

Course No. 3507/3508

**Contemporary
Japanese Culture and
Society**

Lecture No. 17

Leisure

Goraku

娯楽

Talking about leisure...

Different words with different shades of meaning

Goraku 娯楽 Amusement, recreation

Rejâ レジャー Leisure (industry, facilities レジャー産業、レジャー施設)

Asobi 遊び play, game, having fun

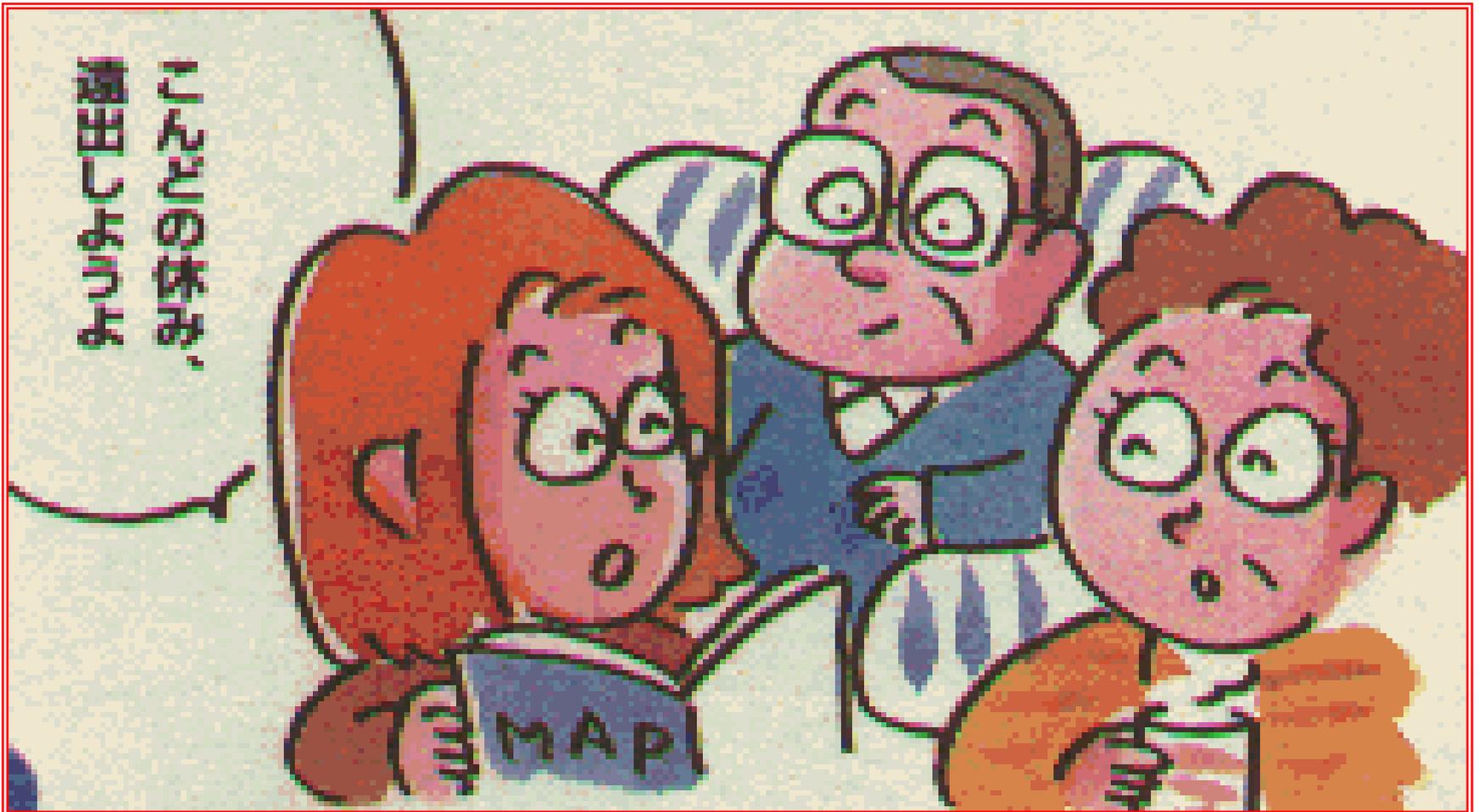
Hima 暇 Idle, time to spare, 'at leisure'

Jiyu jikan 自由時間 Free time

Kibarashi 気晴らし Amusement, diversion, hobby

Famirii saabisu ファミリー・サービス 'Family service' Taking kids to Disneyland

Rejâ...





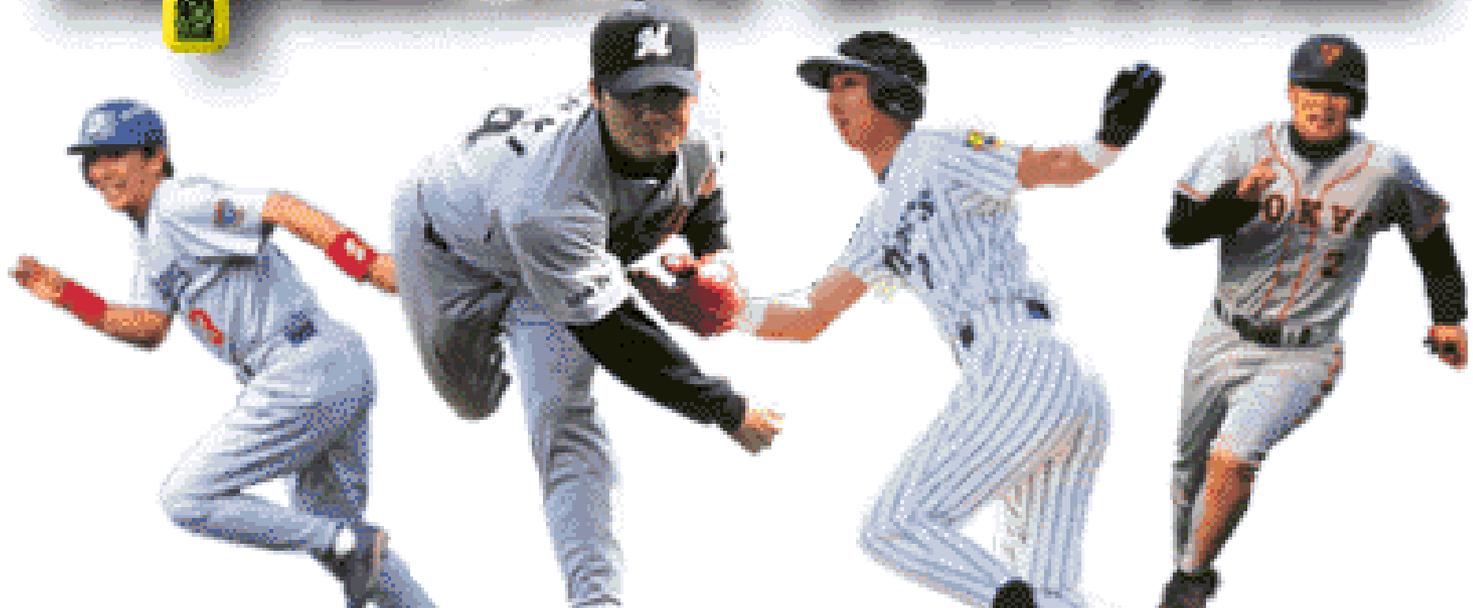
Asobi

Outline

- 1. Sport (Baseball, soccer, golf, tennis, sumo, judo, karate)**
- 2. Gambling (racing, pachinko, mah-jongg, lotteries)**
- 3. A night out (karaoke, bowling, movies, coffee-shops)**

Baseball

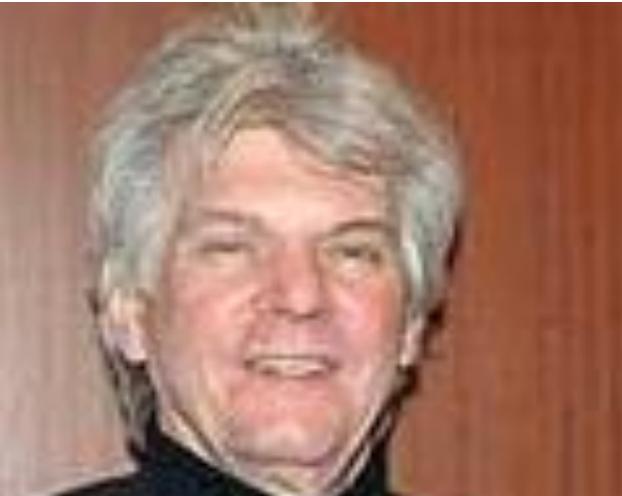
Japan Pro Baseball



130 years of history

Said to be introduced by Horace Wilson (1867-1912), an American professor in Tokyo University around 1873. Japanese baseball was well adopted to Japanese society and named Yakkyū meaning “Field Ball”. The sport easily caught on and was even said by a Japanese writer “Baseball is perfect for us, if the Americans hadn’t invented it, we would have.” (Robert Whiting, *The Chrysanthemum and the Bat*, 51)

Why perfect?

