

**Academic Feminist Debates in Japan:
Social, Political and Historical Contexts**

Takako Nonaka

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University of York

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*To my grandmother, Haru Rikitake,
my nanny, Shika Okawachi,
my aunt, Yoko Sakanoshita,
and my grandmother, Teiko Ide*

Abstract

After Japan opened up to the world in the middle of the nineteenth century, the Meiji regime began to push for modernisation by importing technology from the West. Japan subsequently became the first non-Western developed country. Feminism in Japan developed under the influence of feminist ideas from the West, but also in response to local political and social conditions. The aim of this research is to identify the characteristics of feminism in Japan and to locate diverse feminist perspectives in their social, political and historical contexts. I interviewed twelve famous feminist researchers in Japan in order to identify how they perceived and evaluated Japanese feminisms as well as the impacts of Western feminist perspectives and the differences between the two. I also sought their views on the politics of nuclear power relating to the accident at Fukushima nuclear power station in March 2011. The particular characteristics of feminism in Japan that emerged were: Confucianism in East Asia; the *ie* (family) system; religious discrimination against women; ethnocentrism and heterosexism; and the *bosei* (motherhood) ideology. On the question of whether feminism in Japan is imported from the West, participants' opinions were divided, depending mainly on their age. The differences between feminisms in Japan and in the West that stood out in my data were: the low interest of Japanese feminisms in reproductive health and rights; collectivism versus individualism; and attitudes towards imperialism. In relation to nuclear issues, participants discussed Japan's self-image as a victim nation, the gendering of atomic issues, power symbolism, the weakness of eco-feminism and Japanese reluctance to accept responsibility. Throughout, the impact of Confucianism, the Emperor system, the *ie* system, *bosei*, Shintoism, Buddhism and the only atomic-bombed nation emerged as significant factors, clearly indicating that aspects of East Asian cultures and, more specifically, Japan's history, politics and culture have influenced feminism. All these issues have a supportive connection with patriarchy and, what is more, they coil themselves around the Emperor issue. This indicates that feminism has engaged in a tough struggle against patriarchy, which is deeply ingrained in Japanese society.

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Author's Declaration

I declare that all the research presented in this thesis is original and my own, and was carried out in accordance with the Regulations of the University of York. All sources are acknowledged as References. This thesis has not been submitted for any other degree. No part of this thesis has been published elsewhere.

Introduction

In feminist research, knowing one's position as a researcher and one's attitude towards the research is important; it encourages researchers to engage in critical self-reflection on the research process and to consider how this position influences it (Hesse-Biber 2007). This is because, 'the researcher is a product of his or her society's social structure and institutions' (Hesse-Biber 2007: 129). By looking back at my own background, I would like to explain my relationship with feminism.

I was born in 1967, in a small town with a population of about 60,000 people in a rural area of Kyushu Island,¹ Japan. Of course, I was too young to witness the Women's Liberation Movement (*Lib* [リブ])² during the late 1960s and early 1970s. For people surrounding me in my hometown, the *Lib* was merely an event in the faraway large city. This was the middle of the rapid growth of the Japanese economy, which occurred mainly between 1955 and 1973, so that I was well-off materially when I became old enough to understand what was going on. I studied at coeducational schools from elementary school to high school in my hometown. After that, I studied cultural history at Gakushuin Women's College in Tokyo for two years and then transferred to a BA course in Law at Gakushuin University. In 1986, while I was a student at the women's college, the Equal Employment Opportunity Law for Men and Women (EEOL) came into force, opening the doors of male-dominated occupations such as journalism to women. Four years later, in 1990, I graduated from university and obtained a position as a journalist with a newspaper publishing company. In those days, female reporters could be counted on the fingers of two hands, and made up just 1% of all journalists in the company. As a new role model, the quite small number of women, including me, who had successfully advanced into occupations previously monopolised by men and started working on equal employment terms with men, attracted a great deal of attention. We were known as 'the pioneer generation of the EEOL', whose commitment to gender equality tends to be stronger than that of other generations. At the same time, a backlash against feminism emerged internationally. In Japan, feminism came under severe criticism.

