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The Culture of Japan as Seen through Its Leisure

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Blood and Guts in Japanese Professional Baseball

> At first glance, baseball in Japan appears to be the same game played in the U.S.—but it isn't. The Japanese view of life stressing group identity, cooperation, respect for age, seniority and "face" has permeated almost every aspect of the sport. Americans who come to play in Japan quickly realize that Baseball Samurai Style is different. For some it is fascinating and exciting; for others, exasperating, and occasionally devastating.
>
> (Whiting 1977:v)

Patterns of (Sport) Culture

There is a widespread notion that sport is iconic of national character—that the way we play a game, and the particular game we as a people choose to play, says a lot about who we are as a people. There are countless claims, in particular, that baseball embodies something centrally expressive about America, the single most famous imperative being that of Jacques Barzun (1954:159): "Whoever wants to know the heart and mind of America had better learn baseball." This chapter is a brief examination not so much of as beyond the notion that people at play can be seen as "a people" at play. The people in question are the Japanese as fans and players of professional baseball, and in highlighting two themes—ethnicity and

spiritism—the chapter suggests the shape of my larger, ongoing research into the institutions and ideologies of baseball in Japan.

Despite the recent hoopla in Japan over its new J-League professional soccer, baseball remains in its century-long position as that country's most watched and most played sport. Robert Whiting is a longtime American resident in Japan and an astute and influential commentator of the sport who has become something of a Pacific Jacques Barzun by insisting that whoever wants to know the heart and mind of Japan had better learn baseball Japanese style. Not surprisingly, of course, he and most others warn that what is watched and played on the Japanese diamond is a most distinct brand of the sport, barely recognizable to American players and fans. Judging from the opening words of a recent video documentary, *Baseball in Japan* (1994), nationally broadcast on American public television, this conventional view of Japanese baseball has not changed much in the twenty years since Whiting's first book:

> Because of its slow pace, baseball fits the Japanese character perfectly. The conservative play mirrors the Japanese conservative and deliberate approach to life. Managers and coaches view baseball as a tool to teach loyalty and moral discipline—the same type of loyalty and discipline feudal Japanese lords expected from their soldiers and subjects. This samurai discipline requires endless hours of training, self-denial, and an emphasis on spirituality. So goes the Japanese approach to baseball. (Howard 1994).

We are indeed still mired in a national characterization of the sport that pits the familiar assertive Western individual against the grinding Japanese collective. As usual, too, this is not simply a matter of our own naive and condescending Orientalism. Japanese themselves, inside and outside the baseball world, have been enthusiastic promoters of a unique samurai baseball style, although they predictably give it a more positive, Occidentalizing spin. This is vividly manifest in the messiah-scapegoat cycle through which many American professional players are put during their employment by Japanese teams. All too often, they are hired and introduced as team saviors, they then meet with mixed success as the season wears on, and are eventually dismissed with loud public

criticism of their laziness, selfishness, and lack of fighting spirit. These foreign players remind me of the folk remedy of *nade-ningyô*, the Taoist-inspired paper cutouts of human figures to whom were transferred, by rubbing and incantation, the ailments of a sick patient, who was finally cured when the paper figure was burned!

The linkage of sporting form and societal stereotyping is possibly even more pervasive than the national characterization of company organization, family relations, or schooling patterns. I do not want to get drawn into a critique of national character stereotyping here, except to assert what I hope is the obvious: that national character is not an *explanation* for behavior but a *substitute* for analyzing that behavior. Nonetheless, however easily we can show that both "our national pastime" and "baseball samurai style" are false representations, we can not casually dismiss these baseball stereotypes. Many people will still hold them to be true, and act in and toward the sport as if the matter was so simple. Indeed, almost every mass-entertainment sport in the modern era has been so typecast, and it is important to inquire into why this is so.

