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Lisa Bloom

GENDER, RACE AND NATION IN JAPANESE CONTEMPORARY ART AND CRITICISM

WHEN I BEGAN FORMULATING my ideas for this article, I was looking for ways to link the challenges and opportunities facing feminist artists and critics in Japan with the current uneven state of feminist practices in the art world and academe in the USA.¹ However, given the enormity of this topic, I thought that it might be more effective to first focus on the discussions emerging from work done in Japan by my peers on feminism, nationalism and a new kind of feminist transnationalism in the arts that stimulated my interest to begin with, and leave to the end the ways this work has made me rethink some of the issues of feminism, art theory, and cultural difference in the US. Since my goal was to stimulate discussions and not arrive at any ready-made conclusions, I thought the fewer direct comparisons on the basis of nation alone the better. Certainly the limits of doing that kind of comparative analysis between the US and Japan have already been convincingly argued against in recent books such as *Japan Made in the USA*, a critical analysis by leading Japanese and American scholars on how *New York Times* reporters often reproduce the 'Japan is behind the US model' in their foreign coverage of Japan.²

This article stems from my ongoing work editing a multidisciplinary feminist anthology on feminism, colonialism, and nationalism in visual culture that was just published this fall under the title, *With Other Eyes: Looking at Race and Gender Politics in Visual Culture* (University of Minnesota Press, 1999). The anthology is an intervention in current debates over future directions in art history and Women's Studies and represents writing by two generations of feminist scholars working between art history, Women's Studies and the humanities internationally. The essays in the anthology are examples of how recent work coming out of feminist visual cultural studies puts into practice the writing and teaching of a different kind of feminist art history and art criticism.

My approach in the anthology, as an editor, as well as in this essay is similar to other feminists who are currently writing on what Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan call 'transnational feminist cultural studies.'³ Like them, I, too, am uneasy with a feminism which claims to be innocent of any colonial or racial overtones. In the area of feminist scholarship, work on sex tourism, development issues, labor movements and women's labor has created a context to discuss both power relations between women as well as what constitutes feminist practices in a transnational world of globalizing economic structures and vast movements of populations, cultural products, labor, etc. However, not only does one need to think about how new forms of imperial practices that are gendered are being enacted within global economic structures in the arts – for example in the arena of international art exhibitions – but also how these operate nationally. Nationalist right-wing art critics in both countries remind us only too often that there is a colonial and racial context that remains real, which they will all too freely draw on and powerfully exploit to their own end.

Teaching visual culture in the first Women's Studies Ph.D. program in Japan for the past year, has made me question some of the issues of feminism, and the specificity of location regarding the writing, teaching and exhibiting of international contemporary feminist art and video in both the USA and Japan. My situation in Japan is a relatively unusual one, since the university where I teach prioritises interdisciplinarity, a notion of internationalism that I will return to, and women's studies over more discipline-bound approaches to visual culture. The emphasis on feminist approaches that foreground issues of race and colonialism in an innovative curriculum is the result of the efforts of a top feminist administrator, Noriko Mizuta, and a mentoring system rather than any student, faculty, or community pressure or affirmative action policies, strategies which would be more frequently be the case in the USA. Similarly, the diversity of both the faculty and students who are mostly from different parts of East and Southeast Asia is due not to outside community pressure but to an institutional mandate of internationalism determined in part by the Ministry of Education (*Monbusho*). And, one cannot think of the international (*kokusaika*) as practiced at certain international Japanese universities since the 1980s without also addressing the ways its reinscribes the discourse called *Nihonjinron*, 'the master narrative celebrating Japanese uniqueness' in both art institutions and universities, and the interests of the state to engineer a society of homogeneous citizens which ignores both Japan's trade with citizens of other countries and cultures and the diversity of people within Japan. So successful is this national fiction of homogeneous Japan that most Japanese people in Japan feel uneasy mixing with people from other cultures and societies. International schools and universities are at best one site at which citizens are beginning to deal with issues of diversity and difference, and one of the starting points for thinking about multilingualism and multiculturalism in relation to internationalism in Japan. Ideas of multiculturalism now attracting attention in Japan significantly draw on theories and models imported from the West rather than from Japan's former colonized occupied territories of East Asia.⁴ For example, in the case of more progressive intellectuals in Japan, there is currently a lot of interest in multicultural theories and policies stemming from immigrant cultures such as the United States, Canada, and Australia. However, it would be a mistake to assume such theories would or could be accepted intact since

the context in Japan is so different.⁵ However, such models are used strategically as a way to counter more conservative examples of citizenship and immigration policies.