¹ Kyushu Island is a southwestern part of Japan.

² The *Lib* or the *Woman Lib* is an abbreviation used for the women's liberation movement of second-wave feminism in Japan in the early 1970s, coined by media of those days. Shortly afterwards, those participating in the movement started to refer to their own activism as the '*Lib*'.

During my eighteen years of working, I applied myself to my vocation as a reporter and put my heart into my work in journalism. The labour conditions guarantee gender equality, which means that workers have to accept overtime work, night work, work during holidays, business trips, transfer, and competition with rivals, including co-workers. Indeed, I was transferred to various departments and branch offices six times, worked from early morning until midnight for more than twelve hours a day and went to work during my holidays. Whenever I was given a promotion, I used to be called 'the first woman who has the position'. At the same time, this job brought enough income to support a family budget, so that I was probably seen as a successful new role model of a woman who was economically independent.

However, in July 2008, I quit my job in order to study feminism at postgraduate level in the UK. My bosses told me that I was stupid to give up my position as a journalist, whose labour conditions guarantee gender equality, but I do not regret it at all. Rather, I feel greatly relieved and have regained my sense of self by detaching myself from a workplace controlled by men, because achieving gender equality in the workplace means that women have to obey the rules established by men. Whenever I argued that the stressful working style such as long working hours should be reformed, colleagues said that it was natural for reporters to work in this way in order to scoop rival papers. The labour union did not take my opinion seriously, either, because the majority were always men in the workplace. In Japan, the working style in corporate-centred society has been created by men in the expectation that men will devote themselves to their work and their wives will devote themselves to domestic work. As a result, some of my female ex-colleagues who had young children withdrew from the front ranks of journalism. The more female colleagues stepped aside, the more I was expected to work like a man since I am single. I became disgusted with gender equality in name only and then decided to change my life from journalism to my long-cherished dream of academia. Looking back over my past, I built my career as part of 'the pioneer generation of the EEOL', which indicates that I was practising feminism by challenging patriarchy in the public sphere. Since I entered academia, I have studied feminist theories and learned how my practice of feminism is analysed by such theories, which has stimulated me to pursue academic feminism.

During the process of studying feminism in the UK, I encountered some culture shock, which was the starting point for this research. While I was an MA student in Gender Studies at the University of Sussex in 2009/10, I was deeply impressed by various students' arguments related to feminism in class. Some students from developing countries

showed a deep interest in social class and poverty issues. They often uttered the words 'poor people' and talked about huge gaps between a handful of wealthy people and a large number of poor people. Other students from former colonies passionately discussed their ethnic identity and conflicts with colonial oppression. One coursemate, who came from a former British colony, Fiji, deplored the destruction of indigenous cultures. Students whose countries have relied on immigrants' labour were also very concerned with ethnic minority issues. Although I comprehended that class, gender and race were key feminist issues, during the discussions I felt overawed by their powerful arguments and was at a loss what to say. Their motivation to argue for the protection of human rights seemed to be stronger than mine. In particular, they were far more concerned about class and race than I was.

Clearly, their concerns depended on their background. Unlike their countries, my country, Japan, was the first non-Western developed nation. Subsequently, Japan had a hard time, struggling with difficulties and poverty as a result of its defeat in the Second World War. I remember that when I made a business trip to Vietnam in 1995, twenty years after the Vietnam War, there were many beggars who had lost their legs or arms. Probably they were sick and wounded soldiers. I guess that Japan experienced a similar situation just after the war, but this period was quite short. Japan soon made a remarkable recovery, became the first non-Western developed country again and held the Olympic Games in Tokyo in 1964, just 19 years after the end of the war. As Wilkinson and Pickett (2009) demonstrate, Japan is one of the most egalitarian nations internationally in terms of income and wealth distribution. This has been clearly reflected in people's self-identification. According to the Cabinet Office, Government of Japan (2013a), 92% of people in Japan defined themselves as middle class, only 4.7% as lower class and 1.0% as upper class in 2013. The disparity in wealth is thus less divisive than in other countries. Additionally, Japan, except for the islands of Okinawa,³ has never been colonised and its national policy has not accepted immigrants, so that people tend to see Japan as a racially homogeneous nation. On the other hand, Japan colonised other Asian countries, so that there are of course foreigners such as Koreans living in Japan, but the ethnic minority issue seems to be marginalised as a minor issue. I thought that these differences between Japan and other countries might be reflected in different levels of motivation to think about feminist issues.

