chance to enjoy their stay in New York, which was indeed a rare opportunity afforded by the Japanese government. In interviews, *Takarasienne* talked about their daily experiences in New York more than about their performances at the Expo. In particular, they enjoyed absorbing American fashions by observing what American women

[107] "Saki Hokoru Nihon no Higasa, Nyuyōku Banpaku Nihon dē," *Asahi Shinbun*, 4 June, 1939.

were wearing in New York. For example, Kasugano Yachiyo said, "Our pocket money was limited to 380 dollars, but as soon as I arrived in New York, I borrowed some money from Shibusawa-sensei and went to buy clothes and bags."[108] Another *Takarasienne*, Sabo Mihoko, talked about New Yorkers' fashion in an interview, stating, "I was not really sure about the class hierarchy in New York, yet I found that the majority of women in New York were wearing black and white outfits."[109] She continued that, "In this summer, the Mexican hat would become a fashion trend in New York. By imitating American women, I also bought it." She continued, "Although women staying in New York were called New York girls, their hair was mostly black and they were not so tall and skinny. They just looked like us!"[110] Here, her statement implies an assumption that even *Takarasienne* could be New Yorkers without paying attention to the racial issues that Japanese faced in the US. In other words, Sabo showed her desire to progress in tandem with women in New York, widely considered a hub of global modernity.

While the *Takarasienne* were enjoying the latest New York fashions, Americans also looked at the *Takarasienne* with curiosity. In New York, most of *Takarasienne* were wearing kimono. Sabo said that, while wearing kimono, Americans approached them with a range of questions. For example, when she attended a party, an American identified her *obi* as a cushion to sit on the chair comfortably. Another American called her *tabi* a stocking and tried to roll up the hem of her kimono.[111] In an interview Kasugano talked about the influence that the *Takarasienne* had upon American fashion. "I heard that the very famous

[108] Tōkai Jirō, "Furisode Tobei gumi ni kiita omiyage banashi," *Raito*, 6 August, 1939, 3-6.
[109] Ibid.
[110] Ibid.
[111] Ibid.

fashion magazine *Vogue* posted some fashion styles inspired by the *Takarasienne*'s *furisode*."[112] While the *Takarasienne* admired New York fashions, then, Americans also approved of the Japanese girls' outfits, and we can clearly see transnational connections forming between the *Takarasienne* and American women.

Although the Japanese government and American audiences alike forced *Takarasienne* to represent their own respective ideal images of Japanese womanhood, *Takarasienne* did not simply follow these demands passively. Rather, they were complicit in their own orientalization and chose their own modes of showcasing themselves based on what Americans wanted to see. According to Shibusawa, a *Takarasienne* named Miura Tokiko sought to exploit the interest in kimono among Americans and came up with the idea to advertise Takarazuka performances with the traditional dress. Before they performed at the theater, all forty *Takarasienne* set out to stroll the exposition grounds in kimono. Finally, some Americans followed the *Takarasienne* and bought tickets for the shows.[113] With this in mind, the *Takarasienne* understood the Americans' high demand for an image of "oriental" and "geisha" Japanese girls in kimono and sometimes manipulated them accordingly.

In addition to fashion, the *Takarasienne* in New York had a number of opportunities to go to theaters and night clubs. In Japan, women attending movies were widely associated with the phenomenon of the "*Moga*" (modern girl). Given the popularity of various kinds of theater productions among Japanese women, the opportunity to watch authentic Broadway shows and visit nightclubs in New York was a very special and

[112] Kasugano Yachiyo,"Amerika de nani wo mitaka," *Takarazuka graph no.41*, 1939, np.
[113] Shibusawa, *Takarazuka Tobeiki*, 91.

"modern" experience for the *Takarasienne*. They enjoyed not only watching the performances but also learning new styles and technical skills from Americans directly by visiting the theaters. In an interview, Sayo Fukuko cited the titles of the movies and performances she watched in New York, such as "Snow White," "Hot Mikado," and "Love Fair." She praised performers' technical skills and the music they used in the shows. Sayo also described the experience of having Leonidov, the director of Radio City, taking *Takarasienne* backstage at the hall. She noted that the stage equipment in New York was far more advanced than that of Japan. As mentioned above, although Laonidov criticized the Takarazuka performance, the *Takarasienne* interacted with him directly and got an opportunity to visit and learn about American theaters. Such opportunities would have been unimaginable to most Japanese women of the era.

While the *Takarasienne* cultivated a cosmopolitan identity in New York, they also clarified their identity as exponents of Japanese imperialism through the tour. As mentioned earlier, the 1930s was a time when of heightened Japanese colonialism, nationalism, and militarism. During the tour many *Takarasienne* expressed national pride in Japan's growing imperial power. For example, Sakuramachi Kimiko related a particular experience, stating, "When I entered a shop in New York, Americans always said 'beautiful' to us. But in the end, some asked us 'Are you Chinese?' I was furious about that and said 'NO' loudly."[114] Her words imply the sense of Japanese racial superiority. While they enjoyed experiencing American fashions, they certainly defined their home country, Japan, as an imperial leader of Asia, and did not wish to be mistaken as Chinese.

[114] Kasugano, *Shiroki Bara no Shō,* no page number.

Moreover, another *Takarasienne* also implied the racial superiority of the Japanese while they interacted with African Americans. In one interview, Amagi Tsukie talked about going to the night club called the "French Casino" and watching African Americans perform. Although she did not mention the details, by calling these African American performers "*kuronbo*" (nigger), she showed a certain racial prejudice towards African Americans and implied her superiority as a civilized Japanese. That shows how the racial and cultural hierarchies of the Japanese empire carried over even in New York, and even translated into the context of American race relations.

One crucial reason for this is their "aspiration" towards connections with White Americans. As stated, the point of the Takarazuka tour was aspirational, both in the imperialist sense, as well as in the cosmopolitan sense. In both, the "aspiration" seems to be to become equal to White people, and shed the image of racialized inferiority and difference. In the end, it seems like the closest that the *Takarasienne* came to this aspirational goal was the ability to transfer that expectation downward to African American performers. At the same time, however, she also mentioned that she was very moved by listening to their "authentic" skillful and beautiful songs. Another *Takarasienne*, Miura Tokiko also praised African Americans' songs and dances, calling them "authentic art."[115] Even though both the *Takarasienne* and African American performers were subject to white American expectations of stereotypical "authenticity," rather than identifying this problem as a mutual one, the *Takarasienne* seemed to identify more with White Americans.

[115] Miura Tokiko"Amerika no Tabi," *Kageki no.233*, 1939, 59.

After the performance, some audiences were allowed on the stage. Amagi said that, "I was wondering who would go up and sing, and Tacchin-san (Miura Tokiko) bravely went up to the stage by herself. I was very surprised that she had such a courage to do so in front of the Americans! Because Tacchin-san was wearing kimono, everybody suddenly stood up and started watching her."[116] Miura's behavior at the night club implied her recklessness and powerfulness. Miura also praised that African Americans' songs and dances were the "authentic art."[117] After she enjoyed the performance, while still in kimono she danced and sang along with the music that African American performers played. The evening showcased both the extent and limits of transnational cultural interactions in which certain racial hierarchies both connected and blocked potential contacts between *Takarasienne* and the New Yorkers they met during their stay.

Some *Takarasienne* also talked about their daily lives in New York. For example, in *Kageki*, Sakuramachi Kimiko wrote that when the *Takarasienne* arrived in New York, most of them had already gotten used to their lives in the US. She said, "Because we already knew how to live in the US, taking a cab was very easy, and walking around the Broadway seemed just like walking around Ginza."[118] Sakuramachi's words implied that the *Takarasienne* no longer regarded New York as a special place. Rather, she identified New York as another "home."

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[116] Sakai kyō and Amagi Tsukie,"Hayaichi to mukashi Houbei no Omoide,"*Kageki* no.283, 1949, 29-35.
[117] "Amerika no Tabi," *Kageki* no.233, 1939, 59.
[118] Sakuramachi Kimiko, "Houbei kouen no Kiroku," *Kageki* no.283, 1949, 26.

Conclusion

The Japanese Foreign Ministry sent the *Takarasienne* to America as representatives of a civilized Japan in order to justify the nation's imperialism and territorial expansion. On the other hand, their American reception revealed an expectation that they act as icons of oriental beauty and immaturity. Between the state government and the expectations of the American audiences, *Takarasienne* adopted and shaped their own understandings of what it meant to be Japanese women and thus performed Japanese womanhood differently depending on the situation. While they claimed nationalistic dignity and pride as members of the Japanese empire, however, their rich experience of consuming American fashion and theater, along with direct communication with Americans, allowed them to establish their identities as New Women and to develop transnational identities as part of a global culture. These experiences became one of the means to discover their own selves and fashion themselves as Japanese women.

By examining Takarazuka female performers who actively manipulated their positions as performers to take on a wider range of femininities, this chapter adds a new figure of Japanese females in the 1930s who normally had few opportunities to go abroad. The *Takarasienne* did so during a period of change in the role of Japanese women, and within the context of Japan's increasingly aggressive imperial expansion. Tracing these female performers' transnational footsteps therefore leads us to see how they thought of themselves as not only females but also as ambassadors for "Japan," whether the orientalist fantasy of the Americans, or the imperialist fantasy of the Japanese government. For Takarazuka female performers, that is, the American tour constituted a turning point in rethinking America and also their own identities as Japanese women.

After the American tour, they were finally back in Kobe port on July 5, 1939. In an interview, Amagi explained that the *Takarasienne* continuously fashioned themselves as American inspired women even after returning to Japan. "Since we stayed in America for a while and just came back from America, we fashioned ourselves like American women, wearing tall hats and high heeled shoes even in Japan. So, while we were walking around Ginza, everybody looked at us surprised."[119] Analyzing their comments in the interviews, it was obvious that through their stay in America, the *Takarasienne* were highly influenced by Americans and American culture.

Some Japanese media, however, criticized the *Takarasiennes*' American inspired fashions and attitudes. For example, *Osaka Asahi shinbun* condemned the "Americanism" that *Takarasienne* brought home. It complained about their "gaudy" American-inspired fashions and makeup, and concluded that they were not appropriate in Japan.[120] Furthermore, the article also denounced the relationships between the *Takarasienne* and some Canadian male professional basketball players who arrived in Japan on the same ship with the *Takarasienne*. It was a scandal that some *Takarasienne* got along with these "*gaijin*" (foreigners), and after arriving in Japan, some girls went to Kyoto and watched the basketball match in which the Canadian players played. According to an article, the *Takarasienne* also invited the players to their own performances.[121]

This behavior also implied that they regarded themselves as a member of a larger network of cosmopolitan women who actively contacted foreigners even as the diplomatic

[119] Sakai and Amagi, "Hayaichi to mukashi Houbei no Omoide," 32.
[120] "Zuka Musumeyo Denaose," *Osaka Asahi shinbun*, 30 July,1939.
[121] Ibid.

relations between Japan and America worsened. At the same time, this also illustrates *Takarasiennes*' desires for freedom of love and marriage, and their resistance against the expectations for women in Japan. In fact, the scandal boiled over and the Osaka Police Department directed an executive of Takarazuka to come to the police, and undergo questioning for about two hours.[122] In *Osaka Asahi shinbun*, a Lieutenant, Yamanaka Heizō, castigated *Takarasienne*. saying "Now, Japanese men are fighting for our nation Japan. Why are these *yamato nadeshiko*'s imprudent behavior allowed?... In such an emergency, everybody would be offended if Japanese girls are getting along with '*gaijin*' boys."[123] Moreover, in *Tokyo Asahi shinbun*, the film critic Nanbu Keinosuke noted that, "Recently, the most visible problem in *Takarasienne* is a lack of dignity, taste and intelligence… Their performance would give a significantly negative effect on young female audience."[124] Responding to these criticisms against *Takarasienne*, the Takarazuka company did not have any other choice but to make some corresponding girls leave Takarazuka. As the potential for war with the US increased, the *Takarasienne* who the Japanese government sent to the US as representatives of Japan suddenly became a target of criticisms, and they were not allowed to speak out about their experiences in America.

When war with America broke out in 1941, the Japanese government more strictly cracked down on Takarazuka and female performers.[125] To survive *Takarasienne* had to change the image of "Americanized" girls for Takarazuka. In the *Mainichi shinbun*, an article showed *Takarasienne*'s transformation of their attitude towards America. In

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[122] "Zuka Musumeyo Denaose," *Osaka Asahi shinbun*, 30 July,1939.
[123] "Gaikokujin tono kōsai," *Osaka Asahi shinbun*, 1 August, 1939.
[124] Ibid.
[125] Shiro Okamoto, *The Man Who Saved Kabuki: Faubion Bowers and Theatre Censorship in Occupied Japan*, trans. and adapted by Samuel L. Leiter (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001), 135.

Takarazuka hot spring, an exhibition was held under the sponsorship of the military. At the exhibition, there were some artworks given by *Takarasienne*. One of them was a pair of *geta* on whose soles were the portraits of Winston Churchill and Franklin D. Roosevelt. The *Takarasienne* who made this said, "We should never forget the spirit to grind our enemies with *geta*!"[126] Just four years after the *Takarasienne* came back from their American tour, they had to abandon some of their cosmopolitan connections and strengthen their public identity as ideal Japanese women who supported nationalism and militarism.

Many *Takarasienne*, however, continued to admire America even during the war. That is, although America had become their "enemy" and they had lost the chance to be on the stage, their aspirations for the transnational identity that they had constructed through the American tour of 1939 had barely changed.

[126] "Geta ni aitsuranokao 'Anata ha dare wo gojurin' Takaraduka de mokka oohayari," *Mainichi Shinbun*, 3 February, 1943.

Chapter 2. Takarazuka under Occupation in Japan

Introduction

In April 1946, after the long and demoralizing war, the Takarazuka Revue finally came back to perform in the Takarazuka Grand Theater in Hyogo prefecture. Several Takarazuka female performers posted their opinions about the future of Japan and Takarazuka in *Kageki*, which began publishing again right after the war.[127] For example, a performer named Shijō Hideko expressed her excitement about the American Occupation, saying, "In my hometown Kyoto, we could see the Occupation forces' cool jeeps passing on Shijō Street and listen to swing jazz everywhere. Kyoto suddenly became a modern city."[128] On the other hand, another Takarazuka performer, Awashima Chikage, related a more ambiguous opinion about the Occupation: "I am not sure whether imitating 'America' truly leads to building a 'New Japan.' But during the war, we could not even emulate America. Now, we have to make a new start by selecting what we need to revive 'New Japan.'"[129] As we see here, each woman in Takarazuka had a different view of the American Occupation.

However, each shared a decisive passion to play a role in constructing a New Japan by standing on the stage as performers. For example, Shijō mentioned the important role of Japanese women in this endeavor by saying, "Our brilliant new future is waiting for us young females."[130] She also illustrated her decision to do her best as a new woman through

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[127] During the Occupation, *Kageki* included commentary by various Takarazuka women, members of the Takarazuka administration, and letters from American GI fans.
[128] Shijō Hideko, "Haru toukaraji," *Kageki* no. 248, 1946, 45.
[129] Awashima Chikage,"Sōshun zakkan," *Kageki* no. 248, 1946, 40.
[130] Shijō, "Haru toukaraji," 45.

performing onstage as a "gorgeous flower," and in so doing, encouraged Japanese people to look ahead to the future.[131] Koshiji Fubuki, a famous *otokoyaku* (male role) star, demonstrated her pleasure in performing Western-inspired *otokoyaku* characters by saying, "Finally, I will play a prince called Antonio. It has been a while since I have danced or given any Western-inspired performances... I know I have to take over the dreamy and traditional Takarazuka."[132] Koshiji showed a high degree of motivation to overcome these difficulties and protect Takarazuka by performing onstage. Another *Takarasienne* expressed her pleasure to be back to the stage, writing that, "I had decided not to make any complaints until stepping line dance at the Takarazuka Grand Theater.[133]" As the anecdotes of these *Takarasienne* illustrate, each showed an excitement to perform again on the stage, and had a strong opinion about her own role in invigorating the New Japan.

Some scholars have shown the ways Japanese women throughout the war years and the Occupation continuously constructed their own identity.[134] In their book, *Rising Suns, Rising Daughters*, Joanna Liddle and Sachiko Nakajima note that, "Although it is true that the USA liberated the legal and political structure for women, we will argue... that many Japanese women had already merged into subject positionings, willingly or unwillingly..."[135] Since many Japanese men were fighting for the nation, Japanese women needed to take over

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[131] Shijō, "Haru toukaraji," 45.

[132] Koshiji Fubuki, "Haha heno tegami," *Kageki no. 248*, 1946, 43.

[133] Tamaoka Kaoru, *Takarasienne no Taiheiyō Sensō* (Shinchō -sha, 2004), 203.

[134] See Drothy Robins-Mowry, *The Hidden Sun: Women of Modern Japan* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1983); Yoshiko Miyake, "Double Experiences: Motherhood and Women's Factory Work under State Management in Japan in the 1930s and 1940s," in Gail Lee Bernstein, ed., *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600-1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991); Sally Anne Hastings, "Women Legislators in the Postwar Diet," in Anne E. Imamura, ed., *Re-imagining Japanese Women* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); Susan O. Long, "Nurturing and Femininity: The Ideal of Caregiving in Postwar Japan," in Anne E. Imamura, ed., *Re-imagining Japanese Women,* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).

[135] Joanna Liddle & Sachiko Nakajima, *Rising Suns, Rising Daughters* (New York: Zed Book, 2000), 149.

the works that men traditionally performed. Liddle and Nakajima explain that this experience gave Japanese women various opportunities to engage with a larger range of work, and to think about their identities. Furthermore, they illustrate that the defeat of Japan gave Japanese women the advantage of an opportunity for change, "to move from a position as object to a position as subject."[136] In short, Liddle and Nakajima show us the continuous process how Japanese women throughout the years of war and Occupation expanded their social roles and controlled their own identities.

Besides Liddle and Nakajima, in her book, *The Hidden Sun: Women of Modern Japan*, Dorothy Robins-Mowry also points out Japanese females' struggles to achieve opportunities to expand their knowledge and experiences during the Occupation.[137] Even women in the countryside walked for six to seven hours to attend meetings organized by the Civil Information and Educational Section (CIE). This shows that the enthusiasm women had to expand their knowledge and experiences from the war years.[138] These are just two of many works showing the ways Japanese women refused to accept limited opportunities.