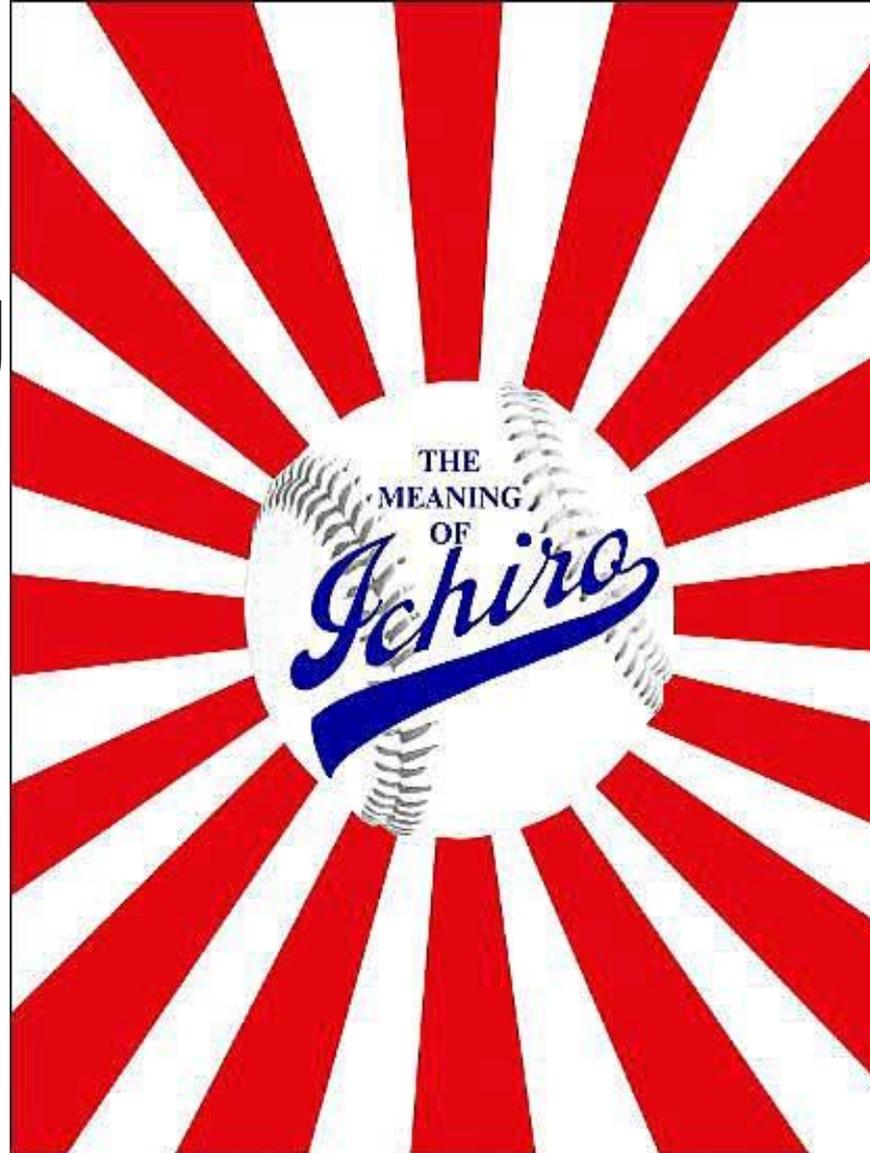


Robert Whiting

**THE CHRYSANTHEMUM
AND THE BAT (1977)**

**YOU GOTTA HAVE WA
(1989)**

**THE MEANING OF ICHIRO
(2004)**



**THE NEW WAVE FROM JAPAN AND THE
TRANSFORMATION OF OUR NATIONAL PASTIME**

ROBERT WHITING

*Bestselling Author of *You Gotta Have Wa**

A few more references

Cromartie, Warren (1991) **SLUGGING IT OUT IN JAPAN**

Maitland, Brian (1991) **JAPANESE BASEBALL A FANS GUIDE**

Obojski, Robert (1975) **THE RISE OF JAPANESE BASEBALL POWER**

Oh, Sadaharu and David Falkner (1984) **SADAHARU OH - A ZEN WAY OF BASEBALL**

Stanka, Jean and Joe (1987) **COPING WITH CLOUTERS, CULTURE AND CRISIS**

2 leagues, 12 teams (1987)

CENTRAL LEAGUE	PACIFIC LEAGUE
Hanshin Tigers (Osaka/Kobe)	Nankai Hawks (Osaka)
Yomiuri Giants (Tokyo)	Seibu Lions (Saitama)
Chunichi Dragons (Nagoya)	Kintetsu Buffaloes (Osaka)
Yakult Swallows (Tokyo)	Nippon Ham Fighters (Tokyo)
Hiroshima Toyo Carp	Lotte Orions (Kawasaki)
Yokohama Taiyo Wales	Hankyu Braves (Kobe)

2 leagues, 12 teams (2013)

CENTRAL LEAGUE	PACIFIC LEAGUE
Hanshin Tigers (Osaka/Kobe)	Fukuoka Daiei Hawks → → Softbank Hawks
Yomiuri Giants (Tokyo) Korakuen → Tokyo Dome	Seibu Lions (Saitama) → Invoice Stadium
Chunichi Dragons (Nagoya)	Rakuten Golden Eagles (Sendai)
Yakult Swallows (Tokyo)	Nippon Ham Fighters (Sapporo)
Hiroshima Carp → Mazda Stadium	Chiba Lotte Marines
Yokohama DENA Bay Stars	Orix Buffaloes (Kobe) Kintetsu-Orix Merger

A highly centralized business:

1987:Tokyo/Yokohama area: 6 teams

- Osaka/Kobe area: 4**
- Nagoya, Hiroshima, 1 each**
- Rest of Japan: None.**

140 games per season. No inter-league play. Each team has only 5 opponents to play, 28 times per season. No promotion, no relegation.

2013

Tokyo/Yokohama area: 6 teams

- **Osaka/Kobe area: 4**
- **Nagoya, Hiroshima, Fukuoka, Sapporo, Sendai: 1 each Rest of Japan: None.**

140 games per season. Inter-league play, 4 games per team (mid-season mini-league). Otherwise each team still has only 5 opponents to play. No promotion, no relegation. “Climax Series” playoff against teams you’ve already played many times...

Dominant Giants

In the 63 years 1950-2012, the Giants have won the Central League 34 times, all the other teams 29 times between them. Kind of boring?

Yes – and in recent seasons fans have gradually shifted their attention to the US major leagues, where the likes of Hideo Nomo, Kazuhiro Sasaki, Ichiro Suzuki and Hideki Matsui have done so well.

The traditional battle **(Dentō no issen 伝統の一戦)**

The Giants won 9 straight Japan Series championships 1965-73 as Japan was becoming an economic superpower, so many fans consider them a symbol of success. To cheer against the Giants, is almost unpatriotic. The Tigers are to the Giants what the Boston Red Sox are to the Yankees... they usually lose. Second city, second raters?

The Giants vs. the Tigers...

... a personal view.

Giants: Tokyo, white-collar, glory fans, want to be on the winning side, nationalistic, rich (Yomiuri Shinbun), conformist, establishment... baseball's LDP

Tigers: Osaka, blue-collar, romantic sympathy for losers, humanist, poor (Hanshin Railways), non-conformist, anti-establishment... baseball's (former) JSP

A frequent pattern in Japan: mainstream culture against anti-mainstream culture. Even if you don't support the Tigers, you can still be "anti-Giants." See my discussion of *Nikkan Gendai*, anti-Giants and anti-LDP newspaper, i.e. anti-establishment.



Anti Giants Forever!!
By The Association for
Defending Pro Baseball
From the filthy-rich
Giants (Futaba, 2001)

Tigers clawed back some respect by winning the Central League in 2003 and 2005, but since then it has been won by the Giants 4 times and the Dragons 3 times. Ordinary guys like me don't really care who wins the Pacific League!

Another case of mainstream vs anti-mainstream?