Another new experience was that I came into contact with Muslim women, which stimulated me to consider religious norms of womanhood. During discussions about

³ After the Second World War, Okinawa, the southernmost islands of Japan, was governed by America until May 1972.

women's rights in religion, a female Muslim student wearing the hijab argued that the hijab was not a symbol of oppression and women should be guaranteed the right to manifest their religious belief by wearing it. Honestly, I was surprised by her argument, because this was completely opposite to my expectation. I assumed that the hijab was a sign of women's subordination. I could understand that Muslim people obeyed Islamic doctrine in their own countries or communities, but she had come to study feminism in a non-Muslim country. I was wondering why she had chosen to study women's rights in the UK. When one of my coursemates then asked her why she was wearing it, she simply said, 'Because of the teaching of Islam.' It was not easy for me to understand her argument and I was confused, but I tried to imagine that if I had been brought up as a Muslim like her, I might have made the same argument.

Outside the classrooms, my Muslim flatmate, who was studying gender and development studies, argued in favour of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), which also gave me a shock. She emphasised that FGM is a tradition and should be protected. I had already known about the debate over FGM, but this was the first time I had directly heard from a feminist an argument for the continuation of FGM. On the other hand, my coursemate who came from Iran did not wear a hijab in the UK, which made me realise that the strictness of Muslim precepts depended on country, community or generation. In the UK, wearing it is a choice as a statement of Muslim identity and commitment to Islam. There are also Muslim feminists who wear it. At the same time, I realised that I had had no contact with Muslim people until I came to the UK in 2008, so that I had misunderstood their culture.

Throughout these experiences, I learned that it was natural that my understanding of feminism did not always agree with others'. Like my coursemates and flatmates, my feminist ideas and behaviour might be affected by the various social norms, religious beliefs and politics in Japan. I assumed that we had different feminisms.

I then considered what feminism in Japan was. As various borrowed words from English, such as feminism and gender, are widely used in Japan, it has clearly been influenced by Western feminist ideas, but I could not explain its specific characteristics. I asked myself again. What are the particular characteristics of feminism in Japan? How different is feminism in Japan from feminisms elsewhere? Is it related to culture? If so, how has it been influenced by culture? I looked for academic literature answering these questions.

Buckley (1997), one of the few Western scholars studying Japanese feminism,⁴ suggests a reason why it is elusive.

...Japanese feminist theories and practice have... generally developed outside academic institutions, which have for the most part remained indifferent, even hostile, to this intellectual and political movement. Because feminism has not 'evolved' in such familiar Western contexts as women's studies centers, panels at academic conferences, and specialized academic feminist journals but has preferred to channel its multiplicity of voices through a mixture of nonmainstream and informal publications, a person looking for 'familiar forms' may find it less immediately locatable. (Buckley 1997: xi)

In Buckley's view (1997), feminist theories in Japan have been developed in grass-roots ways, rather than in academia. Thus, they have existed, but have not become established in an academic way.

In order to confirm Buckley's view, I tried to find feminists' work about the characteristics of feminism in Japan. While much work focusing on specific issues has been published, there is, as far as I know, only one book focusing on feminist theories in Japan.