I suggest that there are at least two reasons for national stereotypes of sports. One is domestic and the other international, and both are related to the fact that the extensive organization and commercialization of sport in the modern era occurred first in Western Europe and the United States in a context of nation-state making, broadening educational hierarchies, maturing capitalist economies, and emerging mass-consumer markets.[1]

The first reason inheres in the pervasive use of mass sports to represent and manage the class, race, and gender cleavages redrawn by modern political and economic conditions within the Western nations. Among many examples, here is the American historian Michael Kimmel expressing how baseball came to be promoted as "our national pastime" in the early twentieth century as much because of as in spite of the contradictions it embodied. The early twentieth-century baseball diamond, he writes, was a "contested terrain," but,

> The contestants were invisible to both participant and spectator, and quite separate from the game being played or watched. It was a contest between class cultures in which the hegemony of middle-class culture was reinforced and the

> emerging industrial urban working class was tamed by consumerism and disciplined by the American values promoted in the game. It was a contest between races, in which the exclusion of nonwhites and nonEuropean immigrants from participation was reflected in the bleachers, as racial discrimination further assuaged the white working class. And it was a contest between women and men, in which newly mobile women were excluded from equal participation (and most often from spectatorship); the gender hierarchy was maintained by assuming those traits that made for athletic excellence were also those traits that made for exemplary citizenship. The masculinity reconstituted on the ball field or in the bleachers was masculinity that reinforced the unequal distribution of power based on class, race, and gender. In that sense, also, baseball was truly an American game ... a place of both comfort and cruelty. (Kimmel 1990:109)

Precisely because they are mass public events, mixing entertainment and suspense, spectating and performing, pleasure and profit, such sports as baseball proved compelling sites for managing social differences and redirecting societal tensions.

A second set of circumstances promoting the nationalizing of modern sports can be traced to the international dynamics of their spread. Americans have always been ambivalent about our baseball diplomacy in Latin America and Japan. We have exuberantly exported the game, but we constantly worry if it can and should be played properly by those beyond the smell of hot dogs and the strains of our national anthem. And as Homi Bhabha (1994) has argued more generally, colonial and neocolonial subjects have appropriated their master's practices with equal measure of anxiety and anger. Mimicry is both a pale copy that falls short of an original and an imaginative appropriation that imaginatively exceeds the model.

The dynamics of mimicry have characterized, I believe, much of the extension of sports by the West to the non-West. They have created colonial and postcolonial anomalies: the Japanese baseball player is not unlike the West Indian cricketer, the South American footballer, the Soviet hockey player, the Kenyan marathoner, the West African basketball player, the Chinese diver.[2] "Styling" sports—Soviet-style hockey, Cuban-style baseball, Brazilian-style

football—is a way of containing these categorical anomalies that our ambivalent imperialisms have encouraged.

In short, national stereotypes of sports and sporting styles reify intersocietal differences while masking intrasocietal differences. Again, they are not solely the tendency of the West, and we may draw a brief illustration from the management of ethnicity and ethnic identity in Japanese baseball—the "blood" of my title.

Purity and Polarization: Ethnicity and Postwar Civil Religion

As I have suggested above, the presence of foreign players on Japanese professional teams is one of the most remarked-about features of baseball in Japan. Some three hundred such players—overwhelmingly from North America—have played for the Japanese pro teams since the 1950s. At present, each team has a quota of three foreign players, of whom two can be on the playing roster at any one time. Their comings and goings, their heroics and tantrums are chronicled daily by the media and reported plaintively by American commentators. They are taken as constant testimony to the impermeable ethnic—and racial—barriers around the sport in Japan, and to the insularity and prejudice of Japanese society more generally.

In point of fact, the ethnic distinction between regular players (*senshû*) and foreign players (*gaijin senshû*) is not as long standing or as clear-cut as it may seem. Its ideological importance dates only from the mid-1950s. For the first two decades of pro baseball—the mid-1930s to the mid-1950s—the ethnic composition of the teams was not a major concern. The early teams had recruited among mainland Japanese who had gone to the colonies as well as an assortment of nonethnic Japanese who lived in Japan (most notably, the White Russian from Hokkaidô, Victor Starfin, who was enshrined in the Hall of Fame as the first pitcher to win three hundred games) and a number of ethnic Japanese from the States (e.g., pitcher Henry "Bozo" Wakabayashi and catcher Yoshio "Kaiser" Tanaka; see Thompson and Ikei 1987–88).

