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Book Reviews

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Redeeming the fault of excess learning, an attribute young women feared lest it make them ineligible to be wives, was not impossible, but only women of high rank, great piety, generous hospitality or some other unusual attribute could accomplish it. While the number of schools for women increased in this era and proliferation of housekeeping manuals reflects improvement in general learning, the quality of women's education declined. Fraser attributes this partly to the disappearance from England of Roman Catholic convents and the women teachers associated with them. The attentions of their brothers' tutors or of fathers seeking son-substitutes account more for the accomplished or learned women of the era than the benefits of Seventeenth century commentators embraced the image of women as "weaker vessels" with enthusiasm, applied it to all aspects of feminine character and life, and used it to justify the subordination of women to fathers and husbands. Were seventeenth century English women too weak morally and spiritually to overcome the legacy of "Grandmother Eve" or were they too fair, soft, sickly and physically weak to show courage? Did they put souls in danger by their inability to restrain carnal impulses? Were their brains so delicate that they could be harmed by vigorous use? Did the women, themselves, accept patriarchal protection as their rightful lot, or did they try to break free? Fraser's extensive and excellent study attempts to answer each of these questions.

Renaissance interest in educating women, symbolized by the accomplishments of Queen Mary I, Lady Jane Grey and Queen Elizabeth I, waned in the seventeenth century and learned women suffered ridicule. Even an advocate of schooling for girls scorned their brains for being less "charged" so that "like empty casks they make the greater noise." Answering the critics of her call for vigorous study for women, Busua Makin found it expedient to explain that Eve's daughters needed learning to overcome her influence. In the American colonies, a minister wrote that woman's publishing, an accomplishment beyond her sex, "doth rankly smell." That English women felt the sting of that idea, too, is reflected in Anne Countess of Winchelsea's praise of Lady Pakington who:

*Of each Sex the two best Gifts enjoy'd
the skill to write, the Modesty to hide.*

Of herself she wrote:

*Did I my lines intend for publick view
How many censures would their faults pursue...
Alas! a woman that attempts the pen
Such an intruder on the rights of men
Such a presumptuous Creature is esteem'd
The fault can by no virtue be redeem'd*

Discussing women's attitudes towards sexuality, Fraser comments that general approval of marital sex included the "sensible notion" that women would enjoy sex once introduced to it and notes that some writers thought that orgasm aided conception. Although she includes little discussion of the incidence of pregnancy outside marriage, Fraser does report that venereal disease, unchallenged by seventeenth century medicine, was so prevalent as to be accepted socially.

Pregnancy itself is well-covered, as married women of the age lived in a state of "almost perpetual pregnancy." Bearing children seemed to redeem women of guilt for Eve's sin, and infertility could be deemed evidence of sin. Nevertheless, seventeenth century couples practiced some forms of birth control (probably *coitus interruptus* or, after 1680, the use of condoms). Suggestive advice appeared in warnings against practices which inhibited conception, and popular publications included folk remedies to prevent conception or induce abortion. Unable to conceive a much-wanted heir in later life, Mary Countess of Warwick lamented having limited her family while young to save her figure and to relieve her husband of the burden of supporting too large a family.

High rates of maternal and infant mortality and the popular belief that a Caesarean birth always caused the mother's death reflect the deficiencies of seventeenth century obstetrics. Midwives were generally ill-trained, and Elizabeth Cellier's attempt to develop a college for midwives failed. Late in the century, the appearance of male physician-obstetricians challenged the traditional female monopoly over the birth process and imperiled the livelihoods of the midwives. Better education and greater skill assured the victory of the physicians. The patients reaped few benefits, however, as lives saved through improved skills were more than balanced by deaths due to infection.

Escape from marriage through divorce was close to impossible. Divorce did not carry the right of remarriage, and grounds for annulment, which did, were very narrow. Even Puritan experiments with civil marriage and divorce plus King Charles II's desperate need for an heir brought no other, and funeral elegies give witness to sincere grief at the loss of spouses. By the end of the century, parental control of the marriage choices of their children had diminished. Family interest, however, still limited the choices. Estates decayed by war cried out for well-dowered, heiress brides, even merchants' daughters, but could not support the crucial dowry needs of their own daughters.