Unfortunately, despite its title, *Feminism in Japan 2: Feminist Theories* ([1994] 2009),⁵ which compiles 17 feminist articles discussing specific perspectives such as Marxist feminism and eco-feminism, it does not include any work that comprehensively discusses the characteristics of Japanese feminisms. In the introduction to this book, Ehara (2009), a well-known scholar studying feminist theories and also a participant in my research, states that a recognised history of feminist theories in Japan does not exist as yet, so that acknowledged theories have not become established. Ehara (2009) then argues that all feminist works include theoretical elements, which are in the process of being developed in Japan. I decided to challenge such a situation and study Japanese feminisms, because this is research that nobody has done. This situation strongly attracted me and motivated me to do pioneering work in the field of feminism.

On the basis of my experience on the MA course, through which I realised that differences in the level of feminist concerns reflected different cultural backgrounds, it did not take very long to develop research questions. The main question is quite simple: 'What are the particular characteristics of feminism in Japan?' A subsidiary question is whether feminism in Japan has been influenced by culture, history, politics and religion. I then hypothesised that feminism in Japan has been influenced by the country's culture, history,

⁴ Buckley uses the term 'Japanese feminism' in her book *Broken Silence: Voice of Japanese Feminism* (1997).

⁵ The series of books, *Feminism in Japan*, has compiled various articles by pioneering feminist researchers and activists in Japan. The first edition, in eight volumes, was published in 1994, and the new edition, in twelve volumes, has been published since 2009.

politics and religion, as well as other feminisms. If so, how has feminism in Japan reflected these and how different is feminism in Japan from elsewhere? It is possible to say that feminism in Japan has been impacted by Western feminist ideas, but I assumed that there were clear differences between them. In order to search for a particular feature of feminism in Japan, I would need to compare it with other feminisms.

This thesis is the result of my research, in which I sought to answer my research questions by interviewing twelve key feminist scholars in Japan and reading feminist books. This introduction is followed by Chapter 1 'Feminism in Japan in Historical Context'. By tracing various women's issues over the last 150 years of modernisation, I will explore how feminism has developed. One of the central issues is how social norms of womanhood have been constructed and how women have negotiated these norms. I will also discuss how women were expected to contribute to building the modern state and encouraged to support the war. I will then consider how the current gender division – housewife and salaried man – has been constructed since the post-war period.

Unlike in Chapter 1, where I will employ a descriptive approach to the development of feminism in Japan, in Chapter 2 'Representing Feminism in Japan: A Review of the Literature', I will consider how existing feminist scholarship has perceived this development. The authors I will discuss represent their views of feminism against the background of politics and key events in various historical periods. Therefore, I will review these views chronologically, in parallel with Chapter 1, from the early modernisation period to the present time.

Chapter 3 'Key Figures' Perspectives on Academic Feminism' reviews five Japanese scholars' works on the core elements of, or particular to, feminism in Japan. Each of these addresses key issues of feminism from a different viewpoint, contributing to the wider picture of feminism in Japan. Ueno analyses family, gender divisions and nationalism, while Kanai focuses on corporate-centred patriarchy. I will also include the critical views of two historians: Kano, who challenges the concept of *bosei* (motherhood) and Suzuki, who critiques imperialist feminism. Finally, I include Sechiyama, who analyses modern patriarchy in East Asia.

In the Chapter 4 'Engaging Feminist Scholars in Japan', I will describe the process of this research by explaining why I chose qualitative research, why I focused on academic feminism, how I chose the participants, how I developed questions for the interviews, and how I analysed the data. I will also discuss the challenges I faced in conducting this research.

Chapter 5 ‘Characterising Feminism in Japan’ is the first chapter based on the interviews. The aim is to identify how participants perceive Japanese feminisms by investigating their views of the particular characteristics and problems. I will consider how feminists have addressed patriarchy, Confucianism,⁶ political issues and religion. I will also discuss the weaknesses of feminism in Japan.