However, it was not until a decade after World War II that *gaijin senshû* became an important marked category. The first such player was actually a liminal figure: the Hawaiian-born Japanese

American *nisei* Wally Yonamine. Yonamine was signed by the Yomiuri Giants in 1951 with the encouragement of the American Occupation authorities, who were generally interested in promoting baseball as yet another democratic American practice. His Japanese descent was believed to ease his acceptance, but in fact it was often an obstacle to his popularity. He was heckled by fans and criticized by commentators who found American *nisei* like Yonamine to be the worst of both sides—neither trusted by fellow Americans nor accepted as Japanese for having been a traitor on the enemy side of the war. Yonamine had a successful career—he became the best lead-off hitter in the league, and was known for his aggressive base sliding, which had not been a tactic used in the Japanese majors before. However, his relations with the Giants club remained troubled, and he was dismissed abruptly in 1960. He went on to take revenge on the Giants, as player and manager of the Chûnichi Dragons.

After Yonamine, the players hired from American professional ranks were largely white, sometimes African American, and occasionally Caribbean. By the late 1950s, the Japan professional player rosters were bifurcated. On the one hand, there were small numbers of large *gaijin* "foreigners," recruited for publicity and power often at the end of their careers. On the other hand were the vast majority of regular "Japanese" players. Salaries, training, and other conditions of employment were determined by this distinction, which gave a moral superiority, if not financial edge or physical advantage, to the Japanese side.

This marking of ethnicity in baseball was a result of ethnicity's new role as a basis for postwar national identity. It is much remarked that, after Japan's defeat, official and mainstream versions of national identity have shifted from explicitly religious foundations (the State Shintô doctrine of *kokutai*) to more overtly ethnic bases. This "Japan Theory," as we know it most commonly, is, in Foucault's terms, a discursive formation—a loosely bounded but still powerfully conditioning field of claims, formulas, and models of ethnic markers, shared personality traits, and behavioral imperatives. In "Japan Theory," Japaneseness becomes a matter of psyche, not politics; it is an identity that we *are*, therefore you cannot *become*. It has the clear advantage of personalizing and naturalizing membership in the national community for a state whose own political character is suspected of everything from aggression to ineptitude. Winston Davis is quite correct, I think, in viewing this as Japan's civil

religion (1992), manifest in a wide range of secular forms, from food and language to corporate organization and legal structure.

This is precisely what professional baseball has come to reflect and why ethnicity came to be so marked in the sport's late-Shôwa era image. Now immediately, a complication arises because, as any fan knows, Yonamine was not the last of the liminal figures. Indeed, some of the greatest "Japanese" players of the last forty years have been of mixed parentage, and a roster would include such stars as:

Kinugasa Sachio, the Hiroshima Carp third-baseman whose 2,215 consecutive games played broke Lou Gehrig's seemingly untouchable record. Given Gehrig's nickname, "Iron Man," Kinugasa was born to a Japanese mother and an African-American G.I. father.

Kaneda Masaichi, a Korean resident of Japan who leads the pitchers' record book with 400 career pitching victories and 4,490 career strikeouts. "Golden Arm" Kaneda played fifteen years with the Kokutetsu Swallows, but announced he would no longer pitch on less than three days' rest. He was traded to the Yomiuri Giants, who accepted that and other conditions. His ability to dictate such personal conditions led to his later nickname, "Emperor" Kaneda.

Harimoto Isao, another Korean resident of Japan, was a longtime star outfielder for the Tôei Flyers, setting the single-season and lifetime records for batting average. His antics and independence earned him the nickname "The Wild Man of Tôei." Harimoto too was traded to the Giants late in his career.