The Weaker Vessel
Lady Antonia Fraser
Alfred A. Knopf, 1984
alteration in the ban on remarriage after divorce.

Widowhood gave some women more freedom and more power than otherwise possible. Armed with widow's portions and dower rights, they could and did act independently. The "lusty widows" of village folklore seem to have escaped the confinement of passive femininity. Even so, despite the belief that an ideal woman would reject remarriage to cling to the memory of her deceased spouse, most widows chose to remarry.

Life existed outside of marriage even in the seventeenth century. For those willing to play it, the mistress's role offered masculine protection and possible upward mobility. So many of the women were also mistresses that the term "actress" seemed to mean "kept woman." For the virtuous and well-born, employment as a "gentlewoman" within a wealthy household performing the role of a personal secretary was a better choice. Single women hawked their wares in city streets, and milkmaids were reputed to be both well-paid and independent. Successful business women, however, were usually women working with husbands or partners or widows carrying on in the family trade. Few women followed the example of highway-woman Mary Frith, but, as always, legions hoped for high pay as common prostitutes. For the old, ugly or peculiar woman, especially unmarried, seventeenth century life carried the special peril of witchcraft accusations.

Although Fraser found little change in the lives of women during the seventeenth century itself, the Civil War brought challenges to every assumption about the nature of women. Lawrence Stone, in Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500-1800, Ralph Trumbach, editor of Marriage, Sex and the Family in England, 1600-1800, and others contend that a major change in the history of the family occurred during the period 1600-1800. Adopted first by the elite, it involved the rise of domesticity, the introduction of marriage based on companionship and affection, improvements in the relationship of parents and children and rejection of patriarchal domination in favor of belief in human equality. Although these changes did not develop fully until much later, the "unfeminine" boldness and courage of Civil War women helped to raise doubts about the natural weakness and subordination of women.

Religious upheaval accounts for some of the change. Even before the war began, women had defied Saint Paul's injunction to keep silent by "prophesying." Later, Quaker "Inner Light" visited both sexes, and Quaker men and women worked side by side as they answered God's call in England and abroad. When men began to advocate liberty of conscience for themselves, they found it difficult to deny it to women. And didn't liberty of conscience place a woman, or at least one aspect of her life, above her husband's control? Did acknowledging the spiritual equality of women, as the Quakers did, open doubts about their political and social inequality? Early in the eighteenth century, Mary Astell complained that "...not Milton...nor any of the Advocates of Resistance, would cry up Liberty to poor Female Slaves or plead for the lawfulness of Resisting a Private Tyranny." Even the radical Levelers continued to preach the subordination of wives to husbands, and the Putney debater who demanded a place for the "poorest he" in England ignored the poorest she. Elizabeth Liburne's clever reply to officials who found it strange that a woman should petition them, even in her husband's behalf, "It was strange that you cut off the King's head, yet I suppose you will justify it," demonstrates how the destruction of one tradition can undermine all others.

Necessity drove women to play unaccustomed public roles in the war era. Although some women had pleaded before the Court of Star Chamber in their husbands' cases prior to the war, their actions were very unusual. Large numbers of Civil War women, like Elizabeth Liburne and the Royalist women who had to appear in Goldsmith's Hall to claim the one-fifth part of their husbands' sequestered estates to which they were entitled, appeared before Civil War tribunals. Sometimes, their ability to plead in ways that the men would have found "unmanly" increased their effectiveness. Amazon mobs, signers of great women's petitions and even midwives indignant that the war was costing them business appear in the public records of the Civil War.

Finally, Civil War women challenged the assumption that women were so physically weak and timid as to need constant masculine protection, and Fraser thinks that some of them relished doing so. Nobody could deny the courage with which Charlotte de la Tremoille, Countess of Derby, withstood the sieges outside her walls. The women of Lyme showed no timidity as they helped repel the King's formidable kinsman, Prince Rupert of the Rhine. Individuals risked their own safety when they served as spies or helped fugitives, and, as in so many other wars, the occasional soldier was a woman in disguise.