This chapter adds to this story by exploring the way *Takarasienne* struggled to revive Takarazuka and reconstruct their identities as postwar professional Japanese female performers through the Occupation. Besides their passion to expand their possibilities to perform on the stage, I argue there are several reasons to focus on the *Takarasienne* during the Occupation. First of all, as stage performers allowed a wide range of gender expressions, the *Takarasienne* served as role models for postwar Japanese women. Scholars have

[136] Liddle & Nakajima, *Rising Suns, Rising Daughters*, 149.
[137] Dorothy Robins-Mowry, *The Hidden Sun: Women of Modern Japan* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1983).
[138] Ibid., 219.

examined other women who became pioneers in the postwar period, such as Okahara Miyako's study *Amerika Senryōki no Minshuka Seisaku.* This book investigates a radio program called "*Shufu no Jikan*" that the CIE had censored during the war, but which during the Occupation was influential among female listeners who learned about democracy and Americanization.[139] One program featured Yamamoto Yasue, a stage actress, who recalled in an interview that stage actresses had a special responsibility as role models during the postwar period. By performing roles on the stage or in radio dramas, actresses could show what it meant to be a New Women in the postwar era. As a result, many Japanese women looked to these role models on stage and radio and admired their beauty and freedom. [140] In this way, the *Takarasienne* also became ideal role models of postwar Japanese women. Because they could perform a much wider range of womanhood, including Euro-American inspired characters and male roles, the *Takarasienne* offered even greater opportunities for women to imagine alternative femininities. As a result, a focus on Takarazuka expands the possibilities for exploring different ways women constructed the New Woman in Occupation-era Japan.

A focus on Takarazuka also allows us to see the ways in which contacts outside Japan helped construct new ideas about Japanese womanhood. The *Takarasienne* had opportunities to interact with Americans directly both on and off the stage. Through their 1939 bi-coastal tour, they had come to shape their own identity in the intersection between Japan and the United States, and this continued during the Occupation. Their postwar

[139] Okahara Miyako, *Amerika Senryōki no Minshuka Seisaku rajio Hōsō* ni yoru Nihonjosei Saikyōiku puroguramu (Akashi Shoten, 2007).
[140] Ibid., 154-155.

contacts with Americans allowed them to continue exploring their own national and gender identities. Moreover, I argue that the Occupation policy of "Americanization" was not a new development for these performers. Even though many previous works treat the Occupation as a sudden transformation into an "Americanized" Japan, I argue that transnational contact predated the war. America did not overwhelm Takarazuka culture, because these female performers had performed Euro-American inspired repertoires since the 1920s, and have toured abroad as well. That is, while "Americanization" suggests the powerful influence of an "aggressive" American Occupation, for the *Takarasienne* it simply meant returning to the original repertoire that they already wished to perform again. This particular perspective allows us to reexamine the relationship between the American Occupation and Japan by revealing that "Americanization" was not merely a one-sided policy imposed by the US in the postwar years, and it was not what "liberated" Japanese women.

By paying attention to the voices of *Takarasienne*, in this chapter I investigate these females' struggles, passionate efforts and strong hopes to start their lives over in postwar Japan. I introduce the various contacts the *Takarasienne* had with American male GIs, their female family members and Japanese Takarazuka male staff, which helps clarify what *Takarasienne* thought of themselves and how others perceived them. While the Occupation circumscribed the choices *Takarasienne* could make about their lives, I argue that these female performers utilized the chances to interact and negotiate with Americans and widen their views to help reconstruct their own identities living in New Japan.

Takarazuka From War to Occupation

In the beginning of the 1940s, the interwar Japanese government strictly continued censoring Takarazuka and female performers.[141] For example, it had censored the repertoires based on Western themes and banned performing them on the stage because the state government regarded them as unpatriotic. Instead, they encouraged repertoires such as *Tsubasa no joshi teishintai* (Winged Women's Volunteer Corps, 1944) and *Sakimori no uta* (Song of the Soldiers of Kyushu, 1944), and promoted nationalism and militarism to enhance the patriotism for the audience and people in Takarazuka. Furthermore, the state banned *otokoyaku* on the stage in 1941 because they needed to increase the number of women in support of the war effort.[142] *Otokoyaku* performers also could not dress as males even during their time off the stage. Furthermore, the public reputation of Takarazuka performers suffered because of their gaudy fashions that were contrary to the popular slogan, "*zeitaku ha teki da*" (luxury is the enemy). A newspaper article from *Kobe shinbun* compared the extravagance of Takarazuka performers to other girls in the town, saying, "Accepting the limitations of patterned, colored and frilled clothes, the fashion of Takarazuka daughters were getting to simpler. But still they should be more frugal." [143] Although Takarazuka females wearing luxurious outfits were icons of fashion among working women called *offisu gāru* (Office Girl) in the 1930s, during wartime austerities

[141] Okamoto, *The Man Who Saved Kabuki*, 135.
[142] Kevin Wetmore, "A Note on Takarazuka," in *Rising from the Flames: the Rebirth of Theater in Occupied Japan, 1945-1952*, ed. Samuel Leiter (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2009), 382.
[143] "Mada mada hade da," *Kobe Shinbun*, 23 September 1940.

these fashions, and the Takarazuka women who made them famous, now became the source of criticism.[144]

As part of its "Regulations for the Control of Theatrical Production," the Cabinet Information Bureau closed down two major theaters: the Takarazuka Grand Theater in Hyogo and the Tokyo Takarazuka Theater in Tokyo. In 1940, Kobayashi Ichizō took up a position as Minister of Industry and Commerce, and to survive Takarazuka became a close ally of domestic wartime propaganda. The company joined *Nippon idō engeki renmei* (Japanese Federation of Mobile Theaters) to encourage civilian and military audiences around the country.[145] Takarazuka performers sometimes even went abroad to appease the Japanese military. According to Jennifer Robertson, "Mobile troupes of *Takarasiennes* (Takarazuka female performers) were dispatched to factories, farm villages, hospitals, and even war fronts throughout China, Korea, and Manchuria to provide civilians and soldiers with 'wholesome entertainment' and to weave together symbolically."[146]

As the war approached, the life styles of Takarazuka women changed suddenly and many of them quit Takarazuka and went back to their own hometown to escape from the expected bombings. According to Nakao Akira in his book, *Tezuka Osamu*, US army airplanes showered leaflets announcing the bombings of Takarazuka city on August 15, the day the war ended.[147] While other major cities around Takarazuka were bombed, Takarazuka city was not seriously damaged and the theater was left unscathed. When the

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[144] "Mada mada hade da," *Kobe Shinbun*, 23 September 1940.
[145] Leonie R. Stickland, *Gender Gymnastics: Performing and Consuming Japan's Takarazuka Revue* (Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press, 2008), 40.
[146] Jennifer Robertson, *Takarazuka: Sexual Politics and Popular Culture in Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 114.
[147] Nakano Akira, *Tezuka Osamu* (Kōdansha Hinotori Denki Bunko, no.75, 1991), 60.

emperor of Japan announced the defeat of the country, Takarazuka performers were scheduled to boost morale by performing in the northern part of Kyoto.[148]

In 1945, the Occupation forces took over the Takarazuka Grand Theater and the Tokyo Takarazuka Theater. While the Takarazuka Grand Theater was returned to Takarazuka within a month of the Japanese surrender, the Tokyo Takarazuka Theater was transformed into the Ernie Pyle Theater and remained under Occupation control until 1955.[149] While the CIE started censoring all Takarazuka repertoires and publications during the Occupation, they nevertheless allowed the theater and its female performers a good deal of freedom. The main purpose of CIE was promoting the transformation of theater arts into a democratic media. They were divided into several categories, and the Motion Pictures Entertainment Section was in charge of censoring the stage.[150] For example, from the earliest performances of the Occupation period, censors allowed the theater to perform Western-themed repertoires and allowed for male role performers, both of which the Japanese government had banned during the war.[151]

While the censors strictly hampered or banned kabuki and other forms of traditional theater that seemed to reflect "feudal" inclinations toward "revenge" and "suicide," they were more lenient with Takarazuka because it had long relied on Western-inspired repertoire and had not been based on "feudalistic" themes.[152] Furthermore, since the stage writers, choreographers, and female performers in Takarazuka were accustomed to Western and American-inspired repertoires and techniques, they found it relatively easy to accept

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148 Stickland, *Gender Gymnastics*, 40.
149 Wetmore, "A Note on Takarazuka," 383.
150 Takemae Eiji, *GHQ* (Iwanami Shoten, 1983), 123-128.
151 Wetmore, "A Note on Takarazuka," 384.
152 Ibid.

Occupation censorship. Although a certain power relationship existed between the Occupation forces and the company's female performers, they were able to adapt to and negotiate with Occupation censors in order to revive their original repertoires in which *otokoyaku* and *musumeyaku* performed romantic, Western-inspired love stories. Furthermore, since Takarazuka had conducted America tours in 1939, Takarazuka was familiar with adapting itself to different audiences. It therefore had little trouble accepting Occuaption authority while still pleasing Japanese audiences. For example, in 1949, Takarazuka held a tenth anniversary event to celebrate its 1939 visit to the US. In the very next year, *Asahi Shimbun sha* (The Asahi Shimbun company) held an "*Amerika Hakurankai* (America Exposition)" in Nishinomiya city, Kobe.[153] In the show, *Takarasienne* performed "*Haru no Odori- Suingu Rapusodī* (Spring Dance- Swing Rhapsody)" and sang a song with lyrics praising America: "Beautiful City Oh New York, Universal City Oh New York, We should honor Oh USA…"[154] In this way, adapting to new censorship rules under the Occupation was not such a big transformation for Takarazuka, and we can also see how successfully the revue became one representative part of Occupation popular culture that helped promote positive images of the US and democracy in postwar Japan.

[153] "Sengo hatsu no Honkakuteki Hakurnkai Amrikahaku," Nishinomiya city HP. https://www.nishi.or.jp/bunka/rekishitobunkazai/mukashiphoto/amerikahaku.html (Accessed August 19, 2020). In the expo, including the model of the Statue of Liberty at the front gate, there was a model of the White House. By using a diorama, it explained the history of America and its culture by displaying Ford cars and televisions.

[154] "Haru no Odori- Suingu Rapusodī," in *Takarazuka Kageki Kyakuhon Kaisetsu shū* (Takarazuka Kageki Shuppan, April,1950), 17-23.

Male American GIs and *Takarasienne*

In the context of the Occupation's promotion of civilization and democracy, Japanese women were regarded as important figures in demonstrating the successful transformation of a "New Japan." GHQ's predominantly male policy makers, starting with General Douglas MacArthur and SCAP (the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers), regarded the emancipation and electoral participation of Japanese women as a key reform in constructing a New Japan. In his autobiography, *Reminiscences*, MacArthur portrayed himself as an advocate and liberator working for Japanese women.[155] Although a number of previous works have accordingly celebrated him as a hero who offered a new path for Japanese women, MacArthur and other male executives were in fact quite cautious about the radical feminist movement in Japan. Furthermore, MacArthur suggested that Japanese women should revert to the "home."[156] He argued that the emancipation of Japanese women should be undertaken upon the premise that women pursue social activities based on gendered divisions of labor. Moreover, while MacArthur likened Japan to "a boy of twelve" who had the potential to become a "man," he did not think Japanese women could or should become leaders of a modern society.[157] As such, gender studies researcher Toyoda Maho argues that the celebratory narrative of GHQ's emancipation of Japanese women served mainly to justify the hegemony of the US as a global leader of freedom and

[155] Douglas MacArthur, *Reminiscences* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), 305.
[156] Kazama Chinami, ed. "Senryō Nihon no Shōfu Hyōshō: Dansei shutai wo kouchiku suru baitai," in *Akujo to Ryōjo no Shintai Hyōshō* (Kanagawa Daigaku Jinbungaku Kenkyū sho, 2012), 210-221.209.
[157] Naoko Shibusawa, *America's Geisha Ally* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 57.

democracy.[158] Furthermore, a majority of previous works treat Japanese women as sexual victims in order to criticize their relationship with American male occupiers.[159] While the Occupation encouraged "restricted" freedoms for Japanese women, and sexual relationships between American males and Japanese females had been a problem, American male occupation forces still allowed Takarazuka performers to return to the stage. They permitted these women to perform Western-inspired repertoires and also play male roles even while censoring displays of Japanese masculinity that might be construed as nationalistic. However, it was also clear that there was a power hierarchy between them, and the majority of male GIs treated Japanese women as immature and submissive girls.

Male American forces occupied, seized, and censored Takarazuka, but at the same time, they enjoyed Takarazuka as entertainment in various ways and willingly reached out to Takarazuka performers. An article from the newspaper *En Corps* illustrates the popularity of Takarazuka among Occupation forces in the Kansai area in particular. *En Corps* was a weekly newspaper published by the Kyoto Occupation forces authorities. It states,

> Each month the world famous Takarazuka Girl's Opera School presents a new show to the public, which has for many years been flocking there to see the performances of one of the world's most unusual and outstanding organizations. And since the coming of the US Army to Japan, so popular have been these shows with the GI audiences that a special invitation is extended to all military personnel for the April performance, which is to start on the 22nd of this month with a double feature- the opera "Carmen" and the revue "Spring Dances"- given each day from 1 p.m... Their

[158] Toyoda Maho, "Amerika senryō ka no nihon ni okeru josei roudou kaikaku- Hogo to Byōdō wo Meguru Ronsou wo Chūsinni," *Amerika Kenkyū no.23* (2000):43-59.
Furthermore, Toyoda explains there was only one administrator, Ethel Weed, in charge of the emancipation of Japanese women. For Toyoda, the fact that only one American woman with little background knowledge of Japanese society, language, or culture engaged in the amendment of the constitution reveals that the policy for Japanese women was rather superficial with regard to the "success" of the occupation.

[159] See Mire Koikari, *Pedagogy of Democracy Feminism and the Cold War in the U.S. Occupation of Japan* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2008), and Kanō Mikiyo, *Senryō to sei* (Keisen jogakuen daigaku heiwa bunka kenkyū sho, 2007).

> stage art is unusual in that it combines the most ancient and beautiful of Japanese work, with some of the most modern music and dancing of the Western world. For anyone who enjoys music and theatrical performances of any sort, the presentations by these girls in the picturesque valley town to Takarazuka, midway between Kyoto and Kobe, promise one of the most interesting and valuable experiences in Japan.[160]

En Corps advertised Takarazuka and its special invitation for the Occupation forces. It portrays Takarazuka as a form of entertainment in which the Occupation forces could enjoy both "the most ancient and beautiful of Japanese work" and "some of the most modern music and dancing of the Western world." Analyzing these parts, the newspaper suggested a divide between "uncivilized" Japanese works and "civilized" Western works. Yet, at the same time, it celebrated the combination of Japan and the West and promoted the plays performed by Japanese women. Although the newspaper did not mention anything about *otokoyaku*, the article contained a photograph by Edward P. Holland of an *otokoyaku* at the center of the stage wearing male kimono.

Whether Takarazuka female players were *otokoyaku* or *musumeyaku*, many American male GIs quoted in *Kageki* mentioned Takarazuka performers' common beauty and cuteness. For example, Lt. Be Randolph MC sent a letter with his opinion of the performance *Rōzū Marī* to Takarazuka. He illustrated the beauty of the Takarazuka females by stating:

> Above all shining out as a brilliant celestial body was the most delightful Rose Marie.[161] I hold no reservation in declaring that she is one of the most beautiful of all the lovely ladies that I have had the fortune and privilege of looking upon. She seemed as a Goddess brought from the days of yore and set upon our Earth for the pleasure of mortal beings. There are no words that can express the beauty of this creature of the heavens, this nymph of glory.[162]

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[160] "*Takarazuka shōjo kageki* from EnCorps," *Kageki no. 250,* 1946, 34-35.

[161] Rose Marie was played by Awashima Chikage at that time.

[162] "Rōzū Marī no kansou," *Kageki no. 254*, 1946, 20-21.

From descriptions such as this, it is clear that American GIs were captivated by the beauty of Takarazuka performers. For example, Randolph described Awashima as a "brilliant celestial body." The word "celestial" suggests an untouchable and dreamy physique. Furthermore, he identified *Rōzū Marī* played by Awashima as a "Goddess," suggesting that he had even deified Awashima's sacred beauty.

Moreover, some of the American voices introduced in *Kageki* mention the *otokoyaku*. Second Lieutenant William Haim, for instance, watched *Karumen* and *Haru no odori*, and wrote that,

> It was my first time ever seeing the Girls' Revue. I was so impressed to watch such a beautiful and entertaining show... Kasugano Yachiyo and Shinryoku Natsuko in *Karumen* were perfect...While watching the two shows, the finale of *Haru no odori* with its many American hit songs made me feel nostalgic. Although they were sung in Japanese, it still seemed very natural... Having *otokoyaku* is another specialty in Takarazuka. But, I think it was less kitsch than I had expected. Rather, they were very pretty and natural.[163]

Overall, Haim had a very positive reaction, even considering the *otokoyaku* as "pretty." Although much Takarazuka scholarship tends to examine *otokoyaku* as an example of latent homosexuality, Haim and other American male viewers did not distinguish male roles and female roles clearly in Takarazuka. Around the same time in the US, when American females started getting jobs outside the house, the concept of binary sexuality between "homo" and "hetero" became more clearly divided.[164] As such, while the US government did not pay much attention to lesbianism in the early twentieth century, the early postwar years saw increases in restrictive legislation.[165] But even though American male GIs witnessed the

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[163] "Takarazuka no inshō," *Kageki no.250*, 1946, 8.

[164] Miwa Rimi, "*Amerika gashuukoku ni okeru 'kindaiteki sekushuariti' no keisei wo meguru rekisiteki kenkyu doukou,*" *Hitotsubashi Shakai kagaku vol.6,* (Hitotsubashi University Repository, 2014), 124-125.

[165] Ibid.

sanctions against lesbianism in the US, they did not take issue with Japanese females playing both parts of a love story in occupied Japan. Unlike American females, male American occupiers regarded Takarazuka females (whether they were *otokoyaku* or *musumeyaku*) as too callow to fall in love with each other. Haim's use of the word "pretty" represented this perceived adolescence, childishness, and innocence of Japanese females.

As another example, analyzing the filming of USSBS (United States Strategic Bombing Survey), one finds that American male GIs Lieutenant Sassoon and Shimomura Michiwo clearly regarded Takarazuka females as immature girls. In addition to shooting color footage of areas damaged by bombings such as Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the USSBS also filmed Takarazuka performances as part of its survey of Japanese scenery and cultural facilities.[166] According to Shimomura, a Japanese-American translator for the USSBS, they originally planned on only recording the music at the Takarazuka Grand Theater. After watching the performance, however, they found that the *Haru no Odori* revue was colorful, beautiful, and elegant, and so decided to film the entire show. During the shooting, for example, both Sassoon and Shimomura taught English pronunciation to one of Takarazuka performers, Fujishiro Ayako, and praised her English as "very good." Furthermore, since it had been filmed late at night, Sassoon looked out for the girls and asked them whether they were sleepy or not. When the girls were sweating during the performance, Lieutenant Sassoon brought tissue cases to the girls and wiped their faces with tissue papers. Moreover, Sassoon administered medicinal stimulants to the Japanese male directors, Yasumoto and

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[166] USSBS (United States Strategic Bombing Survey) was filming the bombed areas like Hiroshima and Nagasaki and cultural facilities in Japan. To restore the sources clearly, they filmed in color. We can see this in the video taken by USSBS in the National Archives catalog https://catalog.archives.gov.