Central league: Famous teams, big money

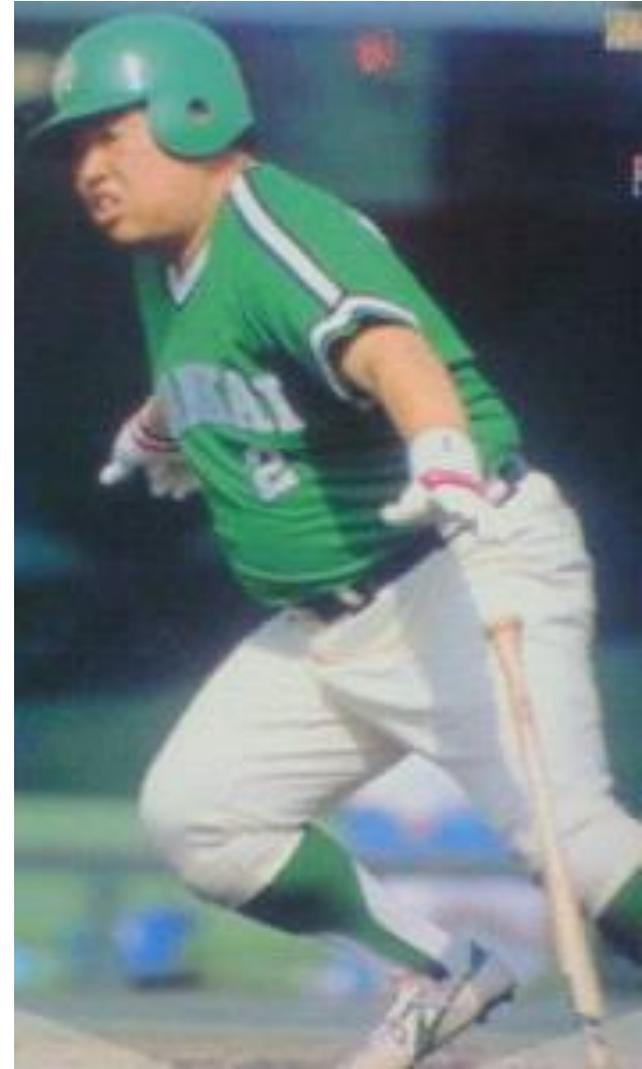
Pacific League: Cinderella league, teams repeatedly bought and sold...

... yet in all-star games from 1951 to 2012, the Pacific League has won 78, the Central League 73. After inter-league play started in 2005, the interleague champions came from the Pacific League 7 straight years. (The Giants won in 2012.)

So a REALLY anti-mainstream person does not support the Hanshin Tigers, but the Nankai Hawks – another team from Osaka, which kept finishing bottom of the Pacific League and played in front of tiny audiences, until the franchise was sold to Daiei supermarket in 1988.

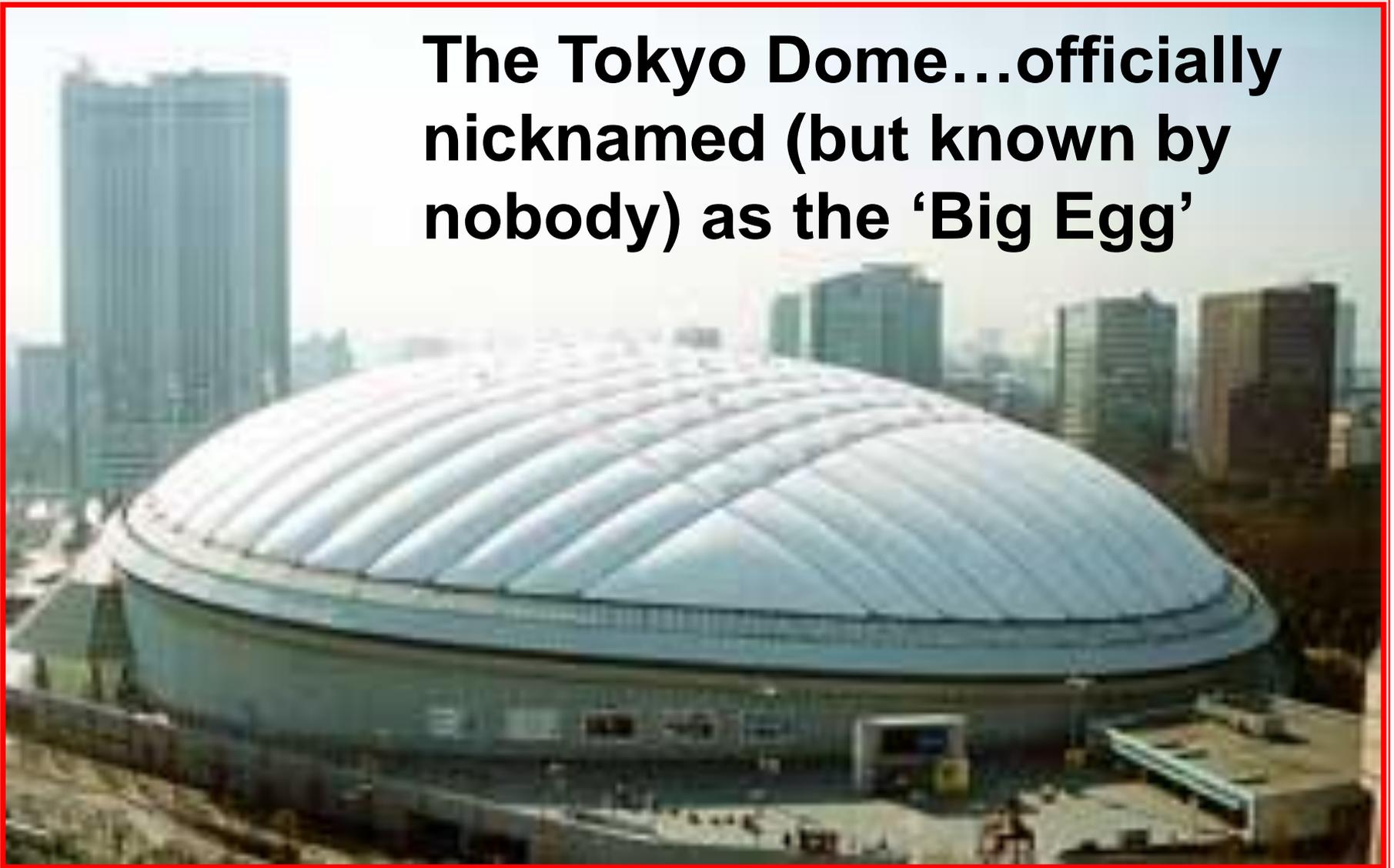
(Founded 1938 as the Nankai-gun, South Sea Army...)

**‘Dokaben
’ Kagawa**



What an ugly monstrosity!

**The Tokyo Dome...officially
nicknamed (but known by
nobody) as the 'Big Egg'**



**Koshien...
home of
the Tigers.
You don't
get ivy at
the Tokyo
Dome.**



“I’m Japanese! That’s why I like the Giants.”

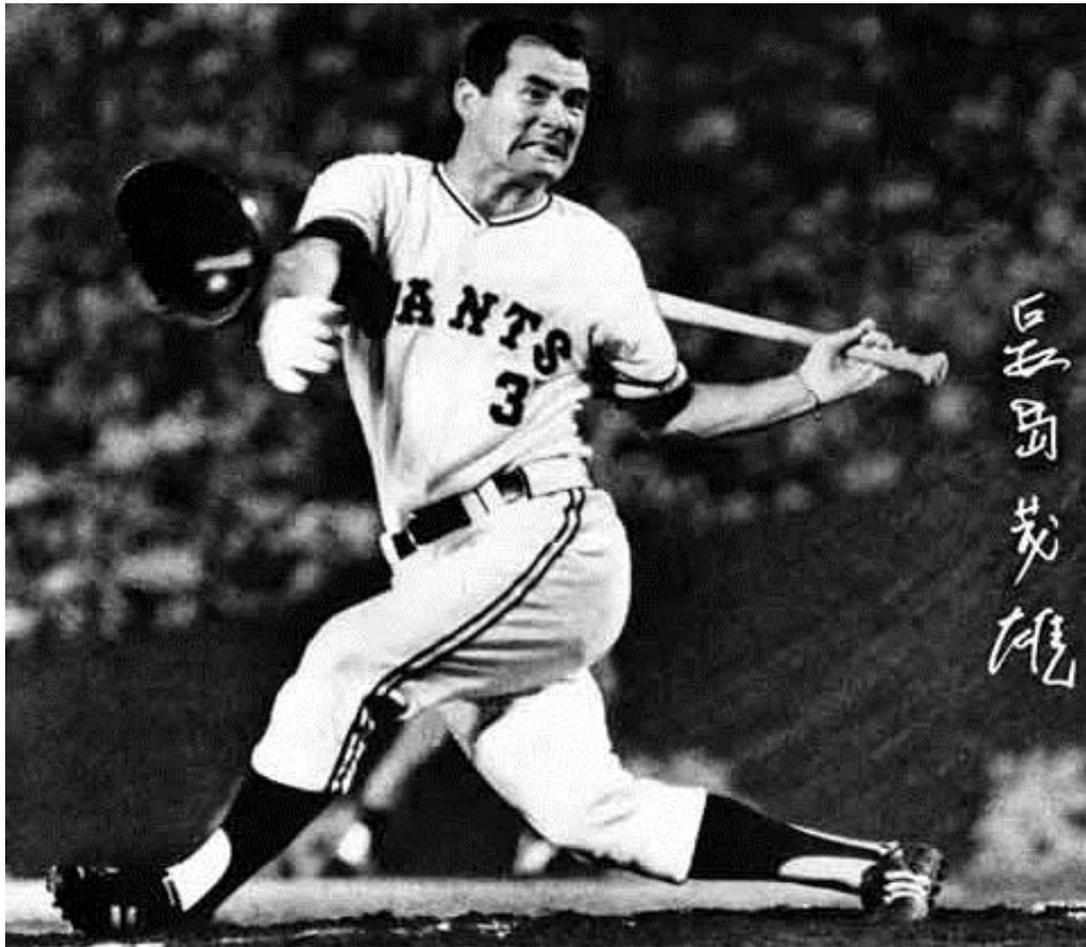
Kawakami Tetsuharu became manager of the *Kyojin-gun* (Giants Army) in 1960. Feeding off the national pride in the sport, he stated he would “build a team of pure-blooded and pure-hearted Japanese.”