Oh Sadaharu, the legendary power hitter of the Yomiuri Giants and holder of the world record for career home runs, was born and raised in Japan to a Chinese father and Japanese mother. He retains his Taiwanese citizenship and remains immensely popular in Taiwan and among Taiwanese residents of Japan.[3]

Nonetheless, a conceptual dichotomy like indigenous-foreign is just that—a categorical opposition—and it allows few anomalies. Oh, Kaneda, and others could be—had to be—elided, however

uncomfortably, into the Japanese category. This was done, I believe, through the understanding that whatever their blood-ethnic backgrounds, they all shared the experience of coming up through baseball in the Japanese school system. This is hardly a resolution because it directly contradicts the postwar premise that Japanese ethnicity is a matter of *being* rather than *becoming*. However, it does explain the very short ideological leash on which these mixed Japanese heroes have been kept by their clubs and the media.[4]

It also explains, I think, the peculiar fascination of such players as Oh and Kinugasa for many fans; the ambivalences of their identity have been experienced by many in the larger postwar society. Japaneseness as a tenet of national civil religion may be held to be a natural consequence of birth and blood, the intuitive expression of a homogeneous population. However, becoming this kind of Japanese for most Japanese—women, regionals, lower classes, stigmatized minorities—is always learned, incomplete, painful, vulnerable. It is precisely such mutual resonance, I think, that renders compelling such figures as Oh and Kaneda.

Historicizing Baseball and Theorizing Sport

To explain why baseball and other mass sports are so amenable to national stereotyping is *not*, of course, to explain the forms of the sports themselves. Indeed, this characterological commentary is an enormous obstacle. It has been so dominant that it has by and large foreclosed any serious scholarship on the much more complex structure of this sport and its immensely popular and potent place in modern Japan. Curiously, this has not been the case for baseball in the United States and Latin America, for football in Great Britain, and for cricket in several countries of the Commonwealth. For these sports, there is a lively and critical scholarship, both historical and social scientific, in spite of and in response to the popular stereotyping. For baseball in Japan, however, there are only a few exceptions to colorful journalism, sweeping essays, and rather anemic institutional sports history.

This is a great shame, for Japanese baseball fairly begs for scholarly attention by anyone concerned with the shape of twentieth-century Japan. Baseball began in the early Meiji elite higher schools and the First Higher School's victories over American teams in the

1890s stirred the patriotic sentiments of a population eager for parity with the Western powers. By late Meiji, baseball spread upward to the universities (especially the new private universities in metropolitan Tokyo) and downward to the middle schools. It incurred the opprobrium of the new national newspapers, until these same newspaper companies turned around and used baseball to promote sales in their fierce subscription wars. Sports journalism, new stadiums, mass transit, and radio broadcasts all made middle school tournaments, college series, and their star players into key figures of the new, commercialized, urban entertainment culture of the 1920s. In the 1930s, a professional league sparked a new level of commercial competition for spectators, readers, and listeners as well as state concern for the corrosive effects of Western cultural influences.

Throughout the postwar decades, baseball has flourished at all the levels—school, college, industrial league, and professional. The August Koshien tournament is a lightening rod for regional pride in an era of rootless mobility, for nostalgic celebrations of youth at a time of great gulfs between generational experiences, and for idealizing the purity of school sports at a time of rapidly expanding private secondary schools whose brazen player recruiting is as shameless as U.S. college football practices (see Esashi and Komuku 1994). At the professional level, baseball has been seized upon as a vehicle of corporate promotion, not only for company and product-name recognition and in-company morale, but also as a publicly visible corps of employees whose comportment will burnish the corporate image.

Thus, baseball has long been embedded in the educational system, the mass media, corporate structures, and patriotic feelings of modern Japan. Throughout the century, it has been a crucial arena where school pedagogy, corporate aims, media constructions, gender relations, and nationalism intersect. It is, in short, a significant window on to as well as a crucible for the ideologies and institutions of modern Japan.