Uchimura, saying "You are still kids, so you must need this." This description suggests that Lieutenant Sassoon, a white male, treated Takarazuka female performers as powerless children by performing tasks that one would typically associate with childcare. Moreover, even for the Japanese male directors, Yasumoto and Uchimura, Sassoon described them as "kids." It clearly reveals that Sassoon regarded not only Takarazuka female performers but also Japanese male directors as submissive.

Considering all these examples, male American GIs seemed to view Takarazuka merely as entertainment performed by beautiful, adolescent Japanese females. As such, the Occupation Forces feminized Takarazuka women and did not mention the possibilities of homosexuality in the performance. At the same time, they also emphasized their own American self-image as liberators of Japanese women by, for example, giving Takarazuka females a chance to perform a variety of characters including *otokoyaku.* The Occupation forces' allowance of such masculine forms within Takarazuka's broader representation of femininity could be taken as a suitable example of the emancipation of Japanese women. However, it did not mean that the male American GIs permitted complete freedom for Takarazuka female performers. While Occupation forces banished forms of Japanese male displays of masculinity for seeming too tightly bound to nationalism, *otokoyaku,* played by innocent Japanese females, did not seem to pose a threat to the demilitarization and democratization of Japan. In other words, *otokoyaku* did not present the same peril as the seemingly savage Japanese males. Rather, the American male occupiers' infantilizing gaze towards Takarazuka girls can be associated with a broader colonial gaze that sought to shore up feminine roles for Japanese women after the war.

Even if American male GIs had treated Takarazuka females as immature girls,

however, Takarazuka females were never passive and subjugated women when interacting with American male GIs. Rather, they willingly communicated with Americans and cleverly exploited special opportunities that most Japanese women could not experience. Beyond performing in stage shows, for instance, they were able to come into contact not only with Americans, but also with new film technology from America. Since the technology of color film was not fully developed in Japan at the time, the USSBS shoot was the first occasion for Takarazuka females to be filmed in color. Also, since it was filmed for an American audience, one of the performers said, "Takarazuka women will finally go to Hollywood!"[167] Such words reveal Takarazuka females' global cultural aspirations. They were pleased with getting the chance to be seen by wider audiences beyond the small theater in Takarazuka. For instance, an *otokoyaku* named Kodama Haruka put on more make-up than usual because she was so excited to be filmed in color for the first time. Kasugano Yachiyo, another main *otokoyaku* performer, advised Kodama to be relaxed, but Kasugano remained agitated, saying that "Main characters including me would be filmed in close-up by the camera. What should I do?"[168] Although the film was ordered by the Occupation forces, Takarazuka females were excited to get the chance to be filmed in color and shown in America. In *Kageki*, they expressed their admiration for Hollywood by saying that, "Our films will be developing in Hollywood. It is like a dream for us."[169] Their words suggest that Takarazuka females took advantage of the filming and promotion process as a unique opportunity afforded by the Occupation forces.

[167] "Tennen iro eiga satsuei kengaku ki," *Kageki no.251*, 1946, 38-39.
[168] Ibid.
[169] Ibid.

Unlike the submissive and weak figures of Japanese females that previous scholars have presented, Takarazuka females were more than mere objects of sexual occupation. Through Takarazuka, they opened new worlds for themselves, and exploited new opportunities to present themselves as performers with ambitions to revive Takarazuka and even promote it beyond national borders.

Female American Audiences and *Takarasienne*

Kageki also introduced American women's voices in describing Takarazuka, showing that Takarazuka attracted more than just American male GIs during the Occupation period. American women, too, found much to enchant them. When an American all-female troupe, called the Lingham Show Troupe, visited Japan to entertain the Occupation forces, they watched the Takarazuka performances of *Karumen* and *Haruno odori* at the Takarazuka Grand Theater. Afterward, they communicated with Takarazuka women. Takarazuka performers were excited to talk to the American troupe, and asked about their experiences learning how to perform in New York.[170] Due to such mutual curiosity and admiration, both the Lingham Show Troupe and the Takarazuka females shared ideas and experiences based on their lives on the stage. Furthermore, the majority of American female audiences also enjoyed watching Takarazuka.

During wartime, the status of American females had gradually changed in America. Even though it seemed very critical for women to get a job during the Great Depression, the demand for women workers, even in the same fields as American males, grew higher due to

[170] "Ringamu shō dan rainichi," *Kageki no.250*, 1946, 49.

the shortage of labor during war.[171] While the state expected American women to have a wider range of womanhood during this period, however, the early postwar years saw American females pushed back into the home and forced to be "good mothers and a good wives" again. The educational curriculum for training American women to substitute for male laborers during war suddenly shifted to one centering on how to become good wives.[172] However, the experience of working outside of house and earning money by themselves spurred many to consider their own independent futures.[173] Meanwhile, the Occupation forces were offering voting rights and other emancipatory policies for Japanese women. Therefore, American females staying in Japan during the Occupation experienced the shifting images of "ideal" women in both America and Japan.[174]

In the Takarazuka Grand Theater, one could therefore find various American females watching and enjoying Takarazuka during the Occupation. Some of them were the family members of the male Occupation forces. While they enjoyed Takarazuka as one form of entertainment, some of them were attracted to *otokoyaku* and became fans. For example, we might turn to an interview article with Miss Caroline Leiter in *Kageki*:

> To be honest, I thought that Takarazuka was not a professional revue, but every performer did a great job. That was very surprising to me. In America, we rarely have women playing male roles. It probably seems quite difficult for American women…

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[171] Soga Kuniko, "Dainiji sekaitaisenchū no jogakuto no koujō roudou no keiken to sengo no shokugyō sikō heno eikyō: mittu no jirei kara," *Kobe Daigaku Ningen Hattatsu Kankyō Kenkyū* 1 (Kobe Daigaku Ningen Hattatsu kankō kenkyū sho, 2013),106.

[172] Uemura Chikako, *Josei Kaihō wo meguru Senryō Seisaku* (Keisō Shoten, 2007), 5.

[173] Sherma Berge Gluck, *Rosie the Riveter Revisited* (A Meridian Book, 1987), 268.
According to Gluck, media was one of the means to tell the ideal representations of women. For example, Soga takes up an example a TV program, "Father Knows Best" and explains that it was one of the reactions to push women back to the traditional gender roles.

[174] For example, an American woman Ethel Weed working for the Occupation forces and taking an initiative for the Japanese women's emancipation said… Weed was working at Womens' Army Corps (WAC) during wartime and chosen as a woman stuff to educate Japanese people, especially women. She had cooperated with Japanese women activists for the freedom of Japanese women that she did not experience yet even in America yet.

> Yet, Takarazuka female students performed male roles perfectly... Another thing that surprised me was that they mastered authentic American rhythm, dance, and production methods. Takarazuka girls must have taken a long training to master their performance...When GIs listen to songs that reminded them of home, they became very pleased. For example, Koshiji Fubuki sang just a song with three words in English and she suddenly became famous among the English-speaking audience... When Takarazuka girls say something in English to the American audience such as, "Hello" and "Goodbye," they are so pleased. In the near future, I hope that Takarazuka girls use English more often... I, an American fan will show my congratulations to Takarazuka Revue! Congratulations! I appreciate all the wonderful entertainment that you showed us.[175]

Here, Leiter notes that she did not expect Takarazuka to be a "professional revue," and registers her surprise that Takarazuka females performed "authentic" American style repertoires. Moreover, in addition to male American GIs, Leiter also indicates the importance of mastering English and urges the women to speak English more during the show. Such comments reveal American priorities such as technical skills and English proficiency based on the power hierarchies between America and Japan. However, while male Occupation forces did not clearly distinguish between male and female roles among Takarazuka performers and uniformly proclaimed the performers' beauty and cuteness, Leiter praised the skill of *otokoyaku* in particular by saying that "female students performed male roles perfectly."[176] Also, by comparing them to actresses in America, she made clear that Takarazuka performers had broader possibilities for performing masculine *otokoyaku* characters that seemed "quite difficult for American females."[177] Since most American females were forced to return home after the war and found their possibilities of womanhood limited by state and society, it is not entirely surprising that they found hidden potential and

[175] "Takarazuka no inshō," *Kageki no. 276*, 1948, 20.
[176] Ibid.
[177] Ibid.

new possibilities for women through watching *otokoyaku.* This indicates that Leiter considered *otokoyaku* freer than their American counterparts. Hemmed in by gender expectations and ideologies, American women were restricted to a small range of female identities to play on stage. It was significant, then, that Leiter called herself a "fan" of Takarazuka.[178]

Another example of this interesting exchange was a report in which a reporter stated that, "Recently, some wives of GIs are attracted to the *otokoyaku.*"[179] In her book, Kawasaki Kenko noted that although CIE decided to include this quote at the end, it was considered problematic and reexamined before publication.[180] This suggests that CIE regarded the American females' admiration of Japanese *otokoyaku* as problematic, because they were concerned about the danger of homosexual relationships between Japanese *otokoyaku* and white American females. As mentioned in the previous section, male American GIs did not problematize their own relationships with Takarazuka females. However, in the case of those between American females and Japanese *otokoyaku*, American male GIs regarded it as a dilemma in light of the issue of race.

Furthermore, in 1949 Nikki Witty, the wife of an American soldier who taught dance to children of the Occupation forces, wrote a play called *Wandafuru Haridei* (*Wonderful Holiday*) for Takarazuka. Witty did not have any prior career as a stage writer, and *Wonderful Holiday* was her first theater production. *Kageki* printed a discussion between Witty, Uchimura (the play's director), two music arrangers and eight Takarazuka

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[178] "Takarazuka no inshō," *Kageki no. 276,* 1948, 20.

[179] "Takarazuka yume monogatari," *Kageki no. 259,* 1947, 48-51.

[180] Kawasaki Kenko, "GHQ senryōki no Takarazuka Kageki," in *Senryō ki Bunka wo Hiraku,* ed. Yamamoto Taketoshi (Waseda Daigaku Gendai Seiji Keizai Kenkyū gyō sho, 2006), 68-69.

women.[181] Witty had watched a Takarazuka musical comedy called *Aloha Oe* five times during her stay near the Takarazuka Grand Theater in 1948. After watching Takarazuka many times, she was so impressed with the Takarazuka performers that she wanted to write something for them. She went to the Takarazuka offices and asked them to allow her to write a production, and the company agreed. [182] Through directing Takarazuka and giving roles to Japanese females, Witty showed her desire to obtain freedoms like those that Takarazuka females seemed to possess.

Likewise, Takarazuka's female performers enjoyed spending time with Witty. In the symposium, Takarazuka females talked passionately with Witty and asked her about "authentic" American theaters. For example, Kuroki Hikaru showed her appreciation for Witty instructing her on how to dance Rumba. Uchibuki Misa continued asking Witty who her favorite singer was, and what kind of dance was most famous in America lately. Moreover, Mizuhara Setsuko and Kaede Shigemi asked Witty about fashion trends in American theater. When Witty talked about how to make theatrical costumes in America, all the Takarazuka females listened intently. Uchimura, a male director of *Wandafuru Horidei,* also appreciated Witty's new style of production and the chance to learn real American style direction while working with Witty.[183]

According to *kyakuhonshū*, Uchimura said that,

> The fact that an American wrote a script for Takarazuka reveals that many occupation forces and their family love and enjoy our Takarazuka Revue... I know that many of them have already become fans of Takarazuka. In fact, I know some

[181] "Wandafuru horidei no sakusha nikkī Uittī san ni kiku," *Kageki no.285*, 1949, 14-18.
[182] Ibid.
[183] Ibid.

female American fans and sometimes I want to write something about non-Japanese fans.[184]

American female audiences were therefore no less active than male GIs in consuming Takarazuka as entertainment. However, American females such as Witty went a step further into the dreamy world of Takarazuka. The fact that Takarazuka executives allowed an American woman with no directing experience to stage a performance illustrates a level of deference that seems only attributable to White supremacy. However, these American women engaged with "all-female" Takarazuka and manipulated its meanings to meet their needs. In response to their sociocultural positions and shifting identities in the US, their ways of understanding "all-female" casts and *otokoyaku* were wide-ranging. While crossing borders to appreciate an art form for entertainment's sake, they also saw the performances within the context of American gender and sexual relations. This encouraged American women to become involved in Takarazuka as well. On the other hand, with their continuous admiration for America, Takarazuka females also communicated with American women and learned a lot from them about the theater trends in America and technical skills such as songs and dances. Despite their unequal relationship mediated through racial hierarchies, both Takarazuka and Americans exchanged and shared their interests as women beyond national borders.

[184] *Takarazuka kageki hanagumikōen kyakuhonshū* (Takarazuka kagekidan shuppanbu,1949), 9.

Japanese Males and *Takarasienne*

MacArthur described Japanese males as "a boy of 12," and mentioned his mission to grow them up into matured males by the end of the Occupation.[185] Not only being treated as "a boy of 12," Japanese males faced the fear of losing their own masculinities by following the American hegemony. "Japan -- only yesterday a menacing, masculine threat-had been transformed," writes the historian of Occupation John Dower, "almost in the blink of an eye, into a compliant, feminine body on which the white victors could impose their will."[186] As Dower noted, Japanese men realized the "feminization" of Japan and were feeling a sense of danger in losing own masculinity. Furthermore, Ōgoshi Aiko noted that, most Japanese men could not accept the emancipation of Japanese women because they feared the collapse of paternalism.[187] Ōgoshi continued that Japanese males started developing a loathing for Japanese females who interacted with GIs or took inspiration from the American occupiers.[188] In her book, Yajima Midori talked about the postwar illustration of the female bodies through the media controlled by Japanese men. By filming and representing Japanese women as a medium of hyper femininity under the control of Japanese males, Yajima concluded that Japanese males utilized the representations of Japanese women to recover and confirm their own original masculinities.[189] However, in Takarazuka the interaction between Japanese males and *Takarasienne* was clearly different from the previous studies argued. Focusing on Takarazuka during the Occupation will lead

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[185]Shibusawa, *America's Geisha Ally*, 54-59.
[186] John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1999), 138-139.
[187] Ōgoshi Aiko and Igeta Midori, *Sengo Shisō no Porittikusu.* (Saitō sha, 2005), 50.
[188] Ibid., 49.
[189] Yajima Midori, *Deai no Enkin hō- watashi no eiga ron* (Ushio Shuppansha, 1979),18-21.

us a different way of representation of its relationships between Japanese males and females.

Right after the war defeat, Uekane Fumio, a big fan of Takarazuka from his childhood, wrote a letter to Kobayashi Ichizo, a founder of Takarazuka and offered himself to participate in Takarazuka stage as a performer. He said, "The beauty of the Takarazuka world had captured my heart since I saw 'Mon Paris' when I was four years old. After the defeat of the war, I performed something like musical during evacuation. Mr. Kobayashi, please allow me to join Takarazuka as a performer and be on stage with Takarazuka girls."[190] During wartime, Uekane was in Kyushu as a member of the kamikaze corps. While his colleagues lost their lives through kamikaze attacks, he decided to survive and encouraged himself by vowing to see Takarazuka again after the triumph of the war. [191] For Uekane, Takarazuka was the only thing that brought hope for his future. After receiving the letter, Kobayashi decided to hire some "real" males as additional members of Takarazuka. One major reason for hiring men was that the Takarazuka was short of female performers because some *Takarasienne* quit during the war. To sustain the same prewar scale performances and to attract even more audiences, the company felt it had no other choice but to hire men for a limited period.

In 1945, Takarazuka recruited five men including Uekane. In the next year, two more entered. However, fans and Takarazuka employees complained, and these men were never given the main *otokoyaku* roles. When they did appear on stage, they played only bit parts, such as playing a big monkey or the legs of horses, and sang mostly in the backup

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[190] Tsuji Norihiko, *Otokotachi no Takarazuka- Yume wo otta kenkyū sei no hanseiki* (Nojigiku Bunko, 2010), 12.
[191] Ibid., 20.

chorus behind the stage curtain.[192] In *Kageki*, Kobayashi talked about the male members, "I know that we cannot substitute real males for *otokoyaku.* I do not want to throw 'the beauty of *otokoyaku*' away."[193] Analyzing Kobayashi's words, although he supported an integration of men and women in Takarazuka, he knew the high demand of *otokoyaku* performed by *Takarasienne* having both masculinity and femininity among fans who had been starved of watching the original repertoires of Takarazuka. As one fan named Kibo Aki said, "Is there any guy who can perfectly perform Romeo from 'Romeo and Juliet' right now in Japan? Is there any beautiful Japanese male who suits tuxedo? NO! I prefer Kasugano-san and Kamishiro-san (both were *otokoyaku*) performing such male characters."[194] By comparing real Japanese males to *otokoyaku*, Kibo showed that men could not play even *otokoyaku* roles. This was a striking admission for a patriarchal society that had become even more so under wartime conditions. But no Japanese man, she declared, was fit to play even Romeo, an Italian who fell in love Juliet passionately and died for his love in the end. For Kibo, *otokoyaku* was not about Japanese men at all, but about demonstrating the different types of "gentle" and "beautiful" males existing outside of Japan.

Furthermore, most *Takarasienne* had also viewed male performers negatively. After the entrance of males, *Kageki* posted the result of the survey asking whether twenty-three *Takarasienne* agreed with the entrance of males or not, and twenty-two females dissented from addition of the male members. [195] One *musumeyaku*, Hibi Teruko said, "I do not want

[192] Tsuji, *Otokotachi no Takarazuka*, 108, 109.
[193] Kobayashi Ichizo, "Omoitsuki," *Kageki* no. 257, 1947, 15.
[194] Ibid., 15.
[195] "*Takarazuka zadankai*,"*Kageki* no. 253, 1946, 27.

to destroy the culture of Takarazuka having both *otokoyaku* and *musumeyaku* which we had cultivated until now."[196] Another *musumeyaku*, Awashima Chikage said, "I have never felt any elegance while seeing men on the stage."[197] An *otokoyaku*, Narumi Ushio also mentioned that, "We have always admired something beautiful, and men did not fit the Takarazuka world."[198] Like Kibo, Takarazuka performers commonly claimed the importance of keeping the romance, dream and pureness of Takarazuka. According to Awashima, she denied the beauty of Japanese males and refused accepting them in the Takarazuka world.

At the same time, however, it did not mean they wanted a Takarazuka in which only *musumeyaku* performed on the stage. Compared with real men, *otokoyaku* de-escalated the hyper masculinity that Japanese males had represented and emphasized. At the same time, while Japanese men were struggling to identify their masculinities after the war defeat, female *otokoyaku* performers took center stage with their own performance. Although previous studies often feature cultural representations of women in theater, film, magazines and novels and emphasize their hyper femininity, in Takarazuka female *otokoyaku* were always the center of the stage and performed a style of masculinity they had constructed even before the Occupation.[199]

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[196] "*Takarazuka zadankai*," 27.