The aim of Chapter 6 ‘Indigenous or Imported?: Contrasting Feminist Views’ is to investigate how participants understand the relation between feminisms in Japan and the West. I will consider my participants’ views on whether feminism in Japan is imported. They were divided on this issue, some arguing for its autonomy, and others identifying a Western influence. I explain this in relation to the generation gap between older and younger scholars. I then discuss some differences between feminisms in Japan and in the West, such as collectivism versus individualism.

Against the background of the nuclear accident at Fukushima in March 2011, Chapter 7 ‘The Politics of Nuclear Power’ will examine the attitudes of participants towards nuclear issues, including the atomic bombing. I will discuss the symbolism of victimisation as the only atomic-bombed nation and modern power, about which there were different perspectives. In relation to anti-nuclear campaigns, I will discuss the weakness of eco-feminism in Japan. I will also focus on the issue of responsibility for the crisis in political and religious contexts.

Finally, in the ‘Conclusion’, I will present my views on feminism in Japan by reviewing my work and considering the limitations and the contribution of my research.

⁶ Confucianism consists of philosophical and ethical teachings established by the Chinese philosopher Confucius (551–479 BCE). This has spread across China, Korea, Taiwan and Japan. Loyalty and filial piety are considered to be important concepts.

1 Feminism in Japan in Historical Context

1–1 Introduction

Looking back on the history of feminism in Japan, it can be said that the starting point was the Meiji Restoration in the middle of the nineteenth century. The Meiji Restoration was a revolution, defined as the beginning of modernisation in Japan. It consisted of a chain of events, mainly the return of political power to the Emperor by the Tokugawa Shogunate in 1867, designed to move beyond the feudal system and establish a modern state by importing ideas relating to technology, capitalism, and political structure from Western countries. Before the main body of this chapter, which gives a history of feminism in Japan, I will outline the differences in Japanese society before and after the Meiji Restoration. Before the Restoration, during the Edo period (1603–1868), Japan was controlled by the Tokugawa Shogunate. One of the most important characteristics of the Edo period was a policy of diplomacy which controlled and limited trade with other countries to that with China and the Netherlands from the early seventeenth century to the middle of the nineteenth century. At the same time, Christians were regarded as traitors, and persecuted. In those days, the Emperor did not have any real power, and there were feudal lords in various districts under the Shogun. This dominance of the Tokugawa Shogunate continued for about 260 years.

However, in 1853 the American fleet came to Japan and demanded that the country should be opened up to the world. Japan finally bowed to the pressure, and was forced to open up the country, by first concluding the Treaty of Peace and Amity⁷ (1854), and a few years later the Treaty of Amity and Commerce⁸ (1858) with America. With the opening up of Japan as a start, the *samurai* (warrior) class became increasingly motivated to overthrow the Shogunate and establish a modern state. Following these events, the Meiji Restoration, led to dramatic changes in Japanese social structures. In 1868, the Meiji period, named after the Meiji Emperor, began. To begin with, the Meiji government aimed to catch up with Western countries. Japan embarked on a programme of modernisation, abolishing feudalism. The hierarchical social class system, in which the *samurai* class was generally

⁷ Under the Treaty of Peace and Amity in 1854, Japan opened the ports of Shimoda and Hakodate to trade with America. The main purpose of the treaty was to allow the Americans to obtain food and fuel at the ports.

⁸ Under the Treaty of Amity and Commerce, Japan opened four other ports to trade with America.

placed at the top, was abolished by the Meiji Government, although the privileged classes, such as members of the Imperial Family, court nobles and feudal lords, were given special status.⁹

Feminism took its first step forward with the Meiji Restoration, in the quest to achieve gender equality, liberate women and raise their social status. Kano (1997) states that until the Meiji Restoration, the hierarchical social class system had had much more influence on Japanese society than gender divisions. Instead of the scrapped status system, after the Meiji Restoration gender divisions began to receive political attention. Kano (1997) claims that the most important fact during this stage was that even progressive ideas, such as an improvement in women's position, were based on a political rhetoric that not only men but also women should contribute to the state. As a result, women's role was confined to the national slogan 'Good wife, Wise mother', devoting herself to the reproduction of labour power (in Marxist terms), which resulted in a close connection between gender and nationalism.