You Gotta Have Guts

My second point in this chapter, thus, is that a critical analysis of baseball is one that situates its practices in historically specific institutional fields of power. To illustrate this briefly, I want to turn

to one of the keywords in the vocabulary of Japanese baseball, "fighting spirit" or *konjô*, along with its borrowed English synonym, *gattsu*. Both pepper the conversation, exhortations, and judgments of players, managers, commentators, and fans alike. *Konjô* combines passive, stoic endurance with active, all-out drive. It is the application of effort (*doryoku*) to temper the spirit (*seishin*). The spirit—which is to say the mind/body indivisible—is honed through repetitive, imitative practice, hyperconditioning, and a tight managerial control that channels that fighting spirit into collective ends. It is the spirit of *ganbaru*, which is *not*, as it is usually glossed, doing one's best, but doing *more* than one's best. *Ganbaru*, or *gattsu*, is an ethos of overachievement and superhuman effort. Pitching day after day, the 1000-fungo drill, and other felt manifestations of fighting spirit are a reaching beyond one's normal limits and rational expectations.

To many, like Robert Whiting, "fighting spirit" *is* Japanese baseball; the modern ball field replicates the medieval battlefield, and the players are samurai with bats instead of swords.[5] My own view, though, is rather different. "Fighting spirit" has been neither a natural nor constant nor universal theme of Japanese baseball. "Guts" as an ideology of commitment, discipline, and comportment has surfaced in baseball only at certain institutional sites and during certain historical moments. I cannot here relate a full genealogy of "guts," but there have been at least three extended moments when guts was prominently foregrounded in routines of practices and imperatives of performance.

"Fighting spirit" first surfaced in mid-Meiji, in the late 1880s and 1890s, as the ethic of "muscular spirituality" self-consciously adopted by the Baseball Club of the premier higher school of the time, Ichikô, or First Higher School (Kiku 1993:84–99, Roden 1980a, 1980b). As Donald Roden has described, the head and faculty of Ichikô, one of five preparatory schools for the still-single national university, encouraged students to run their own affairs through school meetings, dormitory councils, and sports clubs. The Baseball Club became the most prominent exemplar of this rugged autonomy and self-imposed discipline. It reveled in punishing practice and a rhetoric of self-sacrifice. It no doubt saw its ethic vindicated by the considerable success it enjoyed, not only with other school teams but also against a series of American teams that it

challenged through the 1890s. It is important to keep in mind, however, that this was also a time when elite youth fell under the critical gaze of a populace suspicious of their moral and physical fitness for the prestigious positions soon to be theirs. The ostentatious exertions of the Baseball Club, and their articulation of "fighting spirit" must be interpreted in that light.

Then, in the late 1910s and 1920s, "fighting spirit" found another influential ideologue—and a slightly different formulation—in the Waseda player, coach, manager, and later newspaper commentator, Tobita Suishû. Like Ichikô's club, Tobita's version stressed a spiritualized and self-sacrificing playing commitment explicitly likened to a warrior code. However, baseball clubs had now come under adult supervision, both at the university and high school levels, and not surprisingly, Tobita insisted on the unquestioned authority of the manager and his coaches in controlling the team. The lines of discipline and hierarchy were redrawn.

Although there were other coaching styles and philosophies, Tobita's proved compelling at a time, in the second and third decades of the century, when newspaper and transport companies rushed to sponsor sports events and to fan sports fever for corporate profit. Tobita's stern amateurism was used to temper this emerging commercialized popularity, especially of middle-school and Tokyo-area college baseball. Tobita's spiritualization of sport performance also dovetailed the Japanese state's efforts in mobilizing athletics to counter what it targeted as "subversive" elements among educators and university students (see Kelly n.d.b.; Kiku 1993:100–22)