[197] Ibid., 29.

[198] Ibid., 26.

[199] For example, see Kazama, *Akujo to Ryōjo no Shintai Hyōshō,* 221-228. Kazama indicates that after the war, there was a theatrical play called "*Nikutai no Mon*" in which Japanese women were forced to be half naked on the stage. "*Nikutai no Mon*" was a big hit and was made into a movie in 1948. In the same year, a film called "*Yoru no Onnatachi*" featuring *panpan* was also a big hit. In terms of magazines, magazines called "*kasutori zassi*" featuring Japanese female prostitutes and their bodies also became popular among male readers.

In 1954, the Takarazuka company fired all the male performers without even any ceremony for them. After being let go, some continued their careers as professional performers while others remained in Takarazuka as choreographers and directors.[200] Although all male performers were skillful and greatly admired Takarazuka, the fans, the company and the female performers could not accept them on center stage. While there was a high demand of *otokoyaku* and they also got the privileges to show their Western inspired female masculinities, real male performers could only sing in the backup chorus and playing minimal roles, and never were allowed to show their own masculinities on the Takarazuka stage.

While real male performers did not have any big chance on the stage, Japanese men played a pivotal role in the re-establishment of Takarazuka. As Takarazuka staff, they worked very hard to promote Takarazuka stars, and were very pleased with bring *otokoyaku* back onto the stage again. Men were, therefore, in roles supporting women. In the magazine *Kageki,* Hikita Ichiro, a president of the Takarazuka Company during the Occupation era, expressed his appreciation for the support he received from Occupation forces to re-build the Takarazuka in which *otokoyaku* and *musumeyaku* performed love romantic stories.[201] Hikita also announced his responsibility to respect females and female arts by saying,

> Recently, in Japanese cultural media such as novels, theaters and films, most of Japanese females were oppressed, mocked and tempted. Cultural media represented them as unhappy symbols. We should rethink about this ... I personally think we can live happily only when we respect women. In Takarazuka, we always respect them and we should contribute to new Japan by appreciating Japanese women.[202]

[200] Tsuji, *Otokotachi no Takarazuka*, 130-132.

[201] Hikita Ichiro, "Saikan no ji," *Kageki no.248*, 1946, 12-13.

[202] Hikita Ichiro, "Josei shonchō to Josei Geijutu," *Kageki no. 284*, 1949, 65.

Although Hikita had to choose words that would give his female readers a good impression, his attitude towards the female performers was always supportive. Not only Hikita, but also other male employees who had dreams to revive the style of Takarazuka and worked hard to create the stories and stage sets where *otokoyaku* always performed the leading parts.

Though male performers were not accepted on the stage, men played an important role reviving Takarazuka. Takarazuka's first performances after the war were *Karmen* (*Carmen*) and *Haru no odori: ai no Yume* (*Spring Dance: Reveries of Love*).[203] *Karumen* is a world famous French opera depicting the tragic love stories of *Hose* (José) and *Karumen*. But Hori Masaki, the Takarazuka performance's director believed that the all-female Takarazuka version would be unique. He stated that,

> Finally, we got our theater back. I do not know how to express my pleasure... Under the national policies during the war, we had to choreograph repertoires supporting the war effort, and it turned out that all of our efforts were useless... Now, the majority of Japanese do not have any dreams. If human beings do not have dreams, they do not have enough power to go on living... The story of *Karumen* may be too realistic and the story itself may not be one filled with dreams, but the music in the repertoires will certainly empower the audience... Takarazuka's *Karumen* is not a grand opera but a special *Karumen* played by all females to help revive our dreams.[204]

Frustrated during the war because of the closing of Takarazuka theaters, Hori expressed gratitude for getting the chance to reopen with new repertoires. While Hori admitted the limitation of *otokoyaku*'s singing skills, he believed that *Hose*, a Spanish and masculine male played by *otokoyaku* would do something more than provide mere musical entertainment. It would rebuild the dreams of the audiences in which not real Japanese males but only *otokoyaku* combining femininity and masculinity could perform in Takarazuka especially

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[203] Hori Masao, *"Onna bakari no Karumen," Kageki no.249*, 1946, 22-23.
[204] Ibid.

during Occupation era. Although the Occupation forces gave Takarazuka the right to re-open the theater and to allow females to perform male roles once again, Takarazuka male staffs also utilized the opportunities to reestablish the fantasy *otokoyaku* to revive Takarazuka again.

To further protect their theaters, Takarazuka male directors also courted the good opinion of the US Occupation authorities. They gave Americans prime tickets, including seats designated only for the American occupation forces in the Takarazuka Grand Theater. *Takarasienne* also visited the Occupation forces and performed in front of the audiences at several theaters, such as Osaka Kitano Theater, Kyoto Takarazuka Theater, Nagoya Takarazuka Theater and Ernie Pyle Theater.[205] Not only did they interact with the American GIs in Japan, the company also tried to make some connections with Americans in the US. In 1949, for instance, they invited the famous Broadway showman Billy Rose to view some Takurazuka plays and asked for feedback. An article in *Kageki* describes Rose's assessment. Although he criticized the gaudy Takarazuka costumes, and the lack of technical music skills, Hikita accepted these comments with appreciation. "By accepting the critical reviews and getting encouragement from the more sophisticated theatrical arts, I realized that we should learn more and promote Takarazuka."[206]

Considering the actions and voices of the Japanese male staff working at Takarazuka, we can see their devotion to reviving Takarazuka and giving its performers including *otokoyaku* the opportunity to show their skills on the public stage. Also, by playing an intermediary role between Occupation forces and female performers, male executives

[205] Tokyo Takarazuka Theater had been occupied and renamed Ernie Pyle Theater until 1954. Ernie Pyle Theater became the designated theater for the US occupation forces.

[206] Hikita Ichirō, "Igi aru hihyō," *Kageki no.283*, 1949, 13.

encouraged female performers to communicate with members of the occupation forces and a famous Broadway showman who people most Japanese women would not normally had a chance to communicate with directly. Some previous studies have described the Japanese males who lost their masculinities through the war defeat and showcased Japanese females as weak, seduced and hyper feminine symbols. However, when shifting our focus to Takarazuka, Japanese male performers played supportive roles to enhance the beautiful and masculine Japanese females, and the male staff were pleased with giving women back the opportunity to portray their own style of masculinity on the stage. Takarazuka women including *otokoyaku* also appreciated this support and made use of these opportunities to continue performing a wider range of womanhood for their female fans.

The Voices of *Takarasienne*

While their choices were restricted under the Occupation, according to Kawasaki Kenko, Takarazuka female performers passionately engaged in communicating with Americans to revive Takarazuka. For example, to re-open the Takarazuka Grand Theater, Amatsu Otome, a representative of female performers during the Occupation, collected petitions from other female performers and asked the Occupation forces directly to reopen the theater and allow them to perform on the Grand Theater again.[207] By asking GHQ directly, *Takarasienne* actively engaged with the Occupation to reopen a favorite entertainment. Their campaign succeeded in re-opening Takarazuka Grand theater in 1946, a year after the war ended.

[207]Kawasaki,"GHQ senryōki no Takarazuka Kageki," 66.

Various Takarazuka females expressed their thoughts and opinions about getting permission to perform at the Grand theater again. Most of them compared the theater's re-opening to "spring," implying a new Japan and new life. In so doing, they showed great hopes and pleasures in performing both traditional Japanese style as well as Euro-American inspired repertoires with both *otokoyaku* and *musumeyaku* onstage. For example, Kodama Haruka said, "During the wartime, all repertoires in Takarazuka were far from ideal art forms. We had few pleasures performing those highlighting militarism and nationalism. Now, we can re-perform the gorgeous Takarazuka we've had since the prewar era."[208] In addition to Kodama, in another article of *Kageki*, Fujino Takane explained how long she had waited to be in the Takarazuka Grand Theater again. "While I experienced a lot of difficulties and sadness during the war, I got some courage in return. I became mentally strong. When I performed in the Grand Theater even for the solace of the Occupation forces, I could not help crying because I was glad to be at the Grand Theater again."[209] Considering their voices, although it was the Occupation forces that gave Takarazuka females the chance to be back to the stage, the girls did not care who gave them the permission to return to the theater. Rather, their main concern was being on the stage and performing their original repertoire again. That is, Takarazuka females had manipulated the permission to return to the stage on their own terms, rather than being passive victims or following orders directly from the Occupation forces.

At the same time, it was also clear that they had continuous admiration for Euro-America. Kasugano, who performed *Hose* (José), described her pleasure at performing the

[208] "Zuihitsu," *Kageki no. 248,* 1946, 44

[209] "Kurou banashi Areya koreya," *Kageki no. 248*, 1946, 25.

male protagonist, a fierce and masculine Spaniard who becomes hysterical and kills his former lover. Performing this role gave Kasugano a chance to revive the Euro-American inspired masculine *otokoyaku.* Kasugano also talked about her experience meeting with the Broadway director Billy Rose and his wife Eleanor. In her diary, she wrote that when she welcomed the Roses at Haneda airport, she gave them a bouquet of flowers and said, "Welcome to Japan" in English. In her diary, she wrote,

> February 13th, Mr. Rose looked like a young Tokugawa Musei (a Japanese talent) and had an admirable and impressive big nose... February 15th, Takarazuka invited Mr. and Mrs. Rose to the Nichigeki theatre at Yurakuchō in Tokyo. We performed *Futari hakama*, a play based on *Kyōgen*, in front of them. In the middle of the show, while I was greeting them in Japanese, Kei-chan (Awashima Chikage) was translating my words into English. I was telling them that when I toured around America about ten years ago, I was so impressed in seeing the technical skills of Mrs. Rose in the production. Also, I said that we Takarazuka girls were very proud of ourselves because Mr. and Mrs. Rose watched our repertoires... After the performance, Mr. Billy Rose praised our performances and called us 'Zuka Girls'! Everyone including me screamed like, 'Kyaaa!!' We and Mr. and Mrs. Rose swung together to the tune of the finale, *Reinbō*...[210]

Kasugano showed her admiration for Billy Rose and his wife. Since they were already used to performing Western-inspired repertoires, accepting "Americanization" was not a marked departure for them. Takarazuka had already performed their own Euro-American inspired repertoires since the 1920s, and they were ready to be back performing in their "original" style. Furthermore, some performers including Kasugano embarked on a US tour in 1939 and experienced America by themselves. Therefore, some of them did not forget the involvement of America even during and after the war. According to Kasugano's diary, they were proud to be seen and praised by such a famous Broadway producer, but while they treated him like a star, they were excited for themselves as well. In the end of the diary, Kasugano described

[210] "Birī Rōzu fusai wo mukaete Tōkyō dayori," *Kageki* no. 282, 1949, 14-18.

her excitement in dancing with Mr. and Mrs. Rose. Although the war prevented Takarazuka females from gaining exposure in America, their admiration towards America continued to endure.

Besides showing the appreciation for the opportunities to interact with Americans directly, something few Japanese women could experience, Takarazuka females were also interested in the transformation of the status of Japanese females even outside of Takarazuka. When a male interviewer asked ten Takarazuka females about women's suffrage, all of them looked very excited to answer that question. Amatsu Otome said, "The time we females could state our opinions and hopes without shame finally came... We should treat this right very carefully and pay more attention to Japanese politics."[211] Kasugano Yachiyo continued saying, "Until now, Japanese politics have cared about big matters and ignored 'small' matters surrounding us women. I hope female members of the house of representatives would understand our better position in the future."[212] While Takarazuka females did not clearly mention about their gender identities on the stage, their statements and understandings of Japanese females must have changed once the Occupation started, because the situation around them had suddenly transformed and they got the freedom to represent themselves both within and outside Takarazuka. Through the reopening during the Occupation, Takarazuka performers explored again the possibilities for new women in Japanese society, by connecting gender identities played both on an off the stage. Although it is hard to judge whether the Occupation liberated Japanese women, I argue it was clear that the Occupation became one of the turning points for Takarazuka women to seize the opportunity when gender

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211 "*Kurou banashi,*"*Kageki* no. 248, 1946, 21.
212 Ibid.

roles were again open for new interpretation.

While most Takarazuka females presented a positive image of Japanese female liberation and education via America, some of them also pointed out the value of preserving the Japanese-ness that they had cultivated before the Occupation had begun. For example, in *Kageki*, one finds Takarazuka females' voices discussing their ideal images of Japanese females after the war. For example, Ōmi Fujiko mentioned that, "We should not forget the gentleness of *yamato nadeshiko*."[213] Furthermore, Hanamura Yuriko said that, "These days, since the number of working women (*shokugyō fujin*) is increasing, some have totally forgotten the beauty of traditional feminine Japanese women who were modest and polite."[214] In addition to that, Kojima Isoko indicated that, "By advocating democracy, we now have freedom of speech. But I do not want to lose my dignity as a Japanese female."[215] Their words lead us to think that while Takarazuka females appreciated and caught up with the postwar reconstruction undertaken by the Allied forces, they tried to preserve their identities as gentle, humble, yet strong Japanese females even under the Occupation. Accordingly, they did not simply follow the policy of emancipation and democratization of Japanese females to the point of throwing their own gender and national identities as Japanese females away entirely. From these accounts we can see that Takarazuka females actively selected their own ideal figures of Japanese femininity from both their past as well as their future.

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[213] "Yoron chōsa," *Kageki* no. 249, 1946, 29. "*Yamato nadeshiko*" stands for the Japanese women who are delicate but have a strong spirit. "Yamato" means Japan and "Nadeshiko" originates from a flower of the same name.
[214] Ibid., 36.
[215] Ibid., 37.

Takarazuka female performers celebrated the restoration of the original Takarazuka performances with the assistance of the Occupation forces. They heralded the permission to play various styles of characters including masculine *otokoyaku* and perform western inspired repertoires. Moreover, by interacting with Americans, such as male GIs and female audiences, they rekindled their suppressed aspirations towards America, willingly learned English, and appropriated and absorbed American-inspired modes of performance. Towards Japanese males, they clearly mentioned their opinions about the needlessness of "real" males on the stage and drove them away from staging. On the other hand, the *Takarasienne* also appreciated all the support of the male staff working for the restoration of Takarazuka. Interacting with whomever, they were never submissive dolls controlled by people with greater authority than these women. While there were power hierarchies and these female performers were sometimes complicit in representing themselves, they valued the feminine identities that they had constructed before the war, and sought to preserve what would allow them to take active roles as women in reconstructing a New Japan. Regardless of the gender roles they played, they nonetheless shared definite opinions and thoughts about the ideal and future images of Japanese females.

Conclusion

While the majority of both Americans and Japanese treated Japanese women as submissive and powerless, as Takarazuka females' example shows, these female performers worked hard to rebuild Takarazuka during the Occupation. By negotiating and cooperating with Japanese men and utilizing various opportunities to meet Americans, *Takarasienne* earned the approval necessary to return to the stage. This continued a long fascination with

Euro-American cultures, and during the Occupation they met various Americans directly and learned English and theatrical techniques imported from abroad. This chapter shows, therefore, that "Americanization" was not only a one-sided policy commanded by the Occupation forces. Rather, the *Takarasienne* seized the opportunity to perform the signature repertoires in which *otokoyaku* and *musumeyaku* performed Euro-American inspired characters that they had wanted to perform even during wartime.

Male American occupation officers were attracted to the immaturity and the beauty of Takarazuka female performers, and they enjoyed interacting with them. While they portrayed themselves as liberators who rescued Takarazuka females by granting them the rights to perform a wider range of womanhood that could also comprise the masculine *otokoyaku*, the majority of them still treated Takarazuka female performers as childish, immature girls. On the other hand, however, Takarazuka females had never been passive actors and they promoted their status as performers beyond the Takarazuka world by communicating positively with American male GIs. Within the framework provided by the Occupation forces, Takarazuka females optimized the utility of communicating with American male occupiers.

On the other hand, American women whose choices for self-representation were constrained by ideological pressures in the US became fans of Takarazuka performers, taking particular interest in the masculine *otokoyaku*. They admired these Takarazuka women since, even if only on the stage, they signaled broader possibilities and opportunities that American women saw only rarely at home. Takarazuka females also enjoyed communicating with American females such as Witty and learned about "real" theaters in America from them.

Even though previous works tended to focus on Japanese males highlighting hyper femininity of Japanese females through media during the Occupation, in Takarazuka, masculine *otokoyaku* were always standing at the center even though skillful male performers were allowed to be on the same stage. Male performers had never got a chance to be treated as *otokoyaku* by female performers, fans and directors. Moreover, Japanese male employees in Takarazuka aided Takarazuka females with the passion and showed their appreciation for the Occupation forces allowing Takarazuka to reopen, but who also worked hard to make this happen themselves. For example, a stage director Uchimura mentioned their willingness to learn more about American customs and cultures by interacting with Americans. Knowing that Americans would also be watching, Takarazuka officials actively provided an opportunity for the Takarazuka women to meet a variety of Americans and promoted them to improve their repertoire.

In examining the multiple discussions surrounding Takarazuka females during the Occupation period, this chapter reveals that diverse interactions played a major role in restoring the all-female Takarazuka. The Takarazuka Grand Theater was one of the only sanctioned theaters for the Occupation forces, and Takarazuka was therefore one of the few forms of Japanese popular culture that Americans could consume directly during their stay in Japan. As for Japanese males, supporting *Takarasienne*'s stages became their missions to rebuild Takarazuka Revue. It is likely for this reason that the style of Takarazuka female performers had been reconstructed through the multi layered conversations done with and interactions between Americans and Japanese.

By focusing on Takarazuka female performers who used their position as stage performers to take on a wider range of femininities and to interact with Americans to

explore even greater possibilities as women, this chapter adds to our understanding of the construction of womanhood during the Occupation. For the *Takarasienne*, the Occupation constituted a more complex turning point in rethinking their own identities as Japanese women living in a New Japan.

When the Occupation ended in 1952, the Japanese government worked to change its global image into that of a "peaceful" country. Takarazuka followed along. While they performed pro-American musicals on stage during the Occupation, they helped the government's representation of Japan by emphasizing "peaceful" Japanese culture. For example, in the finale of the revue called "Hana no Fūdoki," they sang a song in which they praised the peace and beauty of Japan.[216] They also returned to their role as cultural ambassadors. Their very first foreign postwar tour was to Hawaii, at the invitation of the Japanese Americans' organization called the Honolulu Junior Chamber of Commerce (HJCC). In the next chapter, I will introduce Takarazuka's annual Hawaii tours from 1955 to 1957 and investigate the significance of Takarazuka's postwar American tour in the 1950s.