Nevertheless, there remains considerable interest in Japan on the part of intellectuals to consider the problem of Japanese identity and the nation-state in Japan and the question of why Asia is so seldom discussed within the Japanese discourse of multiculturalism and multilingualism. This is important since 'Japanese' society is not homogeneous but made up of many communities divided by ethnicity, citizenship, and place of residence. 'Japanese' society as a whole does not consist only of people of Japanese descent living in Japan but also East Asians from its former colonies and occupied territories, Ainu, Okinawans, people of foreign ancestry living in Japan, as well as Japanese living abroad. For example, at the Ritsumeikan University International Institute of Language and Cultural Studies in Kyoto there is a 10 year ongoing research project concerned with 'considering the problem of forming a new identity for the 21st century which transcends the nation-state and current "boundaries."⁶ As Nishikawa Nagao, the Director of the Institute put it,

How can we overcome the oppositional relationship of advanced countries advocating globalization and the third world's adherence to ethnicity, or the majority advocating multiculturalism and the minority adhering to its own culture? What role does the concept of the creole play in this? Furthermore, in a country like Japan, a country that has linked America and Europe to Asia in the 20th century world-system, what is the significance of thinking of these sort of problems?⁷

The invitation I received to teach feminism and visual culture in relation to questions of nationalism and multiculturalism at a new international university in Japan stems in part from such questioning. However, such an opening could be possible only at a new university where there is a key feminist administrator from a generation that contested some of the official masculinist ideologies and arrangements of postwar Japan and now has the power to implement her ideas. Also, it is significant that there is no art or art history department established at this school, since the scholarly field of art history in Japan has mostly ignored the issue of gender and race and its importance to the field.⁸ Just as a tradition bound and nationalist notion of Japanese art dominates, so too does a more canonical and mainstream approach to Western art. Megumi Kitahara, a Japanese feminist art critic, has written at length about her concern with a heightened Japanese nationalist presence in the arts, citing the different writings of both Haruo Sanda, a journalist, and Inaga Shigemi, an art historian who is a Professor at the International Japanese Cultural Center in Kyoto. Both these men published articles that openly displayed a rift between a Japanese art establishment and those curators, art historians and artists who espouse feminism and multiculturalism. Whereas Haruo Sanda attacked feminists for importing Western thought and for the low aesthetic quality of feminist art work, Inaga Shigemi criticized feminist art historians who want to rethink the history of Japanese art history in terms of both Japan's colonial past as well as from the perspective of gender as 'masochistic.'⁹ In response to Sanda's and Shigemi's public criticisms of feminist artists, critics and art historians, Kitahara wrote



Figure 23.1 Yoshiko Shimada, *Shooting Lesson* (1992), etching
(Courtesy of the artist)

why did Haruo Sanda and Inaga Shigemi attack feminist art historians at the same time? One of the reasons is the drastic increase in exhibitions on gender in Japan recently. Also we have to think of the effect that the rise of neo-nationalism in Japan amongst Japanese politicians and historians is having on art critics and historians now.¹⁰

Given this highly charged political context, issues concerning the Emperor are especially contentious for art historians rethinking the discipline of Japanese art history, according to Megumi Kitahara who writes,

the construction of Japanese art history is closely related to the creation of the Emperor system. In order to create Japanese art history, we use the power of the emperor. . . . To make certain exhibitions important, we say the Emperor saw that exhibition.¹¹

Kitahara also sees a tension between a certain kind of Japanese nationalism and more critical approaches to the nation as evidenced by the court case filed against the Toyama Public Museum of Art for purchasing the works of Japanese contemporary artist Nobuyuki Ohura. Ohura's use of cutup images of the Emperor in his photomontages were seen as so blasphemous, so much so that even catalogues of his works have been burned by the museum sponsoring the exhibition.