Gaijins in baseball

Japan is like a big club. It's like Club Med, if you can imagine that. Membership is based one's Japaneseness, and gaijin can only be guest members.

-- From Robert Whiting, *The Chrysanthemum and the Bat*, p. 263.

A tale of 2 Giants



**Shigeo Nagashima 1958-1974
and Sadaharu Oh 1959-1989**





In later years...

Oh had the better stats

... with his famous 'flamingo stance' he hit more home runs than any pro baseball player on the planet!

	Nagashima	Oh
Batting average	.305	.301
Home runs	444	868
Hits	2,471	2,786
Runs batted in	1,522	2,170

... but Nagashima was far more popular.

...perhaps in part because he is a
“pure-blooded” Japanese, whereas
Oh is ethnically Chinese and holds
Taiwanese citizenship. He has
always firmly refused to naturalize.

Tigers, 7th inning balloons



Swallows with their half-hearted umbrella dance...



Repeated shared ritual activities strengthen solidarity and sense of “communitas” (Victor Turner). Even if the team loses, you can feel part of a lasting community.

High school baseball



Popularity reflects regionalism and lack of pro teams



Group harmony stressed...



... and purity of heart.

Strictly supporting role for girls



... who must cry when their team loses.

Kind of militaristic...



**Long hair,
tattoos,
earrings etc.
are all
strictly
forbidden!**

Radical?



Styles are conservative even in the pro game. Some teams (Giants, Dragons) ban dyed hair and beards.

Yokohama Bay Stars are liberals on hair... other teams vary. In recent years the Hiroshima Carp and Chiba Marines have banned dyed hair when the team has been struggling.

“Chapatsu” Takuro Ishii (now retired)



The idea being that strict, military discipline needs to be enforced

(Even so, it is interesting that pros have more freedom than schoolboys. For many people it's the other way round – radical fashions at high school or college, strict dress code when work starts at a company. Does growing up mean more or less freedom over personal appearance?)

The Giants are often called 'Kyojin-gun' – the Giants army.

巨人軍

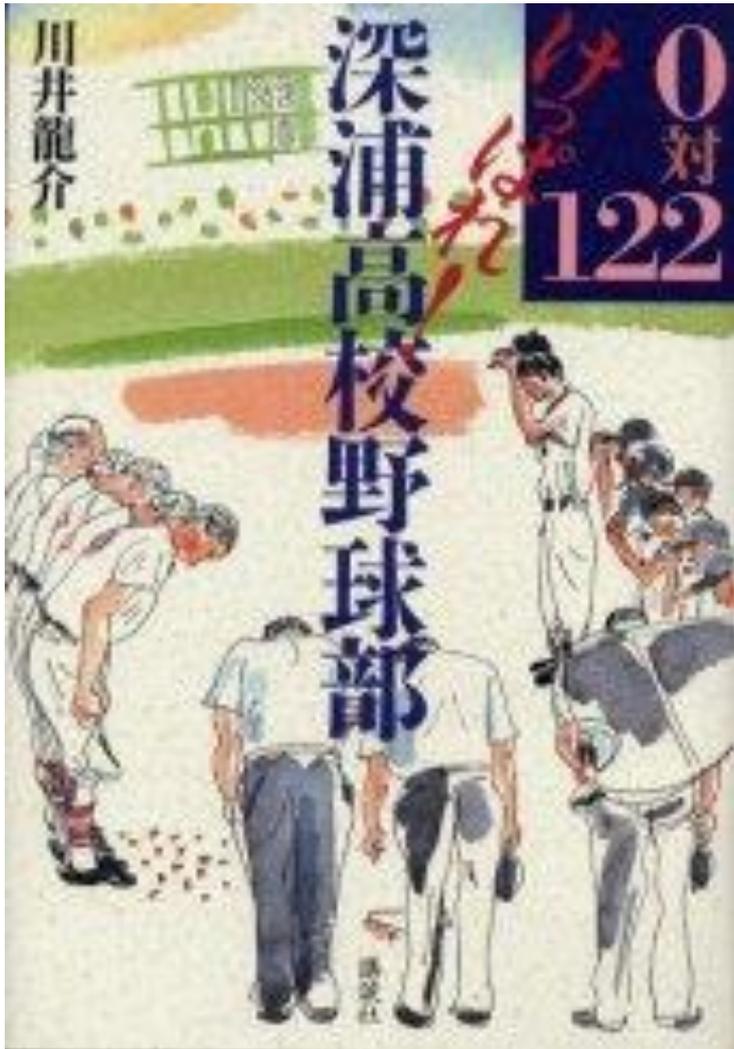
A common punishment for schoolboys is to make them shave off their hair to become a “maru-bōzu”, i.e. a completely exposed head, like that of a monk. May also be self-imposed, as sign of determination to change life.



The moment of victory



Honor in defeat... Fuku'ura High goes down in history by losing 122-0



チーム	一	二	三	四	五
東義	39	10	11	17	16
深浦	0	0	0	0	0

The winning team?
Long forgotten...

Pro baseball about winning, school baseball about losing

Pro

Only 6 teams in league, so good chance of winning. Can lose lots of games without consequence.

High school

Every high school in Japan takes part... one will be champions, all the others must learn to accept defeat.

Football



Kemari
Ancient
Japanese
**‘keepy-
uppy’**



Cf *Dakyu*

打球

**Ancient
Japanese
polo**



Patriotic spirit (Few international events in baseball)



The Japanese are proud of their brave samurai

Local football for kids (Dreaming of stardom? Or just for fun?)



The J League

Launched in May 1993, out of old works-team football... now 20 years old.

Often contrasted with pro baseball:

-- More teams, more regional attachment, more dyed hair and individualistic lifestyles.

58 teams around Japan

2nd division added in 1999. By 2013, 18 teams in J1, 22 in J2.

Another 18 in the Japan Football League, i.e. J3, and 122 in 9 regional leagues below that.

The fortunes of each team can rise and fall far more than in baseball, where you can finish the season bottom and still be in the same league next year.

A sharp contrast with baseball

Baseball works on the American model: Franchises bought and sold, teams that will never be relegated, so much less risk to investors. Only 12 teams, and no attempt to expand the leagues in 60 years.

Football works on the British model: Local club teams, in a pyramid that connects teams from the top of the pro league all the way down to local amateur teams. So more teams, closer connection to hometown.

Decentralized sport



In 20 years, the J League has never been won by a team from Tokyo. The most successful team has been Kashima Antlers (7 championships). Until they came along, most Japanese people did not even know where Kashima was. (It's in Ibaragi pref. and has a population of just under 70,000.)

Yokohama F Marinos...

... flamboyant?





Yokohama
Marinos and
Japan
veteran
defender

**Yuji
Nakazawa**
中澤佑二

3. Sumo 相撲



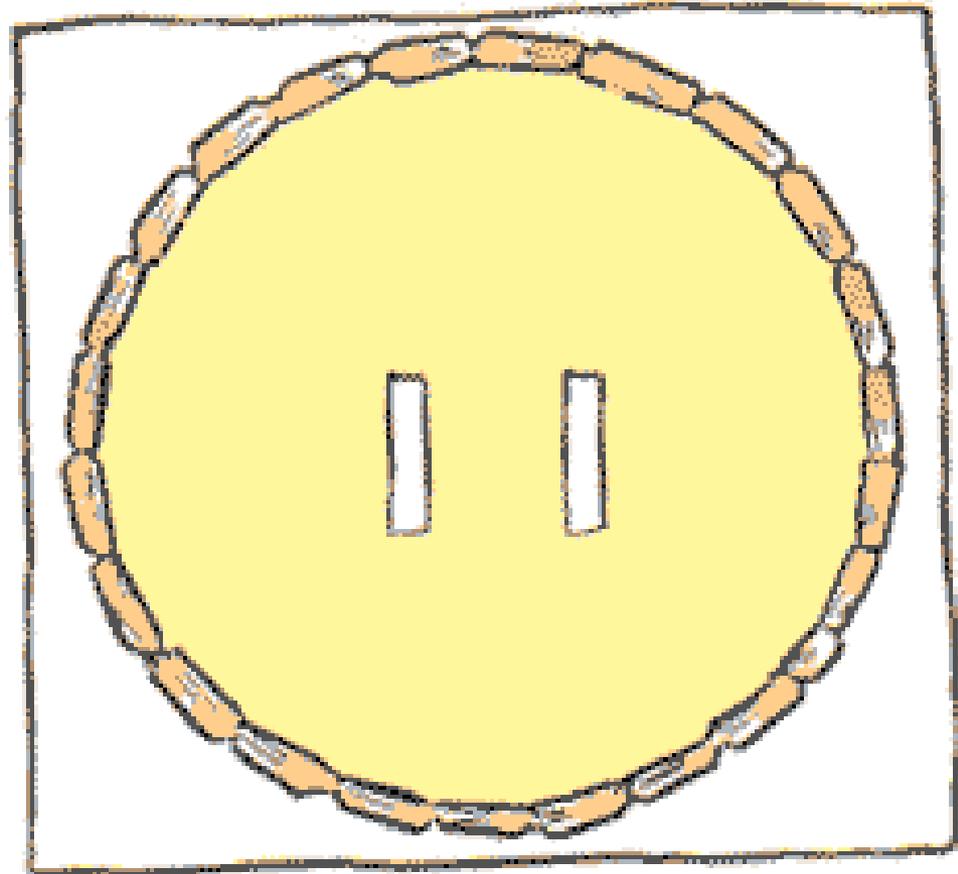
**A sport
or a
Shinto
ritual?**



**Grand
champions
(*yokozuna*
横綱) wear a
shimenawa
festooned
with *gohei*
御幣**

The ring (dohyo) is surrounded by straw like a *shimenawa*... sacred space

土俵は注連縄
(しめなわ)のよ
うな藁の境界線
に囲まれている



Purification of the dōhyō with Salt (Mitoizumi)