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[216] Baku, *Teikoku to Sengo no Bunka Seisaku*, 99.

Chapter3. The Hawaiian Tour in the 1950s

Introduction

From 1955 to 1957, the Honolulu Japanese Junior Chamber of Commerce (HJJCC) invited *Takarasienne* to perform at the annual Cherry Blossom Festival (CBF) beauty queen contest, and paid all their travel expenses. Although the Japanese Foreign Ministry had strictly banned Japanese people from overseas travel at that time, the *Takarasienne* got a special opportunity to visit Hawaii, which became their very first postwar tour abroad.
In interviews, many *Takarasienne* illustrated their various images of Hawaii. For example, Nangō Hikari mentioned her longing for Hawaii, "I feel so lucky to become a *Takarasienne*, because I could visit Hawaii, which I have admired and dreamed about the paradise."[217] Besides this idyllic "paradise," others also mentioned various other images of Hawaii, such as progressive or primitive Hawaii. For instance, Tatsuki Noboru regarded Hawaii as part of the US and talked about the prosperity of the car industry in Hawaii compared to that of Japan.[218] On the other hand, Nawaji Michiko illustrated racial prejudice towards Native Hawaiians: "Everybody mocked me by saying that 'you are so lucky to go back to your home country. Kanaka people would welcome you because your tanned skin looks like them.'"[219] While they each had their own opinions about Hawaii, the *Takarasienne* shared an excitement about traveling to Hawaii as the very first tour abroad

[217] Nangō Hikari, "Omoiha Hayakumo Yumeno Kuni Hawai he," *Kageki* no. 354, 1955, 84.
[218] Tatsuki Noboru, "Omoide Bakari," in *Hawai Kōen Kinen Arubamu Dai Ikkai* (Takarazuka Kagekidan, 1955), np.
[219] Awaji Michiko, "Yume no Kuni Hawai," *Kageki* no.354, 1955, 84.

after the war. Hawaii had since the prewar period been a place of play, fantasy and imagination for the *Takarasienne*. Hawaii was particularly important as a place to explore their new identities as Japanese women in the postwar era. I argue that Hawaii was a unique place because after the war defeat, as we can see from the Tatsuki's words, Japanese people found in Hawaii a peculiar place of coexisting multiple images. It was not only exotic but also nostalgic with imperial war memory. While prewar Hawaii had provided imagery for imperialist fantasy, after the war defeat, however, the exotic imagery was replaced by an image, a part of progressive America. Because of the tangled images of Hawaii in the postwar era, investigating postwar Hawaii will widen the perspective of Takarazuka's transnational history.[220]

Experiencing "paradise," "progressive" and "primitive" Hawaii, *Takarasienne* interacted with various peoples, such as Japanese Americans, White Americans and Native Hawaiians through the tours. While people surrounding *Takarasienne* had various opinions and expectations about Takarazuka's performances at the CBF, each wanted to meet their own aims by using popular representations of *Takarasienne* who had the flexibility to perform a wider range of nationalities and femininities. On the other hand, the *Takarasienne* used the Hawaiian tour as a turning point to reconstruct their own identities as postwar Japanese women. Until the Japanese government had removed restrictions against overseas travel in 1964, very few Japanese were allowed to travel abroad. In other

[220] While few scholars feature Takarazuka's Cold War-era American tour, Baku Sonmi, Hirota Masaki and Watanabe Hiroshi mention it in their own books. However, each author only pays attention to the 1959 tour of mainland America and Canada, and leave out the Hawaii tour held even earlier. Furthermore, each study highlights the voices of government and political leaders, and male Takarazuka executives. They do not treat the *Takarasienne* as active agents and they overlook the voices of these female performers. See Watanabe, *Takarazuka Kageki no henyō to Nihon Kindai*; Watanabe, *Nihon Bunka Modan Rapusodi*; Hirota, "Takarazuka Kageki to Ibunka Kōryū"; Baku, *Teikoku to Sengo no Bunka Seisaku.*

words, in the 1950s the *Takarasienne* again got a special chance to travel abroad when most Japanese could not. As a result, their example provided a model not just for themselves, but for the many women watching the revue at the theater in Japan, or following their tour in the newspapers.

Hawaii was a special place not only for the *Takarasienne*, but also for Japanese women more broadly. While most women did not have the ability to visit Hawaii, those watching Takarazuka could experience authentic Hawaii thorough Takarazuka's stage performances when they returned. The *Takarasienne* became one way for Japanese women to expand the definition of womanhood within the broader hopes for changes in the place of women. With the rapid economic growth in the 1950s, majority of Japanese women had bright hopes for their future because the Occupation forces opened up a number of new rights through constitutional revision, civil code reform, equal education, and freedom of marriage. In her 1985 work, *Sengoshi to jendā*, Kano Kimiyo conducted a survey among 644 Japanese women who had experienced the war, and asked their opinions about the post war reforms.[221] According to one of the questions about the restart of postwar Japan, seventy-percent of survey participants mentioned that they had imagined that their future would be filled with hopes when the war was over. However, when Kano gave the question "Do you think Japanese females became stronger?" in 1985, seventy-five percent of them answered "No."[222] While many clarified their doubts about the postwar reforms for Japanese women in the 1980s, right after the war, a number of Japanese women had regarded postwar Japan positively.

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[221] Kano Kimiyo, *Sengoshi to Jendā* (Inpakuto shuppankai, 2005), 74-115.
[222] Ibid., 106.

Japanese women, including the *Takarasienne*, seemed to have common hopes and opinions towards the possibilities of postwar Japan, as Kano's survey shows. However, the difference between the *Takarasienne* and other Japanese women was that these female performers had a special ticket to visit Hawaii right after the Occupation. For Japanese women, the *Takarasienne* were an ideal model representing modernity and their hopes for the future.

As in the previous chapter, following the interactions with various people such as Japanese Americans and Takarazuka male executives, I argue that the *Takarasienne* offered both American and Japanese audiences various ideals on the stage, from feminine Japanese to exotic Hawaiian. At the same time, considering their ability to travel to Hawaii, I investigate what a Hawaiian tour meant to these female performers within the historical and political background of the Pacific after the Occupation.

The Japanese and Hawaii

Since the late 1890s, there had been transnational communicative flows of cultural entertainers going back and forth between Hawaii and Japan. For example, Japanese cultural entertainers such as stage performers, athletes, movie stars and singers visited Hawaii to perform in front of the Japanese Americans. In 1905, Waseda University's baseball team stopped by Hawaii on the way to the mainland America, and in 1919, Kamiya Sōjin, who later became a Hollywood film actor, and his wife, Uraji, visited Hawaii and inspired both the Issei and Nisei Japanese American community.[223] For

[223] Jack Y. Tasaka, *A Hundred Year History of Japanese Culture and Entertainment in Hawaii* (Honolulu: East-West Journal, 1985).

instance, in 1928, the very first Nisei orchestra called, Nihon gengakudan debuted in Hawaii. Following that, in the 1930s, the number of Nisei orchestra increased, and people called it "the golden age of Japanese American orchestra."[224] Furthermore, Hawaii Nisei singers, Haida Yukihiko, the Katsuhiko brothers and Backy Shirakata went to Japan and popularized romantic images of Hawaii through their songs. Each made their own successful career in Japan.

As war tensions between Japan and the US intensified, the Japanese government strictly censored everything associating with America and Britain, including Hawaii. However, this did not dampen popular admiration towards Hawaii among the Japanese people. Even after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, interest in Hawaii continued to grow.[225] For example, in 1943, Ienaka Shigeru published a book called *Hawai no rekishi to fūdo* introducing Hawaii to Japanese readers.[226] At the same time, Miyashiro Satoshi published a book called *Hawai* that criticized America's invasion of "paradise" Hawaii and promoted a Japanese mission to "save" Hawaii and integrate it as part of Japan's empire.[227] Following the war, however, Hawaii was presented as a far-away place which Japanese people could not visit easily. While during the war Hawaii had been positioned as a land rightfully part of Japan's empire, in the years after the war Japanese people started emphasizing the distance between Japan and Hawaii, and compared an impoverished Japan to a beautiful "paradise" Hawaii. A number of popular songs and films depicted Hawaii as a beautiful and exotic

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[224] Tasaka, *A Hundred Year History of Japanese Culture and Entertainment in Hawaii*, 38.
[225] Yaguchi Yujin, *Akogare no Hawai* (Chuō Kōron Shinsha, 2011), 60, 61.
[226] Ibid.
[227] Ibid., 80-84; Miyashiro Satoshi, *Hawai* (Kaizō sha, 1942).

"paradise."[228] According to Alex Murphy, the Hawaiian songs or films in postwar era functioned as multiple signs implying co-occurrence of imperial war memory, nostalgia, and desire.[229] For example, in Oka Haruo's 1948's song, *Akogare no Hawai Koro* (The Road to Dreamy Hawaii), Oka sang co-occurrence of "bittersweet memories of war, loss, and nostalgia for empire with Hawaii's promise of a postwar paradise."[230] In postwar time, Japanese people had these mixed images of Hawaii, exotic, admiration and imperial nostalgia.

Japanese Americans in Hawaii and Japan

After the war, several Japanese American institutions invited various Japanese entertainers and athletes to perform in Hawaii. For example, sponsored by Japanese American war veteran groups, a famous postwar child singer, Misora Hibari had a concert in Hawaii.[231] Moreover, Japanese song composers, Japanese movie stars and dance groups received invitations from Japanese American institutions to visit Hawaii. Considering the examples of these invitations, we can see the high demand of Japanese culture among Japanese Americans in postwar Hawaii. While the number of Japanese Americans who

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[228] Yaguchi, *Akogare no Hawai*, 99. For example, the nisei singer Haida Katsuhiko performed the musical called "*Hawai no hana*" under the theme of beautiful Hawaii in the Tokyo Nichigeki theater in August 1946. The Japanese audiences who were not allowed to listen to Hawaiian songs during the war gathered in the theater. A few years later, Hawaiian songs including "*Akogare no Hawai Kouro*" sung by Oka Haruo became a major hit in Japan. The song took up the theme of beautiful and exotic Hawaii, a theme enormously appealing in postwar Japan.
[229] Alex Murphy, "Resurfacing Tropics: Hawaiiana and Dreams of Empire in Transwar Japanese popular Music," 2019 (unpublished article).
[230] Ibid., 18.
[231] Christine R. Yano, *Crowning the Nice Girl: Gender, Ethnicity, and Culture in Hawaii's Cherry Blossom Festival* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006), 43. Besides musical entertainers, Japanese baseball, basketball, boxing, swimming and sumo athletes visited Hawaii and had matches with Japanese Americans.

were familiar with their ancestral home was declining, Japanese Americans showed a spike of interest in Japanese entertainment and sports, because some considered it their mission to become a bridge connecting between Japan and Hawaii. This motivated them to bring Japanese entertainers to Hawaii. According to Yano, the postwar American dream was "sharing the optimism of the postwar era within a racialized context."[232] To perform the postwar American dream as "first class" citizens, Japanese Americans, who constituted the largest ethnic group in postwar Hawaii, organized their own institutions and planned to hold cultural events representing the integration of the various races. The Cherry Blossom Festival (CBF) was one of the leading events the Japanese American community held.[233]

The CBF was established by the Honolulu Japanese Junior Chamber of Commerce (HJJCC), which was an organization founded in 1949 by Nisei Japanese Americans. They would eventually invite Takarazuka to Hawaii. HJJCC was an institution composed of only Nisei who faced social problems such as racism (vis-à-vis White Americans) and generational discord (vis-à-vis Issei).[234] According to the official statement of HJJCC, the main purpose of founding the institution was "to build good citizenship among our young Japanese Americans and to provide them with a medium of training for participation in worthwhile community-wide projects."[235] To that end, HJJCC sponsored various community events and focused on depoliticized arenas of culture and education, and on encouraging US-Japan economic ties.[236] In other words, HJJCC promoted Japanese

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[232] Yano, *Crowning the Nice Girl*, 48.
[233] Ibid.
[234] Ibid., 52.
[235] The Honolulu Japanese Junior Chamber of Commerce. http://www.hjjcc.com/history (Accessed August 30, 2019).
[236] Yano, *Crowning the Nice Girl*, 54.

Americans to become a "bridge of understanding" between the US and Japan. Hawaii's geographical location between the US and Japan allowed HJJCC members to hold Japanese cultural events easily, and Japanese Americans in Hawaii had more opportunities than those on the mainland to encounter Japanese culture directly.

As soon as HJJCC was established, they created several events to promote Japan-Hawaii mutual relationships, such as a Hawaii-Japan student conference.[237] It also established the CBF, which was a beauty pageant in which only those of Japanese descent could participate and become queen. While the CBF was a beauty contest introducing Japanese traditional culture to Nisei, Sansei and American tourists, the CBF theme song also identified Hawaii as a bridge between East and West, "The West is America, the East is Japan, the islands of Hawaii act as a go-between."[238] The event therefore also aimed to highlight their loyalty to the US as a "model minority," and negotiated the balance of Japanese-ness and American-ness. At the same time, however, the CBF was also an event that the HJJCC used to represent themselves and their community to the white Americans who dominated society in Hawaii.[239]

Through the CBF, Japanese Americans, including the HJJCC, expected Japanese American female pageants to represent the balance of Japanese-ness and American-ness. For example, in the CBF's annual pamphlet, the HJJCC put images of Japanese American pageant contestants wearing both traditional kimono and the evening gowns that were a standard part of Euro-American beauty queen contests. Negotiating these dual

[237] HJJCC, *Honolulu Japanese Junior Chamber of Commerce Forty-Seventh Cherry Blossom Festival* (Honolulu: Honolulu Japanese Junior Chamber of Commerce, 1999), 67.
[238] HJJCC, *Honolulu Japanese Junior Chamber of Commerce First Cherry Blossom Festival* (Honolulu: Honolulu Japanese Junior Chamber of Commerce, 1953), 31, 51.
[239] Yano, *Crowning the Nice Girl*, 59.

representations to become part of the postwar American dream of modern, middle-class life, the pageant women were expected to perform both Japanese exoticism and American modernity. According to Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, the symbol of the CBF, the cherry blossom, had various meanings beyond beautiful flower-laden trees.[240] Ohnuki-Tierney continued that cherry blossoms were the symbols of Kamikaze pilots during WW II, demonstrating the masculine bravery of soldiers sacrificing their lives for Japan.[241] That is, cherry blossoms could become the representations of wide variety of femininities and even masculinity.

While both male and female Japanese Americans understood the opportunity to present a wider range of nationalities and femininities, these presentations were nevertheless basically gendered. HJJCC male members, for instance, used the event to show their engagement and efforts to become "active young men to become better citizens and leaders."[242] Women, however, participated in the beauty contest where they showed their racialized femininity and oriental beauty. Performing a particular kind of "Japanese femininity" was a major requirement to becoming queen. Since few Nisei and Sansei contestants knew about Japan very well, they had to learn Japanese culture and customs from their parents and other people more familiar with Japan. These included skills ranging from the traditional arts to housework. The winner received a free visit to Japan where she could visit her "homeland" and experience Japanese culture firsthand. In the

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[240] Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms, and Nationalisms: The Militarization of Aesthetics in Japanese History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 32.
[241] Ibid.,10.
[242] Conrad Akamine, *[Letter]Honolulu Japanese Junior Chamber of Commerce Fourth Cherry Blossom Festival* (Honolulu: Honolulu Japanese Junior Chamber of Commerce, 1956), 5.

1950s, very few Nisei and Sansei visited Japan, and Japanese Americans who never visited Japan regarded the trip to Japan as a special opportunity to experience their ancestral home.

Oriental and Feminine Japanese Women

HJJCC members, through the CBF, celebrated the close bonds between Japanese culture and Hawaii by continuously adding new projects, such as inviting from Japan kabuki players, folk dancers, Okinawan dancers, and classical dancers.[243] However, members of the HJJCC did not categorize Takarazuka's performance as merely part of these cultural displays. They considered Takarazuka as something special and independent. Also, while other stage performances continued only for a few days, Takarazuka repertoires annually lasted for almost two weeks in Honolulu.

The performance generated excitement in Hawaii even before the *Takarasienne* arrived. On January 19, 1955, the Japanese language newspaper *Hawaii Times*, placed a notice about the Takarazuka tour earlier than that of the Japanese newspaper, *Osaka Asahi shinbun*. Furthermore, the HJJCC had set up Takarazuka's performance as a grand finale of the CBF every year. Not only HJJCC members, but also Japanese-language newspapers, especially *Hawaii Hochi*, one of the largest Japanese language newspapers in Hawaii, updated information about Takarazuka's tours ceaselessly and also featured *Takarasienne* every year.[244] Along with the CBF's articles, there were over fifty articles or photos

[243] According to HJJCC, Besides Takarazuka, in 1966, the first all- Hawaii amateur song contest (called *nodojiman*) was presented with KZOO Radio. In 1974, Japan's national treasure, the Awaji Puppet Theater was featured. In 1984, a 6-kilometer fun run and a golf tournament debuted as official Festival events.
[244] Yano, *Crowning the Nice Girl,* 69. According to Yano, *Hawaii Hochi* carried more articles, photographs, and announcements of the CBF than other newspapers.

featuring Takarazuka for an entire month in *Hawaii Hochi* when the CBF was held. Other newspapers, such as *The Honolulu Advertiser, Hawaii Times,* and *Hawaii Mainichi,* also promoted Takarazuka and showed their interest and high expectations towards Takarazuka performances. These examples clearly show us the excitement among Japanese Americans about the annual Takarazuka tours, and that the majority of Japanese Americans considered Takarazuka performance an appropriate entertainment for the CBF.

As one of the main events, HJJCC organized an annual grand parade for the crowned queen and the *Takarasienne*. While both in kimono and holding a paper umbrella (*kasa*) passing in front of the audiences, HJJCC had clearly distinguished the role of Japanese American female pageants and *Takarasienne* through the CBF. That means while HJJCC aimed to cultivate the Japanese American women having various possibilities and being "a medium" between Japan and the US, they emphasized the feminine and geisha-like femininity of *Takarasienne* to attract the audiences, especially travelers such as non-Japanese audiences.[245] While Japanese Americans in Hawaii aimed to show their "American-ness" to the rest of American through the CBF, they wanted *Takarasienne* to become iconic Japanese women, and this meant that they picked up the orientalized femininity from the wide range of femininities that *Takarasienne* had and supported "Orientalizing" these females. For example, when the *Takarasienne* arrived in Honolulu in 1955, ten male HJJCC members wearing Japanese *happi* and *hachimaki* welcomed the girls and gave them *jinrikisha* rides. Although most of the HJJCC's members did not know how

[245] The Honolulu Japanese Junior Chamber of Commerce, http://www.hjjcc.com/history. (Accessed August 30, 2019).

to use a *jinrikisha*, they had practiced in preparation for the *Takarasienne*.[246] *Hawaii Hochi* illustrated the welcoming of *Takarasienne* by writing, "It has been the first time ever in Hawaii that Japanese beautiful women wearing kimono were on *jinrikisha* and parading around Honolulu. Now even in Japan, we barely see *jinrikisha*."[247] Besides *jinrikisha*, as mentioned, during the entire parade all the *Takarasienne* were wearing kimono and holding a kasa, a popular emblem of oriental beauty. Considering these illustrations, it was clear that although Japanese Americans already knew the fact that Japanese did not use *jinrikisha* anymore, by using *jinrikisha* for the parade, they aimed to add more traditional and oriental images to *Takarasienne* for the large crowds of Japanese Americans, mainland tourists and other local residents coming to see the beautiful *Takarasienne*'s annual parade.