The flaws in Fraser's The Weaker Vessel are few and understandable. It is not a statistical study, but it does make use of available statistics. Yet, the reader is often left wondering just how typical a cited example is. Despite efforts to include ordinary women as well as the articulate elite, Fraser does not succeed in bringing the inarticulate masses to life. Were the guiltlessly free servants really able to marry for love? Might marriage, itself, have required more economic freedom than they enjoyed? In some places, tighter organization would improve the study, and including the irrelevant family connections of the women used to document ideas often gives the work an unnecessary gossipy tone. Confusion caused by the constant changes in people's names and titles remains despite efforts to eliminate it. These are very minor flaws. The Weaker Vessel has much to offer scholars and opens a whole new world to the general reader.

Jean Stonehouse
Assistant Professor of History

Iacocca

Lee Iacocca and William Novak
New York: Bantam 1984

The personality portrayed in the autobiography, Iacocca, will be familiar to T.V. viewers who have watched Lee Iacocca advertising Chrysler products. The strong willed, hard-working son of Italian immigrant parents relates his story of success and failure in the corporate board rooms of the auto industry. The book provides a glimpse of the personal life of Lee Iacocca, as well as a look into the operation of a major U.S. manufacturing firm and the economics of the auto industry.

Nicola and Antoinette Iacocca, Lee's parents, settled in Allentown, Pennsylvania in the early 1900s and raised two children, Lido and Delma. From childhood Lido, or Lee as he became known, was an industrious student. He attended public school in Allentown, and earned his Bachelor of Science degree in industrial engineering at Lehigh University, completing his studies at Lehigh in eight consecutive semesters. Upon graduation, he was offered employment with the Ford Motor Company, but acting on the advice of the placement director at Lehigh, he
applied for and was awarded the Wallace Memorial Fellowship at Princeton University. After completing his master's degree at Princeton, Lee Iacocca began his work at Ford and his climb to the top of the corporate ladder.

Although educated as an engineer, he was more interested in the personal appeal of sales, and managed to move into marketing. Lee Iacocca's spectacular rise to the position of president of Ford Motor Company is detailed in his autobiography. Although the author details the sacrifices and long hours of work necessary to reach the top, he also emphasizes the importance of his family and the fact that he always made sure he had time for them. It was in the position of general manager of the Ford Division that he made his most notable contribution: the introduction of the Mustang.

In 1965 when the Mustang broke all previous sales records, it became apparent that Lee Iacocca was destined to become the chief executive officer at Ford. While the climb to the top is long and arduous, the fall can be quick and cruel. Seemingly on top of the world at Ford, Lee Iacocca describes his battle with Henry Ford. The intriguing story leading to Iacocca's firing by Henry Ford and the bitterness which ensued, shows a bit of the politics, infighting and total loyalty to the company demanded of executives. As Iacocca says: "The scars left by Henry Ford, especially on my family, will be lasting, because the wounds were deep."

After the Ford crisis, Iacocca's courtship by Chrysler began another challenge and uphill climb. He recounts the mismanagement and disorganization of the Chrysler Corporation which he took over and describes the management changes he initiated in his efforts to save a "sinking ship."

Although his efforts made Chrysler a viable business organization, an external blow in the form of an oil crisis brought the corporation and the auto industry to its knees. Rather than concede defeat, Iacocca took up the struggle in the political arena. Discussing his bid for a government backed loan, Iacocca gives an insider's view of the condition of the auto industry since the oil crisis and the loss of sales to foreign producers. Would a government-backed loan to a private corporation set precedent in the U.S.? Has the auto industry responded to consumer demand or rather tried to mold consumer demand, thereby completely missing the need for smaller more efficient cars? What political maneuverings were necessary to secure $1.5 billion in loan guarantees from Congress? These are some of the many questions which are considered in the account of the successful turnaround at Chrysler.

In saving Chrysler Corporation from bankruptcy, Lee Iacocca has become an American hero. "By the middle of 1983, when the company was solidly on its feet again, there were stories floating around that I was running for President."