水
戸
泉



THE SUMO UMPIRE

*His dress
resembles
that of a
Shinto
kannushi*



An “Invented tradition” (Lee Thompson)

Sumo’s association with Shinto dates from the late 19th century (Meiji Era), when the government was trying to establish Shinto as a national religion with ancient roots. Sumo was supposed to be a ritual, not a sport.

Mirror of Modernity



Invented Traditions of
Modern Japan

EDITED BY
STEPHEN VLASTOS

Lee Thompson

**“The Invention of
the Yokozuna and
the Championship
System” (pp.174-
189) in Vlastos,
Mirror of Modernity
(U of California
Press, 1998)**

There are traditions of sumo wrestling at some shrines, and variations such as naki-zumo and crow sumo.

Examples of sumo in Shinto ritual all date from the 19th century, I believe.

Naki-zumo: first child to cry wins (or loses, depending on region)



Crow sumo at Kamigamo shrine, Kyoto



Priest /referee makes crow-like cawing sound , then small boys fight. Sept 9, keeps crows from damaging harvest.



The highest rank in sumo is yokozuna (grand champion). The first yokozuna was Yoshitoshi Akashi, who wrestled in the early 17th century. Some say he is only mythical.

Tanikaze Kajinosuke

谷風梶之助

**(1750~1795), 4th
yokozuna but the
first to be awarded
the title while still
alive and with an
official win-loss
record:**

W258, D16, L15





The word “yokozuna” literally means “sideways rope”, and indeed the ceremonial attire includes a white rope worn like a belt with zig-zag paper decorations. This marks the yokozuna as a religious symbol.

SHIMENAWA (しめ縄)



The *shimenawa* is a rope, together with *gohei* 御幣 (the zigzag paper strips hanging from the rope) used to mark out sacred areas in a Shinto Shrine. They can be found tied to sacred trees, rocks, and torii gates.

With this political and religious history, sumo is associated with nationalistic pride. In this woodblock print from the Bakumatsu period (1861), a sumo wrestler throws down a foreign barbarian.



Chiyonofuji: last of the greats?



***‘The Wolf’...
dominated
sumo for a
decade before
he retired in
1991 aged 35.
A true master.***

The rise of foreigners

1980s – Nationistic objections as Takamiyama and Konishiki (both from Hawaii) became the first really successful foreign *rikishi* (power warrior, i.e. sumo wrestler).

Now – Mongolian superstars like Asashoryu, Hakusho and Harumafuji are welcomed to rescue the ailing sport.

力士

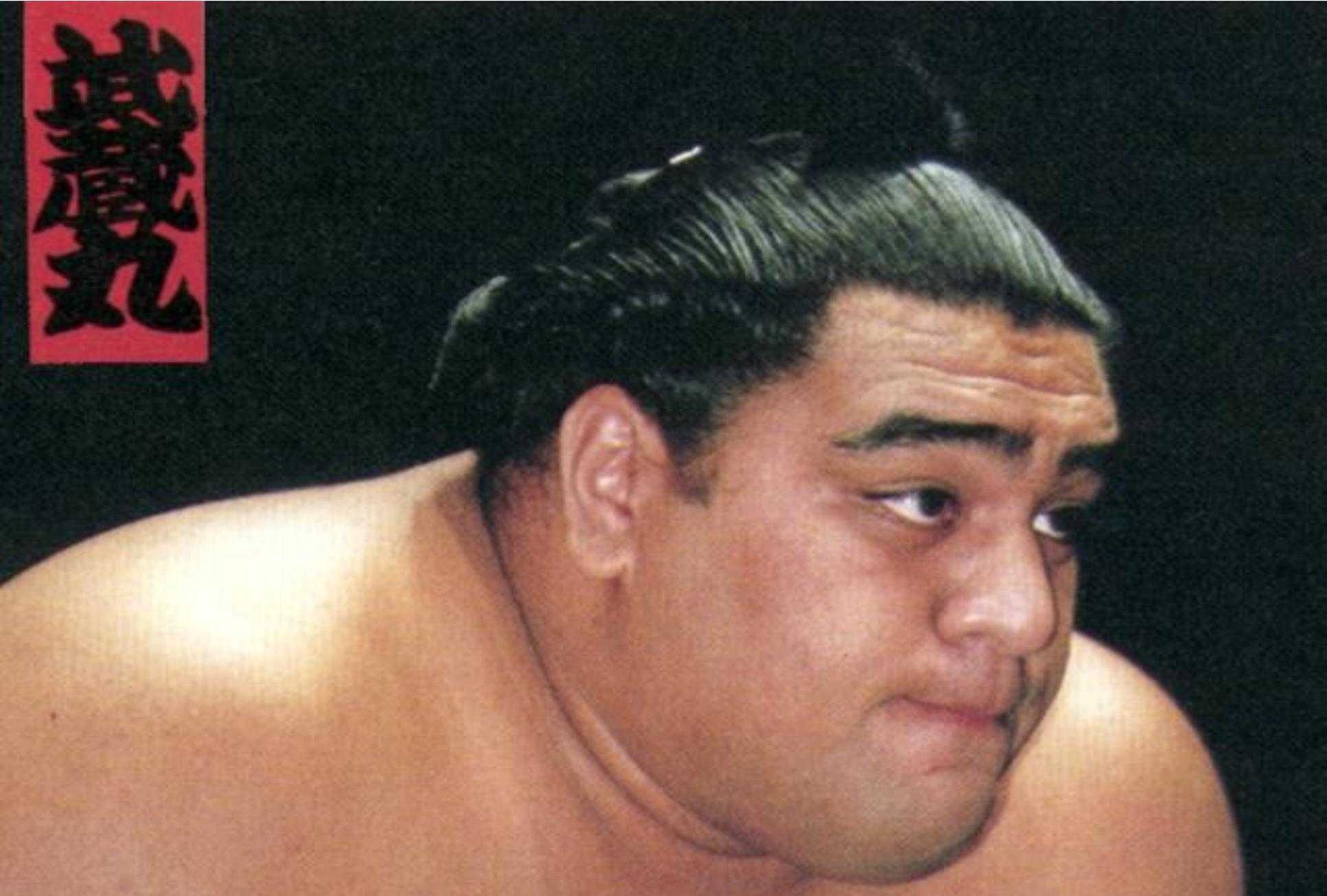
**Takamiyama
(Jesse
Kuhaulua)
First foreigner
to win a basho**





**Konishiki:
Too fat to
be fair?**

**The last time a Japanese wrestler
teached the top level of yokozuna
(grand champion) was Wakanohana
in 1998. Musashimaru (Samoan)
1999 followed. Only 3 since then,
and they have all been Mongolian.
So yokozunas 67, 68, 69 and 70 have
all been “gaijin”**



Musashimaru: Last of the American champions

***The new
breed***

**Asashoryu,
grand
champion
(*yokozuna*)**

**2003 - from
Mongolia**

**Real name:
Dolgorsuren
Dagvadorj**



The big guy from Ulan Bator



Brilliant technique





Hakuho



Harumafuji

Golf

***Arthur Hesketh
Groom***

***Englishman
who introduced
golf to Japan in
1901 at a
gentleman's
club in Kobe.***



(Arthur also introduced cricket, but unlike golf it never caught on.)

“The British may have been dominant in commerce [in the Meiji period], but the Americans were more influential in the educational and cultural spheres.”

Maarten van Bottenberg, Dutch sociologist.

US 42, UK 23

Bottenberg claims that even today 42% of the population of Japan participates in sports of American origin, against 23% participating in sports of British origin.

A dwindling national obsession

In 2011 about 8 million people played at least 1 round of golf in Japan, down from a peak of 13.4 million in 2001.

About 20% of Japanese men and 2% of Japanese women played golf.

1.25% of the total land area of Japan is taken up by golf courses!

Membership in the Koganei Country Club (west Tokyo) costs about ¥52 million or \$0.6 million... down from a peak of \$3.2 million.