Among the audiences, especially, White American residents and tourists stated their interests in watching the oriental and exotic Japanese women in the beauty contest. For example, in *Paradise of the Pacific*, Hawaii's mainstream publication for upper class readers, took up Takarazuka and *Takarasienne*. The magazine specialized in introducing Hawaii's tourism and industry, and most readers were White Americans. The magazine explains the CBF and introduces Takarazuka as a "world famed Takarazuka girls in revue" with a picture of *Takarasienne* wearing kimono on a stage decorated with many Japanese lanterns.[248] It continued that, "Above all the highlight and pure essence of the spirit of the Cherry Blossom Festival, there are the exotically staged presentations by one of Japan's

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[246] There was a small accident when one of HJJCC members turned the jinrikisha over while the Takarasienne Kosono was riding. She said in an interview that, "It took time for me to understand why I was looking at the beautiful sky in Hawaii for a while." *Hawaii Kouen Pamphelet 1955* (Takarazuka Shupan,1955), np.

[247] "Takarazuka Otometachi no 'Hawai Chindochu,'" *Hawaii Hochi*, 1 April, 1955.

[248] "Honolulu's Cherry Blossom Festival world famed Takarazuka girls in revue." *Paradise of the Pacific* vol.69, April 1957, 9-11.

foremost Takarazuka Troupes… These will be the world-famed Takarazuka Girls- glorified in James Michener's best-selling novel 'Sayonara.'"[249] By accounting for these descriptions of Takarazuka and *Takarasienne*, *Paradise of the Pacific* apparently introduced Takarazuka as an iconic oriental and exotic troupe coming from "fantasy" Japan. It also cited a novel, *Sayonara*, which was the story of a romantic tragedy between a Japanese female performer and an American GI. In the end, the article concludes that, "The Takarazuka Revue is a must for theater lovers, especially those of the western world, for whom it is a rare experience."[250] These explanations of Takarazuka clearly emphasize the curiosities and differences based on images of oriental, inferior Japan.

Nevertheless, Japanese Americans produced the *Takarasienne* to perform for white American audiences an "ideal" Japanese women, because they aimed to emphasize a Japanese national and cultural identity through the *Takarasienne*. As mentioned above, since the CBF wanted to represent their racial relationship with White Americans, the CBF and the *Takarasienne* became a way to represent Japanese Americans in a positive light, especially in comparison to other ethnic groups. Because most Issei and Nisei experienced WW II, racial discrimination and the defeat of Japan, these became a turning point to rethink their bicultural national identity. While striving to be American, they also criticized American White supremacy. For example, in a message aimed at white American tourists coming from the mainland, the *Hawaii Hochi* wrote,

> Speaking of Hawaii, many Americans in the mainland regarded it as a tropical island where savage and naked native Hawaiians were dancing hula all day. Yet, since they saw these beautiful Japanese girls on *jinrikisha* in Hawaii, their images of

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[249] "Honolulu's Cherry Blossom Festival world famed Takarazuka girls in revue." *Paradise of the Pacific* vol. 69, April 1957, 9-11.

[250] *Paradise of the Pacific* vol. 69, 9-11.

> Hawaii and Japan would change… Still now, many Caucasians show Japanese as people having almond-shaped eyes and buck teeth. However, because they saw the true beauty of the Japanese, the image of Japan must be changed. Furthermore, unlike a Japanese nightingale, these girls are not only very beautiful, but also talented and have great voices. I am very proud of them.[251]

Moreover, on the next day, *Hawaii Hochi* again highlighted the enthusiastic response of White Americans who never stopped taking pictures of *Takarasienne* in kimono.[252] The *Hawaii Times* also noted how many White tourists gathered around *Takarasienne* every time these women went walking outside.[253] Taking the voices of these articles into consideration, it is clear that Japanese Americans used *Takarasienne* as a way to show audiences, especially White Americans, authentic Japanese beauty.

As mentioned earlier, Japanese Americans used the event to showcase both their Japanese-ness and their American-ness, but they emphasized their Japanese cultural and national identities by introducing the *Takarasienne*. Furthermore, experiencing WWII, racial discrimination and internment also became the point to rethink about their Japanese racial identity. The HJJCC made an effort to produce the *Takarasienne*, who weren't really all that traditional, to become an iconic figure of oriental Japanese women. By showing off the beauty of authentic Japanese women, Japanese Americans aimed to change the image of defeated Japan into beautiful Japan.

In fact, through the festivals, the HJJCC intentionally selected certain features of Takarazuka and hid information they considered not suitable for their image of Japanese women. For example, the official pamphlet of the Cherry Blossom Festival from 1955 to

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[251] *Paradise of the Pacific* vol.69, 9-11.

[252] "Utsukushii Chinkyaku ni Shicho Kara Kagi wo Zotei," *Hawaii Hochi*, 2 April, 1955.

[253] "Takarazuka Kagekidan Ikkou no resepushion Nigiwau," *Hawaii Times*, 5 April, 1955.

1957 presented a particular image of *Takarasienne*. Each year it provided detailed explanations about the Takarazuka revue and spent several pages explaining the repertoire, as well as printed pictures of *Takarrasienne* all wearing kimono and their mostly Japanese-inspired stage performances.[254] By promoting Takarazuka's "Japanese-ness," these pamphlets clearly aimed to show CBF visitors an oriental and feminine Takarazuka.[255] This, however, silenced what made Takarazuka famous in Japan: its Western-inspired repertoire called *yōmono* and the *otokoyaku* performers in male roles. While the HJJCC addressed their purposes showing both American-ness and Japanese-ness, the CBF deliberately promoted instead a stereotyped image of oriental beauty and racialized femininity to show off their dignity as Japanese towards the audiences, especially White Americans. These ambiguities that *Takarasienne* had also illustrated the important role *Takarasienne* played in the CBF.

[254] In their explanation of Takarazuka, it illustrates Takarazuka as follows, "every country has its own unique dramatic forms and Japan is no exception. Of the many patterns of artistic expression which have been evolved in the country, undoubtedly 'Kabuki' can be said to be the most orthodox and certainly the most popular. 'Kabuki' emerged as a definite type of entertainment in the 'Edo' era some three hundred years ago and combined every element of the aural, visual and choreographics arts. As the centuries passed, an extraordinarily high standard of presentation and performance was reached. When Western music and drama threatened the interest in the classical 'Kabuki,' Ichizo Kobayashi, a banker and industrialist, stepped quietly onto the scene and gave birth to the Takarazuka organization in a small town of the name. He formed a girls operatic school and pioneered the introduction of the new techniques and plays. He improved the presentation to appeal to modern tastes, and yet kept the tradition and color of the 'old.' All-girl casts returned and the revues included original interpretations of the music and life of other countries as well as of Japanese life and culture. Today Takarazuka represents a show that is colorful, intriguing, spiced with 'international' flavors, and at all times completely entertaining in the fullest form of theatre."

[255] HJJCC, " Honolulu Japanese Junior Chamber of Commerce 3rd Cherry Blossom Festival," (Honolulu: Honolulu Japanese Junior Chamber of Commerce, 1955).
HJJCC, " Honolulu Japanese Junior Chamber of Commerce 4th Cherry Blossom Festival," (Honolulu: Honolulu Japanese Junior Chamber of Commerce, 1956).
HJJCC, " Honolulu Japanese Junior Chamber of Commerce 5th Cherry Blossom Festival," (Honolulu: Honolulu Japanese Junior Chamber of Commerce, 1957).

In addition to the members of the HJJCC, some Japanese American audiences also had various expectations towards the *Takarasienne*, and shared a sense that they should be a model of ideal and oriental Japanese women. For example, when the *Takarasienne* performed the revues with Western-inspired repertoires, some Japanese Americans criticized what they considered the excessive homage to the West. A Japanese American wrote to *Hawaii Hochi* and complained that,

> While I sincerely enjoyed Takarazuka last year (1955), I was so disappointed with this year's performance. It was just like one of the performances by high school students... I bet the reason was Takarazuka put too much emphasis on the Western inspired repertoires. Even for the *Nihon mono* (Japanese repertoire), the girls were dancing Western dances in Japanese kimono. It was not Japanese dance at all... some parts of the repertoires were directed for the various audiences to understand easier, and I was really disappointed with that point... I heard that responding to the evaluations about Takarazuka last year, they included the low brow entertainment, such as Western inspired dances. However, I was dissatisfied with the fact that Takarazuka underestimated Japanese Americans in Hawaii that we could not understand true Japan. Not only me but also other Japanese Americans have the same opinion.[256]

This comment illustrates Japanese Americans' high expectations towards *Takarasienne* performing the typical and traditional Japanese repertoires.

Furthermore, this Japanese American mentioned that he/she was disappointed because the show was only superficially Japanese and hardly sensed the "real Japan" that he/she wanted to see. Following that, this person felt "underestimated," and disliked the assumption that he/she could not understand authentic Japanese Takarazuka. While the HJJCC controlled the image of *Takarasienne*, there were some Japanese Americans who expected something authentic through the direct connection to Japan. This person's letter

[256] "Dokusha no Hiroba- Zuka Fuan," *Hawaii Hochi*, 3 April, 1956.

suggests the complex relationship between Japan and the Japanese American community the Takarakua performers had to navigate.

An English section of *Hawaii Hochi* also promoted Takarazuka's exoticism in an article titled "Takarazuka Revue Girls Present Colorful, Spectacular Fantasy." [257] As clearly seen from the title, the article whose readers were Nisei, Sansei as well as other ethnicities, emphasized the "exotic" and "fantasy" aspects of the Takarazuka performance. Despite increasing interest outside the Japanese American community, tickets did not sell very well in 1957 compared to the previous two years.[258] One Japanese American man named Sumida Masatake commented on the 1957 tour, "Some people complained they wanted to see more Western inspired repertories, but I do not think it was a good idea. I want Takarazuka to continue performing only Japanese inspired repertoires."[259] Another Japanese American, a Honganji priest in Honolulu criticized one of the productions for what he considered its broken English during the performance. Here, again this monk disliked the intrusion of Western elements in the repertoire.[260]

These examples also show us that the Japanese Americans' expectations towards the *Takarasienne* were not always an embrace of the wider range of womanhood, but instead the exotic Japanese women as a distant image. That also leads us to think that some Japanese Americans including HJJCC did not treat *Takarasienne* the same as Japanese

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[257] "Takarazuka Revue Girls Present Colorful, Spectacular Fantasy," *Hawaii Hochi* (English. ver), 19 April, 1957. While initially published in Japanese, since 1925, an English section, "Bee Section" was added for Nisei readers. Kelli Y. Nakamura, "Hawaii Hochi," *Densho Publications* (Honolulu: Kapiolani Community College, 2016), 55-59.
[258] "Takarazuka Kageki no Uriage Yonman nanasen doru Honoruru kōen Asu senshūraku," *Hawaii Hochi*, 25 April, 1957.
[259] "Takarazuka Kōen no Inshō," *Hawaii Hochi*, 25 April, 1957.
[260] Ibid.

American pageant queens. That is, they clarified the difference between Japanese and Japanese Americans by identifying themselves not as Japanese but rather as Americans. Considering these Japanese Americans' attitudes towards *Takarasienne*, it represents their ambivalent and complicated transnational identities and lives between America and Japan in postwar era.

Flexibility of *Takarasienne* and Worldwide Revue

While the Japanese Americans including the members of the HJJCC emphasized the oriental and feminine representations of *Takarasienne*, Takarazuka male executives used the flexibilities of these female performers through the repertoires to aim at a larger, global fame for Takarazuka. For example, responding to the expectations of the American audiences, Umeda Kenichi, a Takarazuka company employee who directed the Hawaii tour, changed the representations of *Takarasienne* year by year according to the popular reception. For example, for the 1955 tour, Umeda directed Japanese themed repertoires such as "Four Fantasia" showing the shift of the Japanese four seasons, and "Nihon emaki" in which some *Takarasienne* performed several characters including maiko geisha apprentices and *wakashū*, beautiful young boys who were famous in the Edo period.[261] In the next year, however, Umeda added more Western inspired repertoires (one-thirds) and emphasized their original style of Takarazuka by performing both Western and Japanese repertoires. In the show, some *Takarasienne* performed in Parisian dress, and some male-role performers danced in tuxedos and top hats. By showing the Western-inspired

[261] *Hawai Kouen Kinen Arubamu Dai Ikkai*, (Takarazuka Shōjo Kagekidan, 1955), np.

performances, Umeda aimed to show the American audiences the wider possibilities of *Takarasienne* and the progressiveness of Takarazuka revue in which Japanese women could perform both females and males, and Westerns and Japanese.

Furthermore, through the Hawaii tours, Umeda had another scheme to prove Takarazuka's worldwide authority to the Japanese people by explaining how Takarazuka was widely accepted by the American audiences. When Takarazuka announced their Hawaiian tour in *Kageki*, Umeda emphasized the Takarazuka received an official invitation from the HJJCC, an organization of Japanese Americans showing the deep interest in Hawaii in Takarazuka.[262] After the war, Japanese regarded Japanese-Americans in Hawaii as members of "civilized" America, and admired their modern life styles that were largely impossible in Japan following the defeat.[263] Considering the appreciation towards the Japanese Americans, Umeda aimed to show off Takarazuka's authority gained by the approval of American audiences. Umeda also pointed out the important role Takarazuka would play as cultural mediators between Hawaii and Japan.

Moreover, Umeda often mentioned how Takarazuka was famous not only among the Japanese Americans but the White American audiences as well. For example, Takarazuka's organizers emphasized the many White Americans who came to watch. According to Umeda, about 30 percent of the audience in 1955 were White Americans. Besides that, he also noted that a White American who had watched Takarazuka before in Japan told Umeda that he/she preferred Euro-American inspired style Takarazuka. Even when a number of Japanese Americans mentioned negative comments on the encroachment

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[262] Umeda Kenichi, "Takarazuka Kageki no Hawai Koen ni Yosete," *Kageki* no.353, 1955, 74-75.

[263] Iwanami Shoten Henshūbu Hen, *Nikkei Amerikajin- Hawai no-* (Iwanami Shashin Bunko,1956).

of Western-inspired repertoires, the Takarazuka company proclaimed it as a "big success."[264] In an interview in *Hawaii Hochi* Umeda continued to exaggerate the increasing interest among White Americans. "I really appreciate the support of the Japanese American community, especially the HJJCC ... The most wonderful pleasure I got from this year's performance was that more various audiences mainly from mainland America came to watch."[265] While Umeda appreciated Japanese Americans' support, he continued emphasizing the escalation of the White American audience, demonstrating again his ambition to make Takarazuka a worldwide revue company during the annual tours. These examples show that Umeda tried to stress his aspiration to White Americans and his recognition of the racial superiority of the White Americans. Moreover, by emphasizing Takarazuka's popularity among White Americans, Umeda implied that the approval of White Americans indicated how Takarazuka had become a famed worldwide repertoire. Takarazuka officials therefore used the approval of White Americans to show Japanese readers of their magazine that Takarazuka was at the front of progress, modernity and global appeal.[266]

While Takarazuka male executives showed Japanese readers its popularity among White Americans, they simultaneously emphasized Hawaii's exoticism through the annual performance in Takarazuka Grand Theater from 1955 to 1957. As mentioned earlier, beginning with Oka Haruo's song, *Akogare no Hawai Kōro*, in the 1950s, a Hawaiian boom occurred in postwar Japanese popular culture. While Japanese people could not visit

[264] Umeda Kenichi, "Hawai tsuushin shuroku," *Kageki no. 368*, 1956, 48-57.
[265] "Takarazuka Musume Konya Kikoku no To ni," *Hawaii Hochi*,14 April, 1956.
[266] See, *Kageki* no. 356, 1955, 72; *Kageki* no. 356, 1956, 29; *Kageki* no. 358, 1956, 48-49.

Hawaii, they could experience Hawaii through music and movies. Considering the fascination with Hawaii among Japanese audiences, Takarazuka jumped on the trend. For example, Takarazuka's stage director Utsumi Shigenori produced an *omiyage* (souvenir) revue called "Burū Hawai"(Blue Hawaii), which was performed at the Takarazuka Grand Theater in 1955. According to *Takarazuka Graph*, the stage was decorated with vivid colors and wild nature suggesting "exotic" Hawaii.[267] It was a love story of a Native Hawaiian, Keola (performed by Hasegawa Kiko) and a White American male, Johnny (performed by Akashi Teruko). In the repertoire, Hasegawa and many *Takarasienne* wore grass skirts and flower leis while Hawaiian hula dancers performed to the sound of the ukulele. Utsumi proclaimed it a "performance imported directly from Hawaii."[268] This phrase emphasized the "authenticity" of the repertoire and displayed the exoticisms of Hawaii.

The production's success inspired more in the following years. In the next year's omiyage repertoire, the *Takarasienne* again played a Hawaiian themed performance, "Honoruru Horidē" (Honolulu Holiday) in Takarazuka Grand theater. "Honoruru Horidē" repeated the familiar themes of an exotic Hawaii found in the 1955 performance of "Burū Hawai." Irie Kaoru, who composed the repertoire, wrote the song, "*Hawai de mata Aimashō*" (Let's Meet Again in Hawaii), which relied heavily on familiar images of paradise: "palm trees," "Waikiki," and "passion of Kanaka." By using these words that easily evoked Hawaii, Irie intended to stage an exotic Hawaii that would satisfy his Japanese audience. Furthermore, by choosing *Takarasienne* who went to Hawaii tours for performing in the *omiyage* repertoire, Irie aimed to produce a more authentic stage inspired

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[267] "Burū Hawai," *Takarazuka Gurafu* no.98, 1955, 48-51.
[268] "Hawai Koen Miyage," *Kageki* no. 357, 1955, 56.

directly from Hawaii. As mentioned earlier, in the postwar era, a number of Japanese people had described Hawaii as a place of longing for paradise, imperial memory, nostalgia and postwar American society.