A professional baseball league was organized in 1936, limped through the wartime period, and was firmly reestablished in 1950 as two six-team leagues, but "guts" really did not become ideologically central in professional baseball until it was adopted by the Yomiuri Giants during their unprecedented reign as national champion for nine consecutive years, from 1965 to 1973. Their preeminence precisely mapped postwar Japan's double-digit boom years that catapulted the country to the first rank of industrial powers. In the aftermath of the 1964 Tokyo Olympics, during the boom years of Prime Minister Ikeda's "double-your-income" policies, through the national crises of the Nixon Shocks, right up to the first Oil Crisis of 1974, the Giants were a lightening rod for national prestige and patriotic pride. The team was presented as supremely

talented, tautly disciplined, and relentlessly efficient, and its success was celebrated as a powerful synecdoche for the confident, industrious society and competitive, resurgent economy that Japan saw itself becoming. The Giants' "fighting spirit" was testimony to "Japan-style management," which was now presented in a new positive light as a distinctive Japanese accomplishment. They became the barometer of national pride.[6]

The V-9 Giants were led by two of the greatest players ever, Oh Sadaharu and Nagashima Shigeo, and their popularity was assured by the backing of the Yomiuri companies, by then the most powerful news and entertainment organization in the country. They were managed by Kawakami Tetsuharu, who had been known during his player years as the "god of hitting." As manager, Kawakami quickly became famous for a style of authoritarian leadership called "managed baseball" (*kanri yakyû*). He demanded iron discipline, arduous practices, stolid teamwork, a conservative playing strategy. And *no foreigners*. The Giants had been the first team in the early days of pro baseball to hire a foreigner, the abovementioned Victor Starfin. Then, after World War II, they were the first team to again hire a foreigner, the Japanese American from Hawaii, Wally Yonamine. In 1960, it was manager Kawakami who engineered his abrupt release and declared his intention to "purify" the team, the first team to proclaim itself all-Japanese. Blood and guts were inexorably linked.

The V-9 Giants totally dominated the league and thoroughly reshaped the image of professional baseball. They—with the enormous power of the parent media company behind them—projected a player image and a playing style that was coordinated, committed, and relentlessly efficient. However, as in earlier eras, the "fighting spirit" of the V-9 Giants cannot be mistaken for either a *natural* or *universal* style of playing or managing professional baseball in postwar Japan. Indeed, a number of other professional teams had rather different, less spiritualized formulations of training, performance, and strategy at the time.

But the Yomiuri owner Shôriki was out to forge a distinctive identity for the team. Throughout the 1950s, his efforts to make his Yomiuri company into a comprehensive media empire through television, newspapers, comics, and radio, were threatened by other teams' successes. The Giants were especially embarrassed to lose

three years in a row to the Pacific League champions, the Nishitetsu Lions, in 1956 to 1958. The signings of Nagashima and Oh and the appointment of Kawakami as manager were aimed at reasserting its control.[7]

Moreover, "fighting spirit," however stridently it was proclaimed as the true spirit of Japanese baseball, proved to be a rather narrow description of the V-9 Giants themselves. As we have seen, their proclaimed "ethnic purity" elided such exceptions as Oh, Kaneda, and Harimoto; their dominance of league affairs and media reporting verged on intimidation; and their successes on the playing field were the result less of a tightly coordinated group effort than of the individual achievements of a few star players, especially Nagashima and Oh, who were given wide latitude in their behavior and who remained, throughout, wary rivals at best. A circle of harmony and a web of coordinated effort comprised the public team image, but it was an image that was purveyed and protected by a much more savvy deployment of individual talent, the manipulation of player egos, and the massive corporate power and media clout of the parent company.

In short, the "fighting spirit" of the V-9 Giants emblemized the spirit of Japanese baseball—or at least what most Japanese at the time wanted to imagine it to be. In so doing, Japanese both condensed professional baseball into the Giants' image and symbolized national prosperity and unique achievement with the success and style of this dominant and domineering team. A team success built on brute business strength and individual talent was allowed to stand for a sport style which in turn stood for a national distinctiveness. We need to retrace the steps in this ideological maneuver to understand both the blood and guts of Baseball Samurai Style.