One response to the court case has been the work of Yoshiko Shimada who used an image of the late Emperor Hirohito in one of her art works in 1993 for a

larger piece of work which deals with Japanese war crimes in Asia, a piece that feminist art critic, Hagiwara Hiroko, has written about in greater detail.¹² In the piece entitled *A Picture to be Burnt* (1993), Shimada uses an iconic image of Emperor Hirohito in a military uniform, which the artist then disfigures by covering the whole piece in red, and putting an x through it, and then burning out its eyes. Given the prior fate of Nobuyuki Ohura's catalogue which Shimada references in the title of her piece, it is not surprising that the only place that this piece is reproduced is outside of Japan, on the cover of a 1994 issue of *Asian Art News*, a publication in English from Hong Kong.

What is particularly significant is how artists including Shimada and Ohura, among others,¹³ are using their art work as a way to critique the crucial role the state plays in shaping the content of Japan's national history by also setting limits on the style in which the past is remembered. Since for them the function and institution of memory, and thereby of history, is a critical mechanism through which the present gets constructed for younger generations. What I find significant about Shimada's work, as well as the writing on Shimada by Rebecca Jennison¹⁴ and Hiroko Hagiwara is how a kind of transnational feminist art work and visual cultural criticism puts weight on connecting a critique of Japan's Emperor System and its hierarchy to the effects this system has had on the lives of women in Japan and Asia. Since the institution of 'Motherhood' still remains as one of the most contentious issues for even contemporary Japanese feminists, Shimada's critical reframing of stills from old films and official photographs that sanctified the image of motherhood in Japan during the 1930s and 1940s in her art work series *White Aprons, Past Imperfect, Shooting Lesson, Mother and Child* and other work of hers from 1993 is unusual. Shimada explains the impetus behind why she did this work:

Shooting Lesson is one of the first works I have done relating war and women. I was looking through old propaganda photographs during the war, and this photograph struck me as something peculiar, women in white aprons shooting. My mother's generation of women always told us about the hardship of the war, how they suffered. But here is a photograph of Japanese women in the Japanese colony of North Korea practicing shooting to protect themselves and their families from anti-Japanese Korean farmers. If the Japanese women were wearing military uniforms I would not have been so shocked, but I did not expect that the women would be wearing white aprons – symbols of maternal love and care. In this image, what I had previously thought as two opposite entities, motherhood and Imperialism, seemed to merge together in, what for me, was a surprising image of the Japanese Imperial system.¹⁵

To give you a greater sense of the range of her work on this issue, I want to contrast *Shooting Lesson* with another of her pieces *Mother and Child* from 1993. In this work, she points out the inequalities between Japanese mothers during the war. If the official state ideology was *hakko Ichiu* which meant eight worlds under the one universe of the Emperor's love, Shimada's work shows the ways that this ideal failed for certain women. For Shimada, not all Japanese mothers' lives were, in the end, saved by the gigantic will of the state. That is why she contrasts the fates of different



Figure 23.2 Yoshiko Shimada, *Mother and Child* (1993), etching
(Courtesy of the artist)

mothers: on the top, she shows the Empress, Hirohito's wife, holding the current Emperor Akihito; the middle part of the work represents compliant Japanese mothers who were encouraged to produce soldiers for the nation-state proudly sacrificing their sons, and at the bottom, she reproduces a photograph of a mother and baby killed in an Osaka air raid.