By staging the repertoire filled with authentic and exotic Hawaii, these performances -- "Burū Hawai" and "Honoruru Horidē" -- clearly illustrated the high demand among the Japanese audiences who could imagine the fictive sites of desire and longing,. Moreover, Yasumoto Shinji directed another *omiyage* repertoire, this one called "*Hawai Kōruzu*" (Hawaii Calls) in 1957. The performance included not only Hawaiian hula dances, but also dances from Tahiti, which many Japanese also considered another dream fantasy, southern island. Moreover, Yasumoto often emphasize the term "*minami*" (south) which had been tied with the political context of the Japanese empire since the prewar era. Although Yasumoto released this performance in the postwar era, the polyvalent nature of not only Hawaiian but also Tahitian revue reminded the Japanese audiences of nostalgic memories of the imperialist exotic. "I want the audiences to feel a paradise of the Pacific," Yasumoto said. "*Hawai Kōruzu*" shows not only exoticism but nostalgia for the southern islands long associated with imperialist fantasies of the primitive.

While Takarazuka male executives, such as Umeda used and treated *Takarasienne* as representatives of Japanese women in Hawaii, male stage directors, such as Utsumi, Irie and Yasumoto also controlled the representations of *Takarasienne* as exotic and imperialist fantasy of Hawaii responding to the expectations of the Japanese audiences.

Representing Japanese Women through the Hawaii Tour

While people around the *Takarasienne* such as Japanese Americans and Takarazuka male executives had their own expectations towards *Takarasienne*, these women were not simply captured by these agendas. I argue that *Takarasienne* were active agents who accepted and manipulated the various popular images of Japanese women as a way to respond to the expectations of the people around them. Furthermore, by incorporating and representing themselves with the images of Japanese woman who had the mobility to cross borders, these female performers negotiated and re-imagined their own identities and in this way widened the role of Japanese women beyond oriental and exotic beauties to new understandings of modern Japanese womanhood.

Responding to the stereotypical expectations of "oriental" and "traditional" Japanese womanhood from so many in their Hawaii audiences, *Takarasienne* understood their roles and tried performing raced femininity. The *Takarasienne* Kozono Chiharu stated that her Hawaii jinrikisha ride was her very first experience. "The members of HJJCC carried me in a jinrikisha and paraded me around Honolulu. It was my first time to ride on a jinrikisha."[269] Although Kozono mentioned it was her first time to ride on a jinrikisha, throughout the parade she pretended to be familiar with jinrikisha. She waved to the Americans because she understood her role performing oriental Japanese woman to meet their expectations. Moreover, Nawate Katsumi also mentioned that, "When I told the HJJCC representatives that it was my first time to ride on jinrikisha, they looked so

[269] Kozono Chiharu, "Hajimete notta Jinrikisha," *Hawaii Koen Kinen Arubamu Dai Sankai*, (Takarazuka Kagekidan, 1957), no page number.

surprised. I bet they imagined that all Japanese were still riding on jinrikisha."[270] By carrying the girls with jinrikisha, which was one of the icons of Japan, HJJCC members intended to show the visitors *Takarasienne* as portrayal of "authentic" Japanese women by adding jinrikisha, an emblem which easily connected to Japan. In fact, some *Takarasienne* like Kozono and Nawate had never experienced riding in a jinrikisha. However, they played along with this "typical" Japanese experience to please the American audiences. These examples show *Takarasienne*'s their own representations were circumscribed by the Americans.

Moreover, although *Takarasienne* were wearing kimono all the time when they met people in public, some mentioned that they actually did not know how to wear kimono very well. For example, Uji Kahoru noted that, "I barely performed Japanese-inspired repertoires in Japan, and I am not accustomed to wearing kimono yet. So, I am a bit scared of the expectation that the audiences were looking forward to seeing my kimono."[271] Another *Takarasienne*, Ōji Michiyo proudly mentioned she grasped how to wear kimono during her stay in Hawaii: "I and several of my friends had difficulties wearing kimono. It took us forever... But yesterday, it took only 15 minutes to get up, wear kimono and be ready to leave."[272] Their efforts and struggles wearing kimono illustrate that some *Takarasienne* superficially behaved as "typical" Japanese women, fashioning themselves in the iconic kimono to symbolize their appreciation of exotic, traditional Japan.

[270] Nawate Katsumi, "Hawai Arekore," *Kageki* no. 369, 1956, 118.
[271] Uji Kahoru, "Hawai Koen ni Yume Nosete," *Kageki* no. 366, 1956, 79-80.
[272] Ōji Michiyo, "Yume no Kuni heno Tabidachi," *Kageki* no. 380, 1957, 32.

Furthermore, Akashi Teruko, Mitaka Keiko, Uetsuki Sawako, Tatsuki Noboru, Hasegawa Kiko and Shirayuki Shikibu talked about their shopping in Kyoto to buy proper kimono for the Hawaiian tour.[273] They said that since they were chosen as representatives of Japanese women, they visited Kyoto to buy good quality traditional kimono. Although they were Japanese women living in Japan, they chose Kyoto which even Japanese people regarded as the proper place to buy the most traditional kimono. Following that, Hasegawa said that, "I heard foreign people (*gaijin-san*) like flower printed kimono. Do I have to buy one?"[274] From her words, we can see that she tried to buy a kimono that would satisfy the preferences of her American audiences. Even though some barely had any experience wearing kimono, they understood and adopted the expectations. They were, after all, professional performers.

While some *Takarasienne* mentioned the necessity of adjusting to the image of the ideal Japanese woman, many also talked about their pride in being chosen as representatives of Japan. For example, Amatsu Otome who was chosen not only as a performer but also as a stage director in for the 1955 and 1957 tours, explained her responsibility. "It is my duty to accomplish the tour. Although I am going to Hawaii as a stage director and would use up my power by the end of the tour, it is my honor to engage in the foreign tour again."[275] Amatsu's statement shows she felt certain pressure to manage the tour. Although most of the executives organizing the Hawaiian tours were men, Amatsu was the only female director and also a performer, responsible for making the stage more

[273] Akashi Teruko and others, "Harenohi wo Maeni Hawai he iku Hitobito no Okaimono," *Kageki* no. 354, 1955, 88-89.
[274]Akashi and others, "Harenohi wo Maeni Hawai he iku Hitobito no Okaimono," 88-89.
[275] Amatsu Otome, "Omoiha Hayaku mo Yumeno Kuni Hawai he," *Kageki* no. 354, 1955, 84.

attractive for the audiences in Hawaii. Another *Takarasienne*, Amagi Tsukie noted that, "Responding upon the expectation of HJJCC members, we had no choice but to behave as representatives of Japanese women in Hawaii... That was too much responsibility for us."[276] Amagi's words clearly represented her grasp of the expectations of American audiences, including Japanese Americans, towards her, yet simultaneously, she shows her uneasiness whether she could become the representatives of Japanese women and meet the expectations of the Americans who came to watch.

Besides the honor and uneasiness of being cultural representatives, some of the *Takarasienne* noted how competitive it was to become a member of the Hawaiian tour. Fujisato Miho said that, "I had been jealous of the members who got tickets to perform in Hawaii. So, I was very surprised to hear when my name was called as a member of the tour."[277] Since only a few *Takarasienne* were chosen to join the tour, getting an opportunity to go to Hawaii implies untold fights among the *Takarasienne*. Fujisato's words suggest the pride, passion and confidence of those selected to perform not only the specific plays, but the role of Japanese womanhood on the global stage. Therefore, these women challenged and adapted for their own purposes the stereotypical image of Japanese women the American audiences wanted to see. Moreover, they used the tours to promote their careers not only as a *Takarasienne* but also as a professional stage performer, to learn new skills and to get the distinctive fame having performed in front of the Americans.

[276] Amagi Tsukie, "Minna Genkide Tadaima! Kaerimashita," *Kageki* no. 381, 1957, 50.
[277] Fujisato Miho, "Omoiha Tokonatsu no Shima Hawai he," *Kageki* no. 379, 1957, 71.

Takarasienne and Hawaii

Takarasienne often showed their admiration towards the image of "paradise" Hawaii both before and even after the tours. For example, many of them stated how much they admired the dreamscape of Hawaii. For instance, Furusato Akemi said that, "I have admired Hawaii since I was a small kid and have long wanted to visit."[278] Since the 1920s, Japanese people visiting Hawaii had described it as a "paradise" island surrounded with beautiful wild nature. This image continued even after the war, and in interviews many *Takarasienne* talked about "paradise" Hawaii.

Besides a dreamy and exotic Hawaii, several *Takarasienne* discussed their sense of Hawaii as outdated and primitive. For instance, Yodo Kahoru said that she was tired of the slow life in Hawaii compared to European cities she had toured before the war. "The beautiful sky, ocean, flowers, the roads and the fresh air! I felt a different beauty in Hawaii from Rome and Paris. Yet it was just too slow for me."[279] Furthermore, in terms of Native Hawaiians, *Takarasienne* consistently called Native Hawaiians "*dojin*" a disrespectful way of referring to indigenous people.[280] Also, some *Takarasienne* implied that the discrimination against Native Hawaiians was the result of their dark skins. Fukayama Sakura explained that, "The sunshine in Hawaii was too bright especially during daytime. I gradually became like the Kanaka, since I originally had tanned skins like them."[281] Moreover, when HJJCC members welcomed *Takarasienne* with Native Hawaiian food, lu'au, Amatsu Otome said that the food was primitive. Following that, Amatasu emphasized

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[278] Kosato Akemi, "*Hawai Koen ni Yume Nosete*," *Kageki* no. 366, 1956, 83.
[279] Yodo Kahoru, "Utsukushii Kankyō," *Hawaii Koen Kinen Arubamu*, no page number.
[280] Uetsuki Sawako, "Hawai dayori," *Kageki* no. 356, 1955, 70.
[281] Fukayama Sakura, "Hawai Tsūshin shūroku," *Kageki* no. 368, 1956, 48-49.

that she was always drinking Coca-Cola during the tour. Amatsu's words implied the racial and cultural hierarchies between her and Native Hawaiians. Simultaneously, by mentioning Coca-Cola, a symbol of "civilized" America, Amatsu seemed to identify herself with White American consumer culture instead of "primitive" Native Hawaiians.

In short, we can see that as other Japanese people, *Takarasienne* also regarded Hawaii as a place that contained multiple powerful images. There was both the exotic and paradise Hawaii along with the primitive Hawaii, both of these connected to imperial war memory of a colonized South Pacific.

Clearly the *Takarasienne* brought a wide range of images, some of them complimentary and others more racist. Another frequent image was that of Hawaii as a civilized and progressive America. In the interview of *Hawaii Hochi*, Fujisato Miho talked about her opinion about gender equity in Hawaii. "My impression of Hawaii was that people treat females with certain respect. Although Japanese people were gradually accustomed to democracy after the war, under the continuous feudal system, Japanese males still tend to look down on females."[282] Fujisato implied the inferiority and difference of the Japanese gender system compared to that of Hawaii. We can also see her struggle being treated unequally in Japan and her admiration towards a democratic Hawaiian society. Moreover, Shigure Otowa added that, "The difference between Japan and Hawaii was both husbands and wives have jobs. While females are wives, they work outside home. We can barely see these couples in Japan."[283] Shigure's statement implicated her aspirations towards the independent women who could work like men outside the home even after they

[282] Fujisato Miho, "Joseini Taisuru Shinsetsu ni Kanshin," *Hawaii Hochi*, 23 April,1957.
[283] Shigure Otowa, "Zuka Otome ni Kiku Hawai no Sugata," *Hawaii Hochi*, 5 April, 1956.

got married. After the war, one of the images that Japanese people had towards Hawaii was as a modern technological society. According to Yaguchi, because of the corruption of the Japanese society after the war, Japanese visitors often praised what they saw as Hawaii's modern and progressive values.[284] In addition to "primitive" and "exotic" Hawaiian images, other *Takarasienne* saw in Hawaii the promise of a modern, progressive American society.

Encountering Americans

While each *Takarasienne* had different image of Hawaii, the common thing that they stated passionately in interviews was their interactions with Japanese Americans, including the crowned CBF queens, White Americans and Native Hawaiians. Many *Takarasienne* described the many pleasurable meetings with various Americans and the friendships they enjoyed through the tours.

The support in the broader Japanese American community was enthusiastic and widespread. Since HJJCC members always supported *Takarasienne* during the tours, the girls often appreciated their help they received. For example, Midori Yachiyo stated that, "Although they barely spoke Japanese, they worked very hard for us. These members helped us backstage and also did stage lightning. I think it must have been very tough work."[285] Furthermore, some amateur Japanese Americans played the orchestra music for Takarazuka repertoires. A *Takarasienne*, Masuda Hidetaka talked about one of the Japanese American performers, "I was really shocked when I heard that a guy playing the drum suddenly became sick and was hospitalized. He is a serious principal of the elementary

[284] Yaguchi, *Akogare no Hawai*, 114.
[285] Midori Yachiyo, "Shonichi no Kangeki," *Hawaii Koen Kinen Arubamu Dai Ikkai*, np.

school and bought a new drum to play for our performance."[286] These interactions between Japanese Americans and *Takarasienne* show the devoted work of Japanese Americans for Takarazuka performances. Furthermore, in many small daily matters, many Japanese Americans took care of the *Takarasiene*. For instance, a tour director, Umeda Kenichi said that, "The trouble was the girls wanted to buy everything. Fortunately, the wives of HJJCC members taught them how to buy good things without spending too much money."[287] Besides that, an all-female organization called the Honolulu *Nihonjin Fujinkai* invited the *Takarasienne* to a lunch party.[288] Furthermore, when Amatsu Otome went on the Hawaiian tour in 1957, she said that, "Because Hē-san (Japanese American), who helped us stage lighting in 1955, liked Japanese tobacco, I brought a pack as a souvenir."[289] Her words implied the continuous relationships with Japanese Americans since 1955 when Amatasu first visited Hawaii. Although a majority of HJJCC Nisei members identified themselves more as Americans and did not speak fluent Japanese, both *Takarasienne* and HJJCC members cooperated with each other and tried to promote Takarazuka repertoires by interacting and constructing a shared and mutual space beyond national borders.

As well as Umeda Keiichi, a stage director of the Hawaii tours, *Takarasienne* talked in interviews about their admiration for what they thought of as the racial superiority of White Americans. The Hawaii tour therefore became a good opportunity to interact with White American residents and tourists from the mainland. For example, the *Takarasienne* Shigure Otowa said that, "I was really anxious about the performance because many in the

[286] Masuda Hidetaka, "Hawai Tsūshin Shūroku,"*Kageki*, no. 368, 1956, 51.
[287] Umeda Kenichi, "Zentō no Wadai Kassaratta 'Takarazuka,'" *Kageki* no. 356, 1955, 72.
[288] "Nihonjin Fujinkai Takarazuka Otome Kangeikai," *Hawaii Hochi*, 25, April,1957.
[289] Amatsu Otome, "Sakura Ondo wo Miyage ni Takarazuka Otome Ikko Shupattsu," *Hawaii Hochi*, April, 11, 1957.

audience were White Americans... I was so nervous whether they could understand me or not, so I tried to put some lines in English."[290] Here, we can see Shigure's efforts to make the performances understandable for White American audiences. Shigure continued that, "I asked the HJJCC members to teach me lines in English, so that White audiences could understand me better."[291] Moreover, Japanese Americans willingly became mediators and supported Shigure's efforts to interact with White Americans. This illustrates a multilayered picture of the interactions among Japanese, Japanese Americans and White Americans.

In addition to whites and Japanese Americans, other racial groups living in Hawaii also came to see the performances, but *Takarasienne* like Shigure only talked about White Americans, and treated them as special. Amagi Tsukie noted that, "When we were in kimono, many White Americans sincerely applauded us. I felt so impressed being a Japanese, and by comparing the gorgeous evening dress, now I thought Japanese kimono was more beautiful."[292] Taking her words into consideration, the fact that White Americans admired the beauty of *Takarasienne* in kimono seemed to convince her of the real beauty of Japanese-ness. Like Umeda, Amagi seemed to acknowledge the "cultural superiority" of White Americans, because their admiration for her kimono convinced her to take pride in being a Japanese woman.

Although few *Takarasienne* spoke directly with White Americans through the tours, *Hawaii Hochi* did introduce a particularly interesting article illustrating the interactions between *Takarasienne* and a White woman. It says that after Takarazuka's performance a

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[290] Shigure Otowa, "Hawai Arekore," *Kageki* no. 369, 1956, 118.
[291] Shigure Otowa,"Eigono Serifu wo," *Hawaii Koen Kinen Arubamu Dai Nikai*, (Takarazuka Kagekidan Shuppanbu, 1956), no page number.
[292] Amagi Tsukie, "Kimono no Utsukushisa," *Hawaii Koen Kinen Arubamu Dai Sankai*, no page number.

blind White American woman visited the Takarazuka dressing room. She asked every *Takarasienne* to give her an autograph and said that, "I could not see anything but the sound of geta made me feel Japan the most… I have been looking forward to watching today's performance for a while. I really want to visit Japan sometime."[293] This woman's words show us that although many White Americans, including her, expected to meet a stereotypical traditional, oriental Japanese woman, there was nevertheless direct interactions between this White woman and the *Takarasienne*. Although this article did not say what and how the *Takarasienne* responded, it is safe to suggest that they were enormously flattered and pleased to have this praise from a White American. *Takarasienne* definitely enjoyed the time with her and were proud of themselves as performers while communicating with this White woman. As well as Amagi's case, for *Takarasienne,* getting the direct praise from a White woman clearly brought some confidence as professional performers. In the end, they opened themselves up to new ways of thinking to become modern and professional female performer who White Americans could accept and even admire. These interactions suggested the ways of imagining themselves and their role as professional stage performer living in postwar Japan even after coming back to Japan.

In addition to Japanese Americans and White Americans, *Takarasienne* also came into contact with Native Hawaiians during the tour. Commonly, several *Takarasienne* talked about their experiences interacting with Native Hawaiians. Since the *Takarasienne* were dance performers, many of them were interested in learning hula dances and some even took hula lessons led by Native Hawaiians. Kuroki Hikaru mentioned that hula dance was

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[293] "Mimi de Mita Takarazuka," *Hawaii Koen Kinen Arubamu Dai Sankai*, no page number.

more gorgeous than she had expected, and she came to understand the difference between "authentic" hula and what was well known in Japan.[294] Senba Tatsuko also said that although she was very busy with other schedules, she and other *Takarasienne* actively took hula lessons held in Waikiki. She and others often used the term "authentic" hula dance. The "authenticity" that *Takarasienne* were using illustrates the "exotic" difference between them and Native Hawaiians.