_Iacocca_ gives us more than an insightful look at corporate America. It provides a picture of some of the personalities that manage a corporation, explains various corporate management techniques and gives a look at the political and economic conditions in which corporations operate. _Iacocca, however, is primarily about the man himself._

**Anthony Cicerone**  
_Instructor of Economics_

### The Japanese Mind: The Goliath Explained

Robert C. Christopher  
Linden Press 1983

Robert C. Christopher's exploration of the Japanese mind and character illuminates a cross-cultural landscape currently filled with shadowy and distorted images of the Japanese people. Accept the premise, as Mr. Christopher does, that Japanese logic and values differ radically from our own, and you're on your way to understanding the multiplicity of economic, cultural, political and social problems that grow out of our failure to recognize the wide, deep cultural gulf which exists between our two peoples.

Mr. Christopher knows Japanese persons in places high and low: chief executives, legislators, government workers, professors, housewives and salarymen (men who work for Japanese companies). His frequent references to them, their lives, experiences, feelings, and perceptions of Japanese-American relations animate his narrative. His approach is thematic. We're introduced to the Japanese mind first through a series of tenets Mr. Christopher offers about being Japanese, next through the social, economic and political institutions which shape and reinforce this character, and finally through a tentative appraisal of changes in Japanese society which may influence the Japanese character and Japanese-American relations.

Having established his premise, Mr. Christopher proceeds. Why are the Japanese so different? Christopher's first tenet holds that to understand the Japanese mind, logically one needs to understand the language in which Japanese think. One fundamental source of complexity in the Japanese language is the use of different verb forms and even different vocabulary to denote the speaker's hierarchical relationship with the person to whom he speaks. Add to this the existence of 50,000 different kanji or Chinese pictographs which can be found in a Japanese dictionary, and one begins to discover the difficulties of the Japanese language.

With a language overwhelming in its potential for subtility and indirection, it is no surprise that the Japanese prefer, whenever possible, to avoid verbal communication entirely.

In place of the spoken word, Japanese rely on _nemawashi_, translated formally as visceral communication, more commonly as belly language. Racial homogeneity and almost identical social and cultural conditioning has produced a situation, Christopher observes, in which it is often possible for one Japanese to determine the reaction of another to a particular situation simply by observing the second man's facial expressions, the length and timing of his silences and the apparently meaningless sounds he emits from time to time. Thus, following from the first, the second tenet claims that racially and culturally, Japan is the most homogeneous of the world's major nations. The ability of Japanese to read each other's minds and faces is based on the sharing of a common social and cultural history, one that developed in relative isolation.

The corollary to this exclusionary orientation is the recognition of vulnerability. Given the perception that adversity will soon appear, be it typhoons, earthquakes or man-made trouble, the Japanese have psychic fears which reinforce important aspects of their character: tribal values, Confucian ethics and a heavy emphasis on hierarchy and loyalty.

A sense of collective responsibility leads to a preference for decision by group consensus. This in turn negates any tendency toward direct personal confrontation; in fact, the need to avoid conflict is increased. This drive toward consensus is supported by the concept of _nemawashi_, root binding, which is revealed in the tendency to be cautious and tentative in feeling out attitudes toward an issue. By taking no firm stand and by making implicit rather than explicit arguments, the opportunity to avoid conflict and discover consensus is created.

The desire for group well-being affirms
the value of adaptability and change. Since commitment is to a collectivity rather than to an ideology or religion, change can be accepted without the obstacles and conflict common to coping with change in the West. Of course this adaptability, based primarily on the drive for survival, has been a double edged sword. Being flexible has meant emerging from U.S. occupation as a willing borrower of U.S. research, technology and political structures, picking up every new social or intellectual trend that appears in the U.S., while at the same time protecting the essential Japanese value system and culture which has been sustaining and nourishing. Christopher concludes his list of tenets by observing that despite the readiness of the Japanese to adopt things foreign, in their hearts, they feel superior to the rest of the world.