As I was envisaging how Shimada's work and the feminist art criticism surrounding it was practicing feminism differently, I was struck by the wider implications of Shimada's critique of the sanctity of motherhood and its connection to a

nationalist ideology. Not only was her work meant to make more complex the history of this institution of motherhood as it is understood within Japan, but its implications are much more wide-ranging and significant. As Hiroko Hagiwara put it:

In her prints, installations and performances Shimada deals with issues of Japanese war crimes in Asia, for which even ordinary Japanese women were responsible, and with Asian women's experiences, which made a remarkable contrast with those of Japanese women. To focus on differences between 'Japan and Asia' is the artist's far-sighted strategy to position Japan in Asia.¹⁶

Though Shimada has a small following in Japan amongst feminist and leftist critics and curators, her work was also attacked indirectly (not by name) by Japanese journalist Haruo Sanda, cited earlier, for not being 'Japanese' enough.¹⁷ Her feminist perspective, political emphasis in situating Japan within Asia, and her method of using found images which she alters is highly unusual in Japan. So too is Tomiyama Taeko's work. She is a Japanese printmaker and painter of an older generation than Shimada whose work has also been extensively written about by Rebecca Jennison and Hiroko Hagiwara. Writing about the difficulties she has encountered exhibiting her work in Japan, the artist claims that:

Working on a theme related to South Korea brought me up against a wall of prejudice in the art world of Japan. The 'Oriental Art' typified by Lee Dynasty ceramics or calligraphy might be alright, but in a Western oriented art world, modern Asia was not a subject for art. It was next to impossible to find galleries that would exhibit my pictures, aimed as they were at calling back to mind a war that everyone wanted to forget, a colonial past that no one wanted to deal with.¹⁸

Tokyo based curator, Toshio Shimizu explains further:

The Japanese public prefers exhibitions of French Impressionism over any other kind of art, and wealthy collectors in the past have spent huge sums of money on paintings by impressionist masters. The Japanese avant-garde reacted quickly to changes in art movements abroad, first in France and then in the United States. Even today Japanese contemporary art is generally considered to be directly influenced by European and American trends.¹⁹

Shimizu points out that the reverse was true with respect to Asia. Until recently, outside of very limited circles, there was little information on Asian art available in Japan. The situation began to change in the 1990s when six major exhibitions of Korean art were held in Japanese public museums during the first half of the decade, with the most recent being an exhibition of Korean residents in Japan.²⁰ According to Raiji Kuroda, a curator at the new Fukuoka Asian Art Museum,²¹ the most symbolic event of the boom was a symposium in Tokyo entitled *The Potential of Asian Thought* organized by the Japan Foundation which invited Chinese, and Southeast

Asian speakers rather than only artists and curators from North America and Western European countries. Still, Japan's historically colonialist attitude towards Asian culture has made at least some South-East Asian curators cautious about whether Japanese interest in Asia will turn out to be another form of cultural hegemony. As Apinan Poshyananda, the Thai art critic and curator, put it at the 1994 symposium in Tokyo, the 'Japan-led or Japan-determined Asian Spirit will have to be scrutinized closely by her neighbours and cousins' to see whether it is not merely 'the display of cultural hegemony to exhibit superiority of one culture over another through art exchange programs.' Though in certain instances Poshyananda's reservations might ring true, the recent construction of the 'Asian' Museum this year in Fukuoka City with Raiji Kuroda as one of its curators, suggests that a more thoughtful approach to the issue of situating Japan within Asia is emerging. Raiji Kuroda writes:

In order to renovate the concept of 'contemporary art' in Asia, it is important to understand the art movements of each country, in their socio-historical contexts and backgrounds, not by comparison with the mainstream of Japanese or western history. Secondly, we must define contemporary art by the degree it reflects the present situation, and not through individuality, originality or how avantgardist it may appear.²²

How has the longtime emphasis on more avantgardist forms of Western art, the silence on feminism, and the limited interest in East Asia in mainstream Japanese museums historically affected the development of feminist art historical scholarship in Japan? Why didn't feminist artists and art historians turn until recently to the issue of rethinking Japanese feminism from a perspective which takes into account Japan's colonial history? One reason among others offered by Megumi Kitahara is that feminist scholarship has probably been more influenced by other factors outside the field, for example, the end of the cold war and the debates within Japan around the Korean comfort women issue which began in 1991 when three Korean comfort women filed a landmark lawsuit against Japan for drafting them during the Pacific war. Remarking on the temporal coincidence between these two events, Chungmoo Choi a guest editor of the journal *Positions*, writes that

during the cold war, not only was debate on Japan's colonialism suppressed under USA hegemony, but so was discussion of such heinous crimes as the experiments on live human subjects for the development of biological warfare by Japanese Army Unit 731.²³