Simultaneously, there was another story of a *Takarasienne* and a Native Hawaiian that demonstrated transcultural exchange. Wakamizu Kumiko talked about her interaction with a Native Hawaiian named Mrs. Florence:

> Hawaii is beautiful, and the heart of the people living in Hawaii is also beautiful. I became friends with a native Hawaiian, Kanaka. Although we could not understand the language, we could connect from heart to heart... We first met at the reception party. She was dancing hula and we took a picture together. Even at the different parties, she showed up and always gave me a flower lei. One day she invited me to her house and gave me some handmade earrings and neckless. She treated me as her real child and taught me the politeness as a stage performer... When I left Hawaii, she came to the airport to see me off. I was crying and she was also crying.[295]

Wakamizu's words clearly stated the deep interaction with a Native Hawaiian, Mrs. Florence. Although some *Takarasienne* in their interviews implied the racial inferiority of Native Hawaiians, Wakamizu's words lead us to understand that there were also moments when women used dance to create a transnational mutual performance space that transcended the need for language and shared cultural background. In the interview, Wakamizu only talked about the experience with Mrs. Florence. That means the best memory of the Hawaiian tour for her was not the stage performance but the wonderful

[294] Kuroki Hikaru, "Hawai no Tabi Ima Ichido," *Kageki* no. 357, 1955, 40.

[295] Wakamizu Kumiko, "Misesu Furōrensu," *Hawaii Koen Kinen Arubamu Dai Ikkai*, np.

encounter she had with a Native Hawaiian woman. We therefore can see the interconnections and exchanges between Wakamizu and Florence, that did not clearly connect to power relations. Wakamizu's case shows that following the interactions of individuals brought a new way of thinking about the relationship between Japanese and Native Hawaiians, which challenged boundaries of race and nationality.

As introduced, after the *Takarasienne* returned to Japan, the connections made with people in Hawaii continued. One example was the annual visits of the crowned CBF queen. While *Takarasienne* attended the CBF from 1955 to 1957, the queen visited Takarazuka even before 1955. The 1954 queen, Anna Tokumaru, visited Takarazuka and watched the revue. Kuroki Hikaru, a member of the 1955 and 1957 tour, mentioned her interaction with Tokumaru in *Kageki*. "I was imagining that Ms. Tokumaru must have a good figure like a White American... When she watched our repertoire, she applauded it saying, 'wonderful, wonderful...I have never seen such repertoire in Hawaii.' After the performance, we gave her a costume from 'Kagamizushi'... She looked very impressed and said 'OH!' many times."[296] Kuroki suggests that she thought of Tokumaru more as an American than Japanese. Kuroki continued, "Ms. Tokumaru promised me to welcome me at the airport if I am chosen as a member of Hawaiian tour... It was only two days we could stay together, but the communication with her made my admiration towards Hawaii clearer and stronger... After several days, Tokumaru-san sent me a Hawaiian record."[297]

As seen above, every time the queen visited Takarazuka, there were direct communications between the queens and the *Takarasienne*. Even after the HJJCC stopped

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[296] Kuroki Hikaru, "Mis Hawai to Tomo no Futsukakan," *Kageki* no. 348, 1954, 44-45.
[297] Ibid.

inviting Takarazuka to the CBF, the queen continued visiting Takarazuka until the early 1960s.[298] *Takarasienne* gave the queen their kimono costume used in the performance, and talked and sometimes danced with the queen. When the queen Vivienne Honda came to watch Takarazuka in 1964, Honda said that watching the Japanese inspired revue became one way to learn about her unknown home, Japan.[299] After the performance, the Takarazuka company held a party for Honda at the Rokkō hotel in Kobe, and twelve *Takarasienne* who went on the Hawaiian tour gathered and welcomed her. The article continued that the queen in a Hawaiian muu muu danced hula to music her uncle played on the ukulele. Following her, all twelve *Takarasienne* joined in the dance. After the dance, *Takarasienne* sang one of Takarazuka's most famous theme songs, "*sumire no hana sakukoro*" and "*sayonara* Vivienne."[300] Through the continuous interactions with the crowned queens, *Takarasienne* were often inspired by these Japanese American women who looked both Japanese and American, but did not speak Japanese and barely knew about Japan. *Takarasienne* emphasized the moments of mutual recognitions between themselves and the female Japanese Americans. For these female performers, the crowned queens were a symbol of an exotic, progressive Hawaii, far distant from Japan.

***Takarasienne* After the Hawaiian Tour**

Even outside the theater in Japan, some *Takarasienne* who had traveled to Hawaii on tour often embodied Hawaii by wearing Hawaiian clothes in their daily lives. For

[298] "Takarazuka Nyūsu," *Kageki* no. 384, 1957, 50; "Takarazuka wo Otozureta Mis Hawai," *Kageki* no. 396, 1958, 62; "Hawai kara 'Sakurano Joōu,'" *Kageki* no. 408, 1959, 78; "Mis Hawai Raihō," *Kageki*, no.431, 1961, 47; "Mis Hawai Raihō," *Kageki*, no.443, 1962, 88; "Mis Hawai Raihō," *Kageki* no. 455, 1963, 79.
[299] "Hawai no Joōu Mis Sakura wo Mukaete," *Kageki* no. 467, 1964, 122,123.
[300] Ibid.

example, in the magazine *Takarazuka Gurafu*, Furusato Akemi introduced nine types of outfits she brought back from Hawaii. All of the outfits were either Western style dresses or pants, yet simultaneously, all were designed in vivid colors such as deep ocean blue, sky blue and mountain green with flowered prints that easily evoked "paradise" Hawaii. In one photo Furusato holds a pineapple while standing in an Aloha shirt and Western styled pants with a straw hat. The image suggests how Furusato embodied the hybridity of progressive and primitive Hawaii as a form of self-expression. Furusato actively and flexibly chose the image of herself responding to the expectations of the audiences. In this case, for Japanese readers, she shows her various styles of womanhood by widening her fashion from traditional kimono to Hawaiian outfits. In other words, she utilized these Western and Hawaiian dresses as effective tools to Japanese audiences that marked her as a woman of a new generation.

In addition to embodying Hawaii, some *Takarasienne* domesticated Hawaii by decorating their rooms with objects that brought exoticism into their daily lives. For example, after the Hawaiian tour, Akashi Teruko introduced readers of *Takarazuka Gurafu* to her room decorated with Hawaiian souvenirs. Next to a vanity dresser on which she put a vase with colorful flowers, she placed a guitar, pink and blue colored Hawaiian lei flowers and an ukulele. Furthermore, in the picture, she was standing in a tank-top and long skirt while playing the ukulele, each item evoking exotic Hawaii.[301] According to Christine M.E. Guth, bringing souvenirs home enables tourists "to authenticate their own experience."[302] For Akashi, carrying and displaying Hawaiian objects in her room allowed

[301] "Oheya Haiken," *Takarazuka Grafu* no.98, July, 1955, 18, 19.
[302] Guth, *Longfellow's Tattoos*, xx.

her to "authenticate" her experience in "paradise" Hawaii. At the same time, decorating her daily personal space with Hawaiian objects permitted her to add new meanings to her identity as a Japanese woman. That is, by showing her domesticating Hawaii to Japanese audiences who read *Takarazuka Gurafu*, she showed off the difference between the readers and herself, who had experienced Hawaii firsthand. Her experience in Hawaii at a time when very few Japanese people were allowed to travel abroad marked her off as unique and modern. That is, showing her acquisition of Hawaii illustrates her wider range of womanhood, who could become Japanese, Western, and even Hawaiian. Akashi's example illustrates how domesticating exotic Hawaii allowed her to open up more flexible and wider ranges of womanhood to the Japanese readers.

Conclusion

While each group of people involved in the Takarazuka Hawaiian tour tried to control the image of *Takarasienne* for their own purposes, female performers were not passive nor voiceless women who just followed orders from others. Rather, within the limited opportunities they had, they were active participants in their own self-representation to people both at home and abroad. Shaped by their own images of Hawaii, they created new meanings by experiencing Hawaii for themselves. Furthermore, through their interactions with various peoples and adapting themselves to sometimes competing expectations others had for them, they performed various forms of Japanese womanhood for various audiences. According to circumstances, they sometimes performed "oriental" Japanese women by riding on *jinrikisha* and wearing kimono, even if these were things they did not experience in Japan. On the other hand, they came home to stage the exotic

“paradise” Hawaii for Japanese audiences and show their wider range of modern womanhood. In each case they aimed to show their flexible representations and recreate their own identities as professional Japanese female performers in the postwar Japan by utilizing the opportunities they had.

Able to visit Hawaii at time when few Japanese - especially women - could travel abroad, and doing so as professional entertainers gave them entirely new perspectives and experiences that broadened their thinking. Especially, by interacting with people in Hawaii, they redefined themselves as women with wider range of modernity. They were eager to find some way to both widen their opportunities through embracing what they saw as progressive Hawaii, while also upholding conventional standards of Japanese femininity. Even after coming back to Japan, some *Takarasienne* maintained contacts with HJJCC members who passionately supported the *Takarasienne* during the tour, and they also welcomed the crowned CBF queens on the annual visits to Japan. Furthermore, even in their daily lives, some consumed Hawaii by embodying and domesticating it for their own purposes. Promoting themselves in public as women who had experienced Hawaii, as discerning enough to tell “real” Hawaii from the public image, implies their ambition to represent themselves as modern Japanese women. Their experiences abroad became a model for the rest of Japanese women eager to imagine bright futures.

By featuring *Takarasienne* who actively navigated multiple expectations about their role and meaning, this chapter has introduced new representatives of Japanese womanhood whom previous scholars have largely overlooked. Moreover, featuring Hawaii, which contained multiple images for Japanese people, such as exoticism, imperial war nostalgia and an admired part of American culture, leads us to a new analysis of the cultural

relationships between Japan and Hawaii in 1950s. Japanese people, including the *Takarasienne*, imagined Hawaii as a more complex picture than that of mainland America. That is, while the Japanese viewed Hawaii as part of the US, they regarded it at the same time as an exotic, primitive place. This tangled picture of Hawaii was also reflected in race and ethnicity, that was distinctive in the 1950s. Therefore, paying attention to Hawaii allows us to see a different view from those studies focused on mainland America.

Takarasienne embodied a range of femininities that even embraced more masculine roles (such as *otokoyaku*), as well as both Western and Oriental stereotypes. Yet these women had their own opinions and took on a far more active and collaborative role in cultivating themselves as the vanguard of modern Japanese womanhood in the 1950s.

Conclusion

In 2016, some retired *Takarasienne* performed the well-known Broadway musical "Chicago" at Lincoln Center in New York City. Not only Japanese fans but also American fans gathered in front of the theater after every performance, and took pictures with their favorite *Takarasienne*. A retired *Takarasienne*, Shizuki Asato, who performed the leading male part, talked about her performance in New York, "I am really glad that I can perform the role of Billy at a Broadway theater in New York. I heard that several theater producers said that it would be amazing if any female actress performed Billy. While 'Chicago' has been performed all around the world, women acting in male roles poses a new challenge, the first challenge like this in the world"[303] Another *Takarasienne*, Asami Hikaru performing female character, Roxy in "Chicago" mentioned that, "I really want to express 'Japanese-ness' through performing… We, as Japanese women, will play the most elegant 'Chicago' and mesmerize American audiences."[304] Another *Takarasienne*, Yamato Yuga talked about her continuous admiration towards America, saying, "While I was in Takarazuka, every time I took time off, I visited New York and watched a ton of performances. I got so much inspiration from these stages and I have dreamed about someday performing at a theater in New York."[305]

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[303]"Entame tāminaru." https://enterminal.jp/2016/05/chicago-og-2016/. (Accessed October 2, 2020).
[304] Ibid.
[305] Ibid.

Considering these *Takarasienne*'s words, while they showed their excitement about performing in New York and their admiration towards American theater, they also emphasized Takarazuka's unique characteristic: its all-female performers. By emphasizing all-female Takarazuka's "Chicago" poses a new challenge, these performers were proud of themselves as professionals performing at the highest levels and in the most prestigious theaters around the world. At the same time, as Asami mentioned, they reconstructed and renegotiated their identity as Japanese females through staging their own version of "Chicago" outside Japan. In other words, the special opportunity to perform "Chicago" in front of American audiences at a Broadway theater, a hub of global culture and thus the most authoritative place, made them realize their extraordinary role as *Takarasienne*. It also motivated them further to represent Japanese female performers around the world. As seen, even today, *Takarasienne* have continuously visited America with aspirations and enjoyed interacting with Americans and reconstructing their own sense of who they are and what they can represent.

Over the years, their ways of performing have formed a complex offering to the various audiences for whom they have performed. For American audiences in the twenty-first century, they decided to perform "Chicago," an authentic Broadway musical. Thus suggests their desire to challenge majority expectations about traditional Japanese women being feminine and submissive. By performing "Chicago" in exactly the same way as the authentic Broadway version, they schemed to show the way they represented a wider range of womanhood, including elements of traditional masculinity and Western-inspired characters. In fact, there were several critical comments about Takarazuka's "Chicago" among the audiences in New York. The *New York Times*, for example, was confused, asking

whether the performance was a comment on gender, and expressed disappointment that it did not "see some of its more exotic repertoire." It also considered the performance overly "kitsch," and when comparing the Broadway version of "Chicago" to the Takarazuka version, it said that Takarazuka's "Chicago" was not authentic since it simply imitated a performing art originated in the West.[306] These critical comments reminded us of the voices of American audiences watching Euro-American inspired Takarazuka repertoire in the 1930s, which I discussed in chapter 1.

As for the American audiences in the twenty-first century, however, due to the expansion of communications and transport technologies, it has become easier for Americans to touch Takarazuka and understand its specialty features, all-female performers and Western stylings. As mentioned in the beginning, there have been a number of American fans, especially female fans who were moved to tears at the chance to watch real Takarazuka live. When I talked with several female American fans who had watched "Chicago" in 2016, one of them told me that she was crying when she heard "*Sumireno hana*" (Violet Flowers), a famous Takarazuka theme song, because it was her first time to listen to it live in America. Although she lives in Boston and visits New York very often, she does not watch Broadway musicals anymore. "I used to be interested in the theatres," she told me, "but it is not as interesting as Takarazuka anymore."[307] As seen, many of them thought Takarazuka was intriguing and tried to understand it. As a result, they recreated their own fandom within their own socio-cultural background in the US. These American fans tell us of complicated borders. While crossing borders to appreciate an art form in their

[306] Isherwood, Charles. "Review: In Takarazuka's 'Chicago,' the Midwest Looks a Lot like Japan," *New York Times*, July 21th, 2016. http://nyti.ms/2aci4mE (Accessed September 2, 2016).
[307] Personal Talk, interview by author, 14 September 2016.

non-native language, they also see the performances within the political-cultural context of American race and gender relations. This means that they are all actively engaged with Takarazuka and continually reconstruct Takarazuka fandom by adding new meanings to it to meet their needs.[308]

My dissertation has explored the transnational history of *Takarasienne* who went to America and interacted with Americans from the 1930s to the 1950s. By using transnationalism as a main analytical concept, through this dissertation I investigated how *Takarasienne* actively explored the meanings of Japanese womanhood within the framework of larger hegemonic structures that shaped how both Japanese and Americans viewed these performers. Moreover, I clarified the process of how these women used their experiences as *Takarasienne* to recreate their own identities, especially through a period in which the boundaries and role of Japanese women were continuously transforming.

During wartime Japan, I featured the *Takarasienne* American Tour in San Francisco and New York, especially their participation in International Fairs in 1939. Given the significance of representing *Takarasienne* at such major Expos, I explored how they adopted and shaped their own understandings of what it meant to be Japanese women in response to the expectations of both the Japanese government and the American audiences. I did so paying particular attention to the anti-Japanese movement, which was escalating in America, and the Japanese government's attempts to counter that growing criticism. In this way, I examined how *Takarasienne* could represent a "civilized" and "modern" female that could help to counter the image of Japan as a rising aggressive colonial power.

[308] Regarding American female fans' fandom of Takarazuka, see Irie Toshiko, "Toransunashonaru na shiten kara mieru, takarazuka to Amerika jin josei fuan," *Setsudai Jinbunkagaku* vol. 25 (2018): 159-179.

In the next chapter, I focused on Takarazuka's Occupation-era history in Japan, and explored female performers' interactions with American male GIs, American women and Takarazuka male executives and performers. Besides these interactions with *Takarasienne*, I also examined how these various groups thought about the female performers, as well as argued how these women had strong opinions about their own roles as Japanese women to invigorate the vision of a New Japan. In addition, I followed the voices of these women to argue that "Americanization" was not a new development for Takarazuka. This particular perspective allows us to see that "Americanization" was not merely a one-sided policy imposed by the US in the postwar years.

Regarding Takarazuka's postwar era, I investigated Takarazuka's postwar American tour by highlighting the Hawaiian tour in the 1950s. By clarifying the complex historical and political background of the Pacific after the Occupation, I revealed various perspectives towards the *Takarasienne*, such as Japanese Americans who invited Takarazuka to their annual Cherry Blossom Festival, White American tourists from the mainland, and Takarazuka male executives who gave the *Takarasienne* the opportunities to go to Hawaii. At the same time, following the previous chapters, I clarified how the *Takarasienne* actively participated in their own self-representation to people both at home and abroad. Through the experience in Hawaii, they created new meanings of being Japanese women living in postwar Japan. Shaped by their own images of Hawaii, I argue that by experiencing Hawaii for themselves, they created new meanings for Japanese women in postwar Japan. In each case they aimed to create flexible representations and recreate their own identities as professional Japanese female performers in postwar Japan.

Through this dissertation, I have introduced various voices about the *Takarasienne*. I have emphasized the many different perspectives of their fans and observers. My main focus, however, has been on the voices of the *Takarasienne* themselves as they interacted with Americans and who also traveled to America by themselves. Most previous works exploring Takarazuka history have paid little attention to what these females actually said, and instead have focused on what others -- especially both American and Japanese men -- have said about them. As the scholar James Clifford has noted, women are still exceptions when considering the paradigm of travel and mobility. By following Clifford's argument, through the dissertation, I have clarified how through their travels *Takarasienne* were active agents interacting with America to reshape and redefine themselves. Furthermore, I have argued that these women created a sense of themselves through their encounters with "the foreign." They did so as travelers, which made them unique at a time when few women could travel, and as professional performers on the stage. As a result, through their experiences on the stage and off, they presented their own understanding of how to model Japanese women living in the new era not just for themselves, but also for Japanese women watching them in Japan.

This project is one of the first attempts to explore the transnational history of Japanese female performers and their interactions with America from the prewar to the postwar era. Through this research, I have offered a more nuanced and multi-layered analysis of the *Takarasienne*'s experiences. As a Japanese scholar majoring in Global Studies, especially American Studies, my point of view featuring Takarazuka and its female performers within a transnational framework adds new insight on the vital impact of the process of constructing the *Takarasienne*'s own modernity, as well as the process of

creating a broader range of options for women in Japan. Researching Takarazuka and its female performers with a transnational perspective will add new significance to the all-female Takarazuka Revue, the only such theatrical revue company in the world. My project will help move forward an emerging field of transnational area studies, showing the ways transnational historical encounters have created new meanings for popular culture phenomenon like Japanese Takarazuka.

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