Setting aside his initial premise and set of tenets, Mr. Christopher turns to an examination of daily life in Japan. He paints a seemingly transparent picture of some daily event: a day at the beach, park, kindergarten class, neighborhood, home, apartment, restaurant. He then transports us behind the shoji (paper sliding doors) to uncover cultural dynamics which reveal a quite different picture. Finally, he points out the consequences of misinterpretation and urges caution in making cultural generalizations drawn from superficial observation.

For example, consider the Japanese family. It is a far more complex entity than suggested by watching a Japanese mom, dad and their two kids at the beach. The visual images are startlingly similar to those of Americans: the number of family members, artifacts like pails, shovels, inflatable rubber duck, plastic cooler and portable radio or TV. Yet superficial similarities give way to significant variance when one comes to understand the psychic environment in which this family lives. The marriage bringing this family into being may well be one of the 40% of Japanese marriages arranged by a go-between. Marriage is viewed, not as the culmination of romance, but as a permanent practical union of social significance. The wife will most likely stay at home and raise the children, handle finances and make major decisions about household management. The husband, though respected and deferred to, will be at work or in a social setting with workmates much of his life. Children will be pampered, boys favored over girls, both encouraged to be dependent upon the love, support and unqualified acceptance of dad, and especially, mom. While enlightened by insights into the dynamics of Japanese family life, the Western eye will probably continue to view

in this scene an oppressed wife, a weak and ineffectual father and spoiled brats. Taking us beyond this tempting set of stereotypes is Christopher's forte.

Through cultural analysis he resolves what must be for the Westerner an anomaly. Is the Japanese male lord of all he surveys, dominant in professional and public life, or is he a weak, ineffectual person able to exert limited influence in his own

home? Perhaps he is both.

An understanding of the concept of *amae,* which does not have a direct English equivalent, is central to recognizing the nature of this seeming contradiction. It refers to unconditional acceptance which fosters dependence. Men, and to a lesser extent women, grow up with an expectation they will be loved and cherished from birth to death, and beyond. Japanese males, being endowed with superiority at birth, being pampered and favored more than females, carry with them throughout life feelings of being unconditionally loved and accepted. Thus the father of the household, freed of concern about losing his place of honor by allowing his wife decision making power, is able to give his full allegiance and commitment to his company. He knows his dedication will be repaid. In grasping, even in rudimentary terms, the father's dedication, the reader discovers that although the road to understanding the Japanese male as geisha, office girl and housewife, he seeks to report an historic trend. His statement that "what is going on in Japan now, I believe, is a subtle but inexorable consensus changing process concerning sexual roles," is supported by a few glittering success stories, a report of reluctant posturing on the part of the Japanese government to affirm women's rights and an increase in the Japanese woman's perception that if she has the desire and ability she should be allowed to enter fields of work previously reserved for men. His conclusion, "the key question, in fact, seems to me not whether the Japanese women's revolution will triumph, but how soon," reflects one of Mr. Christopher's frequent departures from objectivity. For preceding this prediction about a growing fissure in the structure of Japanese society, he has carefully built a more accurate scenario revealing the role of the Japanese woman as essential to the stability of her culture.

In concluding his probe of the Japanese mind, Mr. Christopher peers tentatively into the future of Japan and U.S.-Japanese relations. America needs to retain sufficient military might to contain Soviet adventurism in areas vital to Japan's interests and to remain strong enough economically to continue an active international role. Internally, Japan needs to cope with an aging work force, and the tendency of decreased productivity brought about by an increased affluence.

On a psychic level, the Japanese may need to work through the state of dynamic tension brought about by the influence of modern western values and western style relationships focusing on the importance of individual rights, and the more deeply ingrained structure of relationships and ethics originating in village life and generic to all Japanese social relationships.

Christopher's parting comment, that "like so many Japanese, Japan as a nation is a quick study," leaves us with an important caveat. Oversimplification is not the elixir of truth. *The Japanese Mind: The Goliath Explained* begins the reader on a long road to understanding the Japanese people, their history and culture. The careful reader discovers that although the road will change contours to adapt to new conditions, the distinct sign posts and groups peopling the road will be unlikely to change significantly.

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