Boom and bust

Many fortunes were made and lost buying and selling golf club memberships in the Bubble Economy of the 1980s, but now the market is in the doldrums... just like the stock market.

**Ayako
Okamoto
#1 in the
LPGA,
1987**



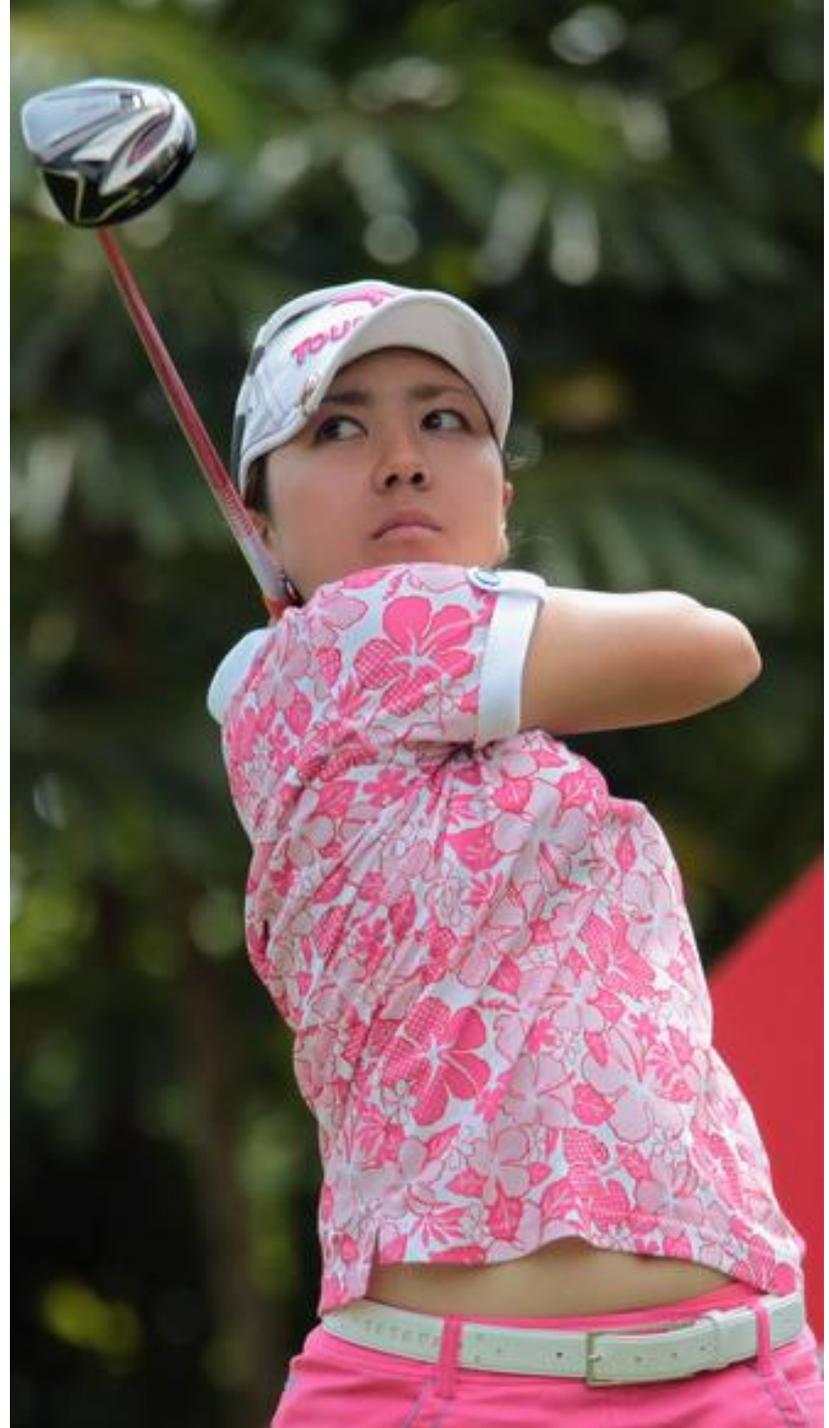


Ai Miyazato

**World #5
money
winner in
2012, top
star since
2006**

Mika Miyazato

**World #11
money
winner in
2012... no
relation**



By the way...

The two Miyazatos are the only Japanese girls in the top 50. South Korea has 17 in the top 50, including #1, #2, #6, #7.



Isao Aoki

**2nd to Jack
Nicklaus in the
1980 US
Open... best
result by any
Japanese man**

**Shigeki
Maruyama
Tied for 4th at
US open in
2004....**



Shingo Katayama



4th in the Masters, 2009

Ryo Ishikawa



Despite all the fuss, never better than #50 in the men's PGA rankings. Best result: a tie for 20th in the 2011 Masters

Similar story with tennis...