Concluding Remarks

I have limited this chapter to two points, which nonetheless are of considerable importance in any serious appreciation of the position of sports in modern nation-states. First, for reasons both domestic and international, the national stereotyping of "sporting styles" is a pervasive and powerful rhetoric for reifying intersocietal differences (hence, the talk about U.S. baseball, Dominican baseball,

Japanese baseball, etc.) while masking intrasocietal differences of gender, class, ethnicity, and region. However, instead of simply dismissing such national stereotyping as just so much ideological fog, it must be treated as part of the problem to be confronted. The vast outpouring of commentary about "Japanese baseball" is a constitutive element of "baseball in Japan." A critical analysis must consider both the talk and action of baseball for their ideological effects and institutional locations.

My examples of these points have been blood as an ambivalent marker of ethnicity and guts as powerful idiom of performance. Blood and guts may be natural substances, but they are neither natural philosophies nor national characteristics. They are, rather, ideologically motivated efforts to naturalize certain distinctions and disciplines under some fairly specific historical circumstances.

Baseball in modern Japan has nationalized and pacified patriotic sentiments. It has also massified and mediated popular leisure. As Michael Kimmel argues, the baseball diamond is a contested terrain—but it is not the site of a single competition. There are many simultaneous struggles, on and off the field, that are condensed in and expressed through the efforts of the players.

Notes

1. Among many others, three recent studies that illustrate this with special reference to baseball are Kuklick (1991), Leifer (1995), and White (1996).

2. More than other sports, cricket has perhaps inspired the most penetrating analyses of the colonial and postcolonial dynamics of sport. C. L. R. James's *Beyond a Boundary* (1963) is the locus classicus. Among many others are a fascinating collection of West Indian cricket (Beckles and Stoddart 1995) and recent work by Nandy (1989) and Appadurai (1995). For broader arguments about sports imperialism and non-Western acceptance and resistance, see the contrasting positions of Guttman (1994) and Brown (1990–1991, 1991). Two books on Dominican baseball illustrate the shifting balance of domination and resistance (Klein 1991; Ruck 1991).

3. Robert Whiting's two volumes in English contain valuable sketches of these players. There is, in particular, a large literature on Oh Sadaharu, in Japanese, Chinese, and English. He has written a number of books himself; among the autobiographies, *Kaisô* (Oh 1981) in Japanese and a 1984

English-language collaboration with David Faulkner are especially valuable. I have written elsewhere about Oh (Kelly n.d. a.).

4. Kinugasa's African-American father is not mentioned in his two official biographies, and during his playing days the Hiroshima Carp front office cautioned reporters about inquiring into it. I have illustrated the restraints on Oh in my article, "Learning to Swing: Oh Sadaharu and the Spirit of Japanese Baseball" (n.d. a)

5. See inter alia his chapters on "Baseball Samurai Style" (Whiting 1976:36–67) and "The Super Samurai" (ibid.:68–82). Robert Whiting, it should be added, is an astute, informed, long-standing commentator on Japanese baseball—the most influential writer on the game in English. My skepticism about some of his generalizations does not detract from my regard for his portraits of the sport. He has also published extensively in Japanese, e.g., Whiting (1991), Tamaki and Whiting (1991).

6. Matsuzono Hisami, when owner of the Yakult Swallows, once declared that the best possible outcome would be for the Giants to finish first and his own team to finish second! This was a matter of sentiment—he was a long-standing Giants fan—but also corporate business; Yakult yogurt drink sales were said to decline whenever the Swallows defeated the Giants (Whiting 1989:7). A sense of this self-image is conveyed in the 1984 article, "Nihonjin to Kyôjin-gun," that appeared in 1984 on the occasion of the team's fiftieth anniversary (Iwakawa 1984a). It reports on a series of interviews with 102 former members of the Giants organization. A partial English translation appeared as "The Mystique of the Yomiuri Giants" (Iwakawa 1984b).

7. There were additional factors as well, including serious concerns in the late 1950s and 1960s about pro baseball's image; there was rather open player gambling and underworld influence, violence against umpires was not uncommon, as was brawling among players. Yet another key influence on the Giants' "fighting spirit" was the stirring gold-medal victory of the Japanese women's volleyball team in the 1964 Olympics, which ennobled "fighting spirit" on a national level.

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