Now that rethinking Japan's colonial past has become a part of a greater feminist project in Japan that extends beyond the arts, more feminist scholarship in English that deals with questions of race and colonialism, such as the work of Griselda Pollock, Gayatri Spivak, Trinh T. Minh-ha, Lisa Lowe, Rey Chow and others has been recently translated into Japanese and there seems to be a greater international exchange recently between feminist scholars who are working on these issues.²⁴

It is also worth pointing out that doing work on feminism in the arts in Japan is very different institutionally than in the USA. There is only one women's studies

program at this university, but women's studies courses on the arts exist in Western Civilization, Communication, and American and English literature departments, among others. With the exception of the exhibition of the work of Yayoi Kusama, there is very little known in the USA about Japanese feminist artists. This lack is reflective not only of feminism's institutional situation in the USA and Japan but also how it is frequently perceived by opinion-makers and journalists in both countries. For example, one independent feminist forum is the Tokyo-based *Image and Gender Research Group* which was founded in 1995 and has been successful in creating an innovative monthly lecture series in feminist theory and the arts as well as workshops on institutional policy issues, such as sexual harassment. It, too, has attracted negative attention from the same male critics mentioned earlier.²⁵ One of the arguments against the group by Haruo Sanda who refers to the group as a 'political sect' is a right wing nationalist one – similar to a critique of multiculturalism and multilingualism – that is feminism too is seen simply as another borrowed idea from the West of little concern to authentic Japanese intellectuals and ordinary citizens. It is significant that many of the feminist curators, art critics and art historians in the group, though they have travelled and in some cases lived outside of Japan and speak several languages, have nevertheless chosen to work in Japan in an attempt to intervene in the art establishment here as well as to offer a much needed forum for younger feminists working in the arts. In some cases, those who have remained have only gained recognition abroad and have to exhibit or publish their work outside of Japan to gain attention.

My participation and involvement in the *Image and Gender Research Group* has made me realize how different feminist artists and critics' groups are in the two countries. Perhaps the hostility to art work and scholarship that deals with issues of gender, race and nation is more overt in Japan, and that has made Japanese feminist art critics, academics, activists, curators, publishers, and artists more able to bridge constituencies, and academic divisions more easily and communicate with each other more intensely than women artists, curators, and critics do in the USA. This uneven dialogue between feminists in the USA is perhaps one of the consequences of a fractured feminist art community divided along ethnic, racial, national, and class lines, as well as a certain kind of USA parochialism that results in part from the overspecialisation of scholars in the academy, the separation of the art schools and art departments from women's studies, ethnic studies, and area studies departments on university campuses.

A major driving force behind a shift amongst Japanese feminists in Japan towards a more complex notion of feminist art in relation to race, ethnicity and nationalism has begun to unleash a new form of transnational feminism which is very different than the older European-based notion of a cosmopolitan feminism and its problematic Eurocentrism. If USA feminists are to contribute to developing a new feminist transnationalism in the arts – they might begin by engaging more seriously with the work of feminist artists, curators, and critics from Southeast and East Asia as well as Japan, and work harder at making connections between USA based artists and critics and those feminists in Asia, Australia and Japan. There is a lot for visual cultural critics like myself to learn. For example, part of the rethinking needed is to recognize that the internal dynamics of feminist art practices and academe in the USA is not a smooth or a simple art history but one that has very distinct regional

locations (in which New York based artists tended to be favoured) and that this was the direct result of a Eurocentric cosmopolitanism which excluded Chicanos, African Americans, or Asian Americans. However, it is not perhaps by chance that some of the most influential practices in Japan can also be found in artists and cultural critics located on the West coast of the USA who are also elaborating a new kind of feminism in relation to issues of multiculturalism and transnationalism. I am thinking of the art work of Hung Liu and Yong Soon Min, as well as some of the feminist cultural critics such as Lisa Yoneyama, Tessa Morris-Suzuki, Dorinne Kondo, Miriam Silverberg, Hyun Sook Kim, Chungmoo Choi, and others who are currently writing for the journal *Positions*. What connects their work is a concern with how visual culture – photographs and films – represents contentious sites where national history is written and the significance and impact of new and old politics of remembering and forgetting on the lives of women in Asia, Japan, and their diasporas.