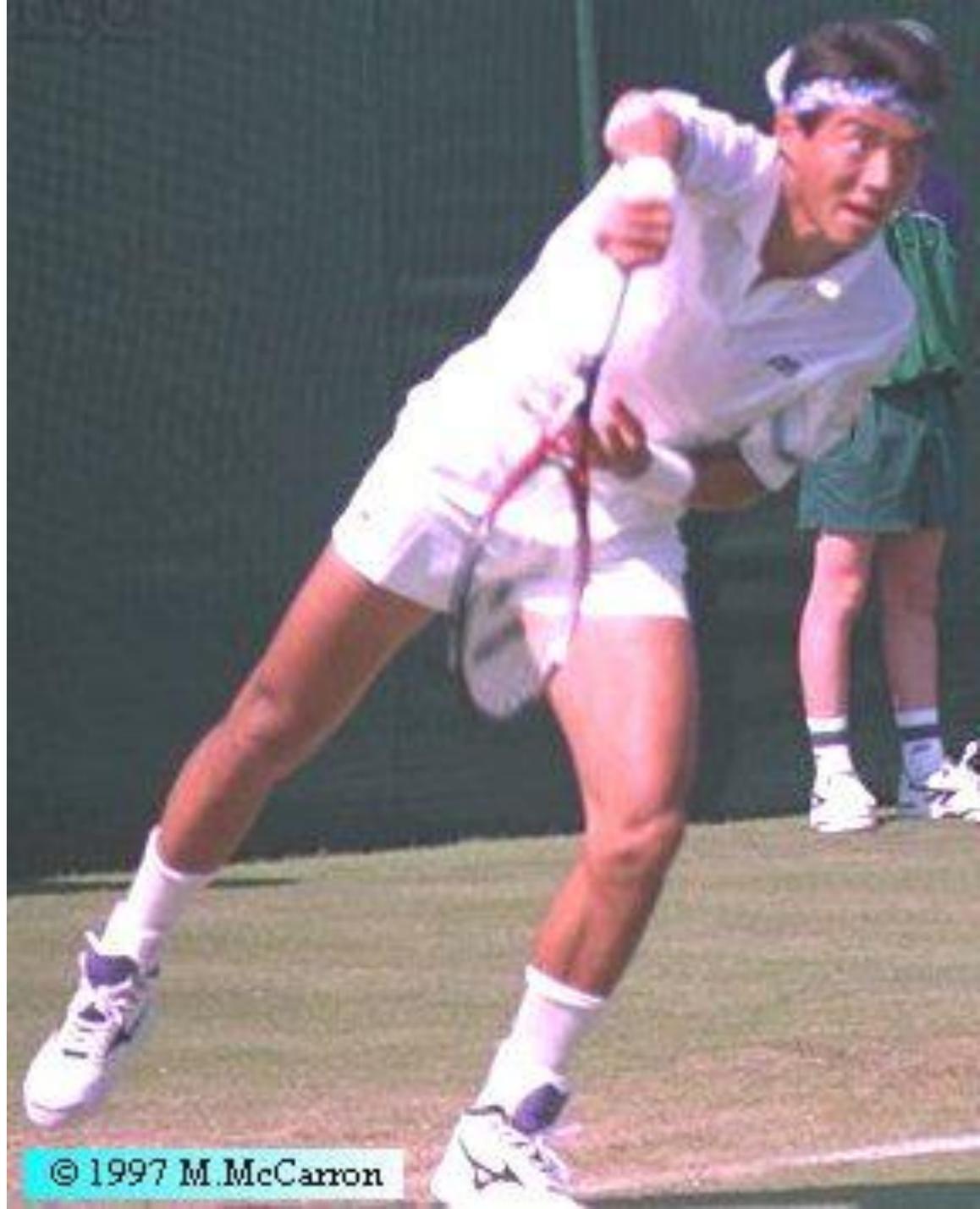
**Highest
World
Rank:**

#6

Kimiko Date



**Shuzo
Matsuoka...
Highest
world rank:
#46
(1992)**

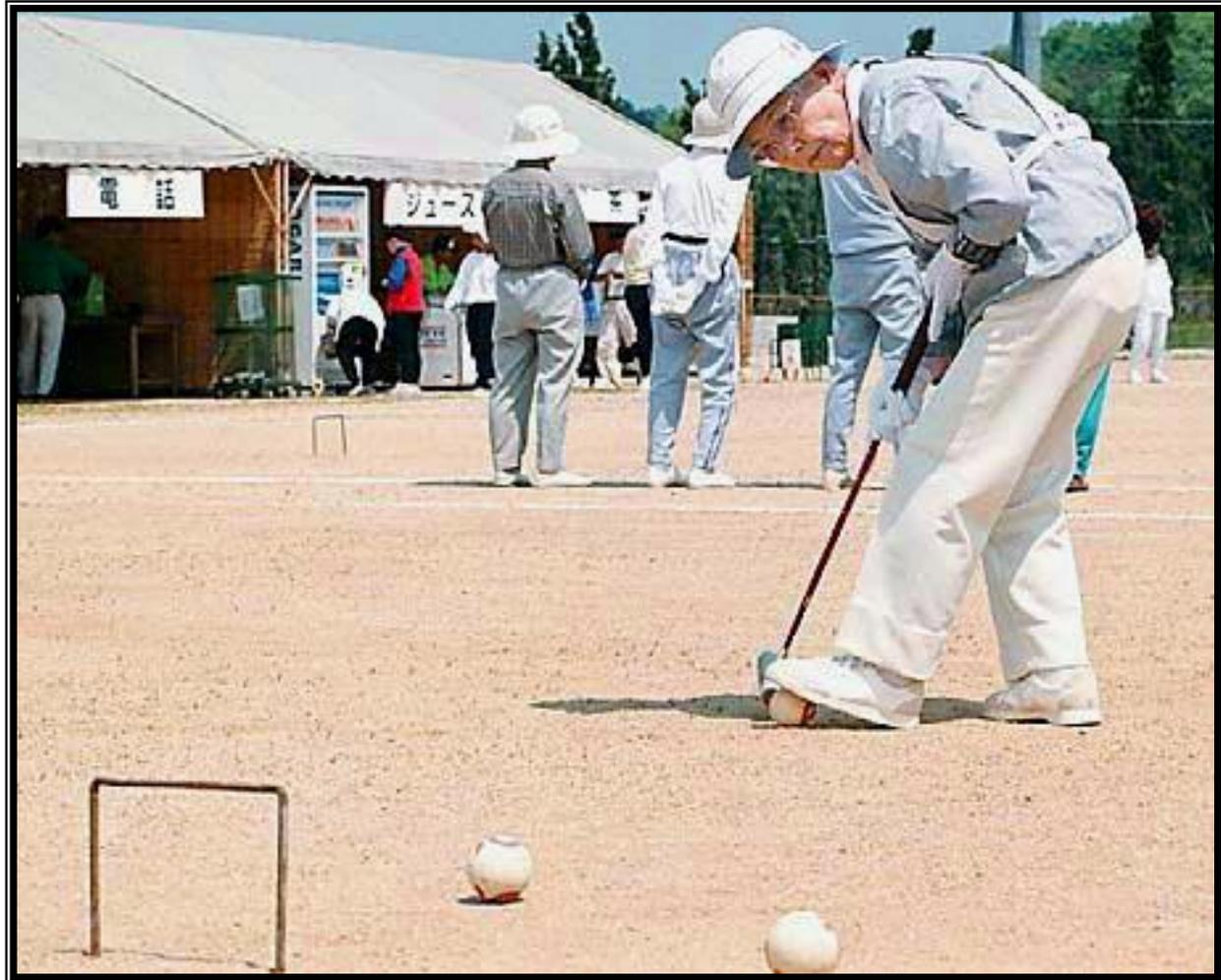




Kei Nishigori

**Reached
world #11
in 2013**

GATEBALL



A game for the elderly



Modified croquet

Invented in 1947 by Suzuki Kazunobu, “concerned about the lack of recreational opportunities for young people” amid postwar shortages. But in the late 1950s it caught on among old people’s groups and is now the representative old people’s sport.

... the day you take up gateball is the day you admit you're past your prime



... but still have that competitive spirit!

**Tournaments...
medals... numbered
bibs... intense local
and personal
rivalries... this is the
world of gateball.**

**By contrast,
the British
equivalent,
croquet (クロー
ケー), is played
by fairly young
people as well
as retirees...**





Croquet is
divided
along class
lines rather
than age...
reckoned to
be a rather
posh
sport...

By the way...

Japanese and American people often mix up 'croquet' with 'cricket' – a totally different sport, far more popular than baseball in the world today...

ちなみに、「クローケー」と「クリケット」は全然違うスポーツだよ！

Cricket



Croquet

Totally different...

3. A Night Out

The Sakariba 盛り場

**Sepp Linhart, *Sakariba* (in Joy Hendry ed.,
Understanding Japanese Society 2nd ed, 1998)**

“According to [Nozomu] Ikei, the kind of poorly regarded leisure pattern which is typical of the modern sakariba – drinking alcoholic beverages, playing pachinko, mahjong gambling, looking at naked women – is often left out in descriptions of Japanese *rejâ* (leisure), because *rejâ* as a loan-word from English denotes only noble actions or behaviour that is well thought of, rather than more basic desires.” (p.233)

“The fascination of the crowd.”

「雑踏の魅力」 (池井望)

“... such a place always has to be crowded and noisy. Lots of people are coming and going... There is music in the air... there is the noise and the smell of fried delicacies and the laughter of drunken men everywhere. For the sociologist (Nozomu) Ikei, this overcrowding is the main characteristic of a *sakariba*.” (Linhart pp. 231-2)

'Zones of Evaporation' 蒸発地帯

... Linhart sees *sakariba* as a third type of social space, in between the workplace and the home, where a person (usually a man) can 'evaporate' – temporarily disappear from society and his responsibilities. He can also achieve *henshin* (metamorphosis, cf TV drama lecture) into a star or special person... and Linhart relates this to old agricultural festivals of transformation.

Karaoke カラオケ

Word invented out of *kara* (empty – cf *karate* – ‘empty hand’) + *ôkesutora* オーケストラ, hence “empty orchestra.

Started in the entertainment districts of Kansai in the 1970s.

A Cultural Affairs Agency survey of 1993 found 43% of the sample had done karaoke at least once in the previous year.

**The trouble
with karaoke
is that it
encourages
or forces
people to
sing who
really ought
to keep silent**



カラオケは困ったもんじゃ... 音痴の人でも歌わなければならない

Karaoke theories

- 1. Satisfies a widespread love of singing.**
- 2. Fantasy fulfillment – emulate the stars.**
- 3. An effective way to relieve stress.**
- 4. A forum to act strategically for political ends (e.g. flatter the boss by singing his favorite song).**
- 5. A medium of communication... breaks the ice among shy people**

That list based on:

‘Japan’s Empty Orchestras: Echoes of Japanese Culture in the Performance of Karaoke’ by Bill Kelly.

In: *The Worlds of Japanese Popular Culture*, ed. D.P. Martinez, Cambridge UP, 1998, pp. 75-87.

Company singing, pre-*karaoke*

When things seem sufficiently enlivened, the chief raps on the table for attention and suggests that singing begin. Everyone claps in agreement, and someone calls out Mr. Ono's name. Clapping erupts again, and he stands, sings a brief folk song, and then sits down amid much applause. The chief next calls on Kato...

Kato makes an excuse, drinks a full glass in one swallow, makes more excuses, but fails to stand and sing as requested. Everyone sympathizes with Kato's embarrassment, but he must sing like the rest, for the solo performance is an integral part of office parties... finally ready he hurries through a popular song and sits down amid thunderous applause, obviously relieved. Then everyone in the group takes his or her turn singing a solo.

With much giggling and handholding two women pair off in a duet. One young man sings a song full of taboo sex words disguised rather transparently as puns in the midst of an otherwise innocent story. Another offers a rendition of a soulful ballad. The deputy [chief]... ties his necktie around his head... and proceeds to sing and dance an exaggerated rendition of an old folk song... Finally the chief, in a polished and charming manner, sings a traditional song and then its modern counterpart.

--- Thomas Rohlen *For Harmony and Strength*.
California UP, p. 99.

Nihonjinron?

1. The 'way' (*dô* 道) of karaoke

--- “Articles outlining the finer points of karaoke technique, such as positioning and gesturing on stage... the ideal distance between microphone and mouth, appropriate poise and etiquette vis-à-vis the audience, all of which depend on the style of the song or the gender of the singer.” (Kelly p. 81)

Nihonjinron?

2. Amae theory

To put it in Takeo Doi's terms [The Anatomy of Dependence 甘えの構造], singing expresses a willingness, or at least an acceptance of the necessity, to demonstrate a dependence on the benevolence of others within the collective unit, or to put it in Japanese, to *amae*.

(Kelly p. 84)

And yet karaoke has changed

1960s – Company drinking parties as described by Rohlen.

1970s – First karaoke machines appear in Kansai.

1980s – Heyday of karaoke bars, including coin-in-slot types. Slightly risqué image, condemned in conservative press.

1990s – Rise of the karaoke box. Young couples on dates, families with small children.

2000s – Smaller groups, mostly of people who know each other.

A private karaoke room



A karaoke box (Kumamoto 1997)



And a good thing too...

... if it means you don't have to wait half an hour listening to drunk salarymen singing war songs (*gunka* 軍歌 – most karaoke songbooks have a *gunka* section)... before it's your turn.