Notes

- 1 Colleagues and friends have inspired and assisted this article at various stages. I especially want to thank Rebecca Jennison for her invaluable feedback as well as for including this essay as a paper in the panel that she organized, 'Different Locations: Contemporary Visual and Performance Artists Seeking Alternatives in Japan' for the College Art Association that took place in Los Angeles, Cal., in February 1998. Please note all Japanese names are given in English form with the first name first, in Japan, the surname is usually placed first.
Special thanks to Yong Soon Min and Connie Samaras for inviting me to present a version of this paper for the University of California at Irvine's Colloquium, 'Straddling the Pacific Rim: Politics of Representation on the Move,' in February of 1998. My special thanks to Apinan Poshyananda and Raiji Kuroda for their response to an earlier version of the paper. I also wish to thank Jonathon Mark Hall, Suresht Bald, Megumi Kitahara, Roddey Reid, and Yoshiko Shimada for extremely attentive and helpful comments, Material support has also been important. A travel fund from my research budget at Josai International University made it possible for me to travel to the USA in February of 1998 to present this paper at the College Art Association Conference in Los Angeles and at the University of California at Irvine's Colloquium.
- 2 Zipangu (ed.), *Japan Made in USA* (New York and Japan, 1998).
- 3 See Caren Kaplan and Inderpal Grewal, 'Transnational Feminist Cultural Studies: Beyond the Marxism/Poststructuralism/Feminism Divides' in *Between Woman and Nation: Nationalisms, Transnational Feminisms and the State* (Durham: 1999) pp. 349–63.
- 4 This has its parallel in the USA since the USA has also drawn little on intellectuals located in its former colonies or occupied territories.
- 5 For a more detailed discussion of this specific issue as well as an excellent overview on the overall issue of citizenship and internationalism in Japan, see Tessa Morris-Suzuki, *Reinventing Japan: Time, Space, Nation*. (London: An East Gate Book, 1998) pp. 185–209.
- 6 Nishikawa Nagao, 'The 20th Century: How Do We Get Over It?', *Ritsumeikan University International Institute of Language and Culture Studies*, Kyoto, Japan, p. 5 (translation: James W. Hove).