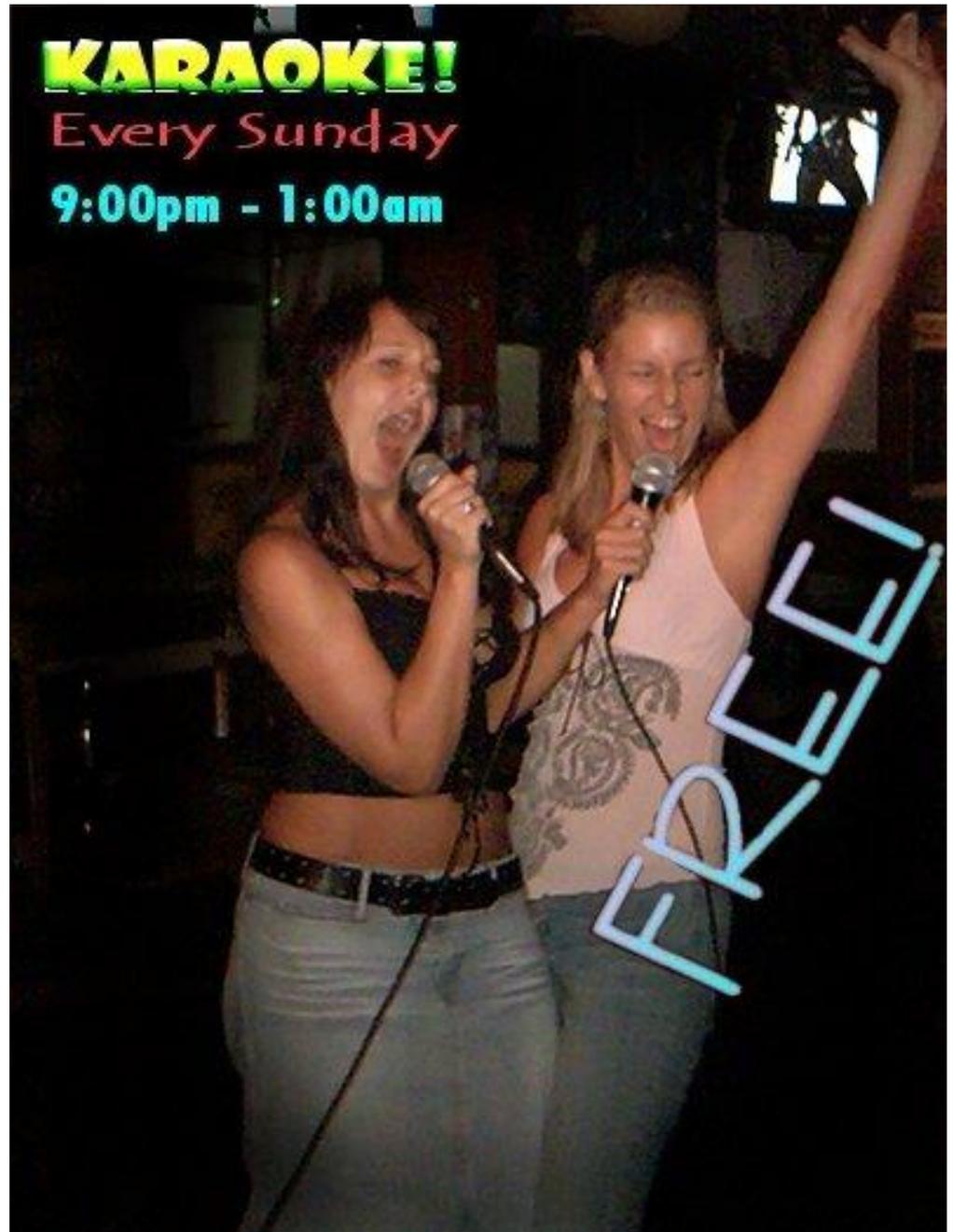
Also, these days gaijins don't have to sing *My Way* and *Yesterday*... they have more and better foreign songs, like *Anarchy in the UK* by the Sex Pistols...

But what does it mean for Japanese society?

Before – (1) Big groups, members of same company, same university etc. (2) Mainly a male activity, associated with hostess bars. (3) Some stress to get it right – formal studying of technique etc.

After – (1) Smaller groups, often just a couple. (2) Rise of the karaoke box reduces male-dominated image. (3) More informal – most young folk don't bother with technique lessons (?)

Advert for a
US bar with a
Sunday night
karaoke party.
Specialist
karaoke bars
are fairly rare
outside Japan.



**Family karaoke at a US pub
... in Japan, pubs and karaoke have become
largely separated**

KARAOKE



**Every other Saturday
night starting
Sept. 14 - from
9pm - 1am**

**Family Karaoke
for all every Sat.
from 1-4pm**

Bowling... not as popular as it used to be... not sophisticated enough??



Pinball... gone, alas



... beaten by pachinko and video games.

Movie industry... in decline but rescued by Hayao Miyazaki



**... and
grateful for
any gaijin
glamour
available**

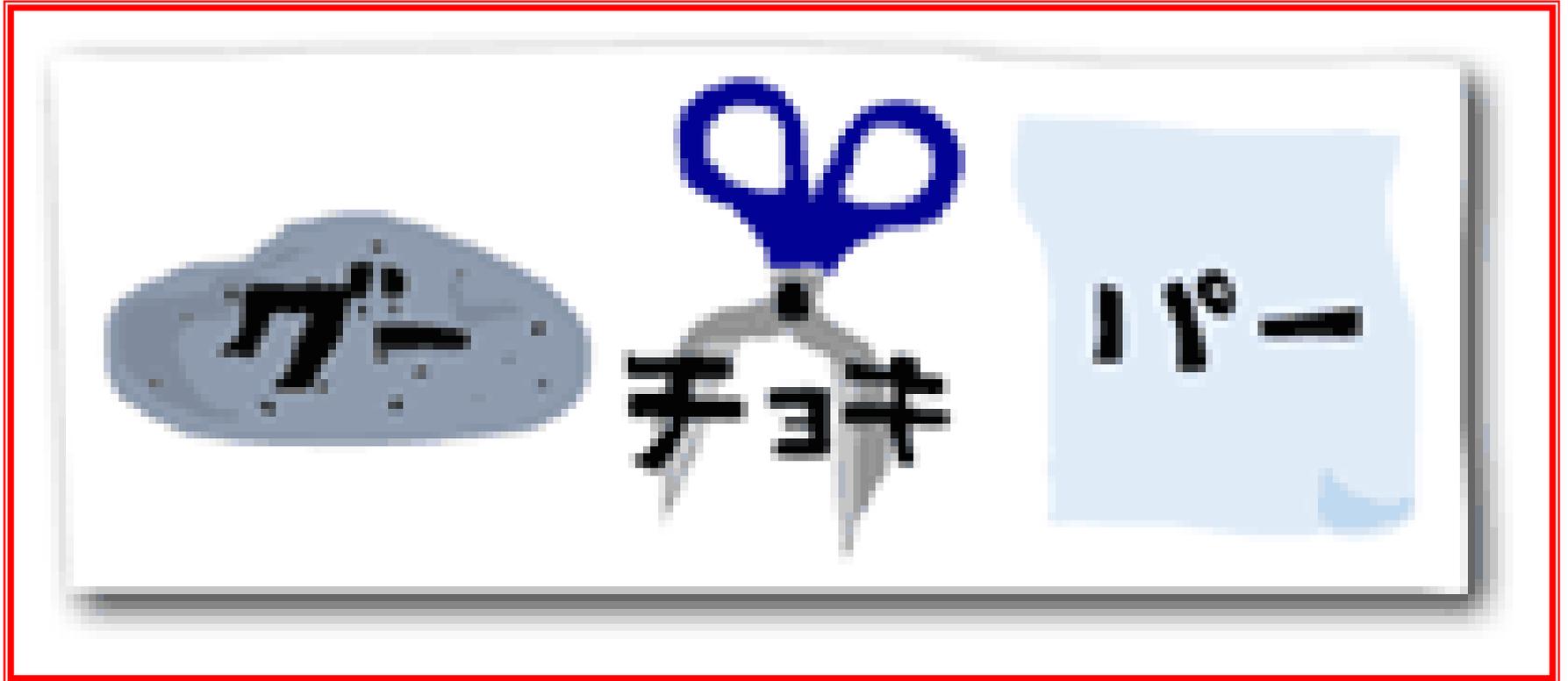




Ken-dama 剣玉

A cheap
and
pleasant
form of
amusement

What if you've got no money at all?



**At least you can still play janken...
(Gû choki pâ / stone scissors paper)**

Varieties of Jan-ken

A	B	C
stone	scissors	paper
snake	frog	slug
warrior	tiger	warrior's mother
the village chief	tiger	mother of the village chief
fire	snake	water

Tôhachi-ken 東八拳



Ancient 'ken' game, also imported from China c. 300 years ago. The 3 hand-shapes are fox, gun (hunter), and village headman 「狐」、「鉄砲」、「庄屋」

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