- 7 Ibid.
- 8 For further background on the important ways that art historians are currently rethinking Japanese art history, see Kojin Karatani, 'History as museum: Okakura Tenshin and Ernest Fenollosa' and the published proceedings from the December 1997 conference, *The Present, and the Discipline of Art History in Japan* (Tokyo: Tokyo National Research Institute of Cultural Properties, 1999). For further discussion about how the issue of gender has been largely ignored within the field of Japanese art history, see Chino Kaori's article 'The Importance of Gender in Japanese Art Historical Discourse,' in *The Present, and the Discipline of Art History in Japan*, pp. 46–47, as well as Inaga Shigemi's critical response to Kaori's paper in *Aida*, 1998. vol. 20.
- 9 Inaga Shigemi, 'To Kitahara, Megumi Reading Art Activism # 22' (Letters to Editor section), *Impaction* 112, 1999, pp. 170–73; Haruo Sanda, *Live and Review*, 1997. Regarding Shigemi's use of the term 'masochism,' it is important to point out how that term is also frequently used by Japanese nationalists who blame Japanese people for supporting Korean comfort women.
- 10 Megumi Kitahara, 'The Debate around "Just Only": Gender Difference in the Japanese Art World from 1997–1998,' *Impaction* 110 (1998), pp. 96–107. (This article is from a series of 22 articles that Megumi Kitahara published on art activism in this journal.) Kitahara uses the term 'just only gender differences' to differentiate her use of the term from Inagi Shigemi's, who she claims deploys the term to invalidate feminist scholarship in art history altogether by referencing post-structuralist debates on essentialism outside of Japan.
- 11 Interview with Megumi Kitahara, November 14, 1999.
- 12 Hiroko Hagiwara, 'Comfort Women: Women of Conformity: the work of Shimada Yoshiko,' Griselda Pollock (ed.) *Generations and Geographies of the Visual Arts* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996) pp. 253–4.
- 13 Also see the work of photographer Ishikawa Mao and sculptor Tomotori Mitako. Ishikawa Mao's work is on the symbolism of the hinamaru in Okinawa in the late 1980s. Tomotori Mitako's work deals with the resurgence of Ainu identity politics in the 1990s after Ainu citizens were deprived of access to the rivers and forests which sustained their lives. For further information on Tomotori Mitako, see Megumi Kitahara, 'Cutting in the Memory: Tomotari Mitako's Nibutani Project,' *Impaction*, no. 25, p. 130.
- 14 Rebecca Jennison, "'Post-Colonial" Feminist Locations: The Art of Tomiyama Taeko and Shimada Yoshiko,' *USA-Japan Women's Journal*, English Supplement, no. 12, 1997, pp. 84–108.
- 15 Shimada Yoshiko, 'Sleeping with your Enemy: Japanese Women and Power in Recent History,' presentation given at the 1999 College Art Association Conference in Los Angeles on February 13, 1999.
- 16 Hagiwara Hiroko, 'Comfort Women: Women of Conformity: the Work of Shimada Yoshiko,' Griselda Pollock (ed.) *Generations and Geographies in the Visual Arts* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), p. 254.
- 17 Haruo Sanda, *Live and Review*, 1997. Haruo Sanda's criticism followed the exhibition *Gender Beyond Memory: The Works of Contemporary Women Artists*, curated by the feminist critic, Michiko Kasahara in 1996 at the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography, which included Yoshiko Shimada's work. Haruo Sanda's criticism of Yoshiko Shimada resonates with the return of expressions such as *hikokumin*, literally meaning 'non nationals' which was a term of abuse applied to Japanese

citizens who showed insufficient enthusiasm for their nation's effort during World War II. This neo-nationalism has also manifested itself in recent legal policy changes in Japan during August of 1999 regarding symbols of the Japanese national heritage. Recent bills that legalized the Hinomaru flag as the national flag of Japan and the *Kimigayo* as the official national anthem have been seen as highly controversial. Both were key touchstones of Japanese national unity during World War II; the *Kimigayo* is seen as especially problematic since it was a song to admire the Emperor as a living god during World War II. It is also significant that both were proposed as bills days after a high school principal in Hiroshima Prefecture committed suicide on February 28, 1999 after being seen as disloyal to the nation for refusing to obey an education board order that the flag be raised and the *Kimigayo* be sung at the school's graduation. See 'Flag, anthem views vary among pollees,' *Japan Times*, August 6, 1999, p. 1.

- 18 Tomiyama Taeko, 'Shadows from a Distant Scene,' in the catalogue: *Silenced by History: Tomiyama Taeko's Work*, pp. 59–60.
- 19 Toshio Shimizu, 'Territory of the Mind: Japan and Asia in the 1990s,' *Art Asia Pacific*, p. 40.
- 20 *Areum Art Network: The Art Exhibition of Korean Residents in Japan*, November, 1999.
- 21 Interview with Raiji Kuroda, June 1999. See the catalogue for the *Commemorative Exhibition of the Inauguration of Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, The 1st Fukuoka Asian Art Triennial 1999*, March 6th–June 6th, 1999.
- 22 Raiji Kuroda, 'Practice of Exhibitions in Global Society for Asians, by Asians, and Some Associated Problems,' Jean Fisher (ed.) *Global Visions: Towards a New Internationalism in the Visual Arts* (London: Kala Press, 1994), p. 148.
- 23 Chungmoo Choi, 'Guest editor's Introduction,' the special issue on the comfort women: colonialism, war and sex, *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique*, vol. 5, no. 1, Spring 1997, v.
- 24 See the special issue on Gender and Imperialism, Brett de Bary (ed.), *USA–Japan Women's Journal*, English Supplement, no. 12, 1997.
- 25 Haruo Sanda, *Live and Review*, 1997.

(b) The space of the digital