In this chapter, a history of feminism in Japan after the Meiji Restoration will be traced, to form a foundation for this research, focusing on seven topics. Firstly, I will describe why and how women's role was constructed politically during the Meiji period (1868–1912). Secondly, I will discuss how pioneers of feminism in Japan during the Taisho period (1912–26) came into contact with Western feminist ideas through books and started to debate various issues, mainly *bosei* protection. As Molony (1993) points out, this debate had a strong influence on political discourse in Japan. Since then, it may safely be said that this debate has been a key issue for feminism in Japan, in which great importance has been given to *bosei*. Thirdly, I will follow the situation of female workers in the textile industry, their contribution to early industrialisation and the raising of their consciousness as workers. Fourthly, the double expectations of women as mothers and workers during wartime, from the Manchurian Incident¹⁰ in 1931 to the end of the Second World War, will be sketched. Women's role as mothers requires particular attention from the point of view of family ideology. I will also describe how gender was related to nationalism and how ordinary women and feminists responded to the state's expectations. Fifthly, I will focus on the post-war reforms that brought various changes in Japanese society, such as

⁹ These special statuses were abolished in 1947 after the Second World War.

¹⁰ The Manchurian Incident (1931–33) was the war involving Japan's aggression against Manchuria, the northeastern region of China. In 1932, the Imperial Japanese Army occupied the whole of Manchuria and founded a new state, Manchukuo. In 1933, Japan concluded a cease-fire agreement with China, but anti-Japanese feelings arose among local people, which culminated in the Second Sino-Japanese (1937–45) and the Pacific (1941–45) wars. In 1945, the state of Manchukuo was abolished, following Japan's defeat.

constitutional gender equality and female suffrage. Sixthly, I will outline how, during the rapid growth of the Japanese economy, which occurred mainly between 1955 and 1973, a change in family structure and new gender divisions gradually emerged against a background of urbanisation, with the arrival of the nuclear family where the husband works outside of the home and the housewife devotes her energy to domestic work. I shall call this period ‘the second modernisation’ to distinguish it from ‘the first modernisation’ after the Meiji Restoration. By the end of that period, the early 1970s, the women’s liberation movement via second-wave feminism, namely the *Lib*, had made an impact on society. Finally, I will discuss how Japan dealt with subsequent events such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW),¹¹ adopted by the United Nations (UN) in 1979. Currently Japan is facing an ageing population and low birth rate. I will conclude by considering these new issues.

1–2 The Construction of Women’s Role during the Meiji Period

One of the central impacts of modernisation was that women came to be highlighted. The social and political reforms of the Meiji Restoration ought to have brought ideas of equality, regardless of occupation, abolishing the previous hierarchical social status system, but ironically this achievement of equality produced a new submissive category – woman. As Kano (1997) states, the category of woman began to be used politically and socially after the Meiji Restoration. Nolte and Hastings (1991: 151) claim, too, that ‘State attention to women’s role was a product of the sweeping political and social reforms of the Meiji Restoration of 1868.’ Thus, a new social category based on gender was created by the Meiji government.

Interestingly, the Meiji government’s attitudes towards women were not always clear from the outset. A governmental definition of women’s role was made after many twists and turns in doing what was convenient for the state. One of the remarkable social reforms carried out by the Meiji government was the promotion of girls’ school education alongside boys. During the Edo period, before the Meiji Restoration, there was not only an

¹¹ CEDAW is a multilateral convention that came into effect in 1981. It consists of 30 articles, and its aim is to abolish discrimination against women in all fields, including traditional customs. Japan has been a signatory of the convention since 1980 and ratified it in 1985.

official educational system for boys mainly of the *samurai* and ruling class, established by feudal domains, but also private schools for boys, which were established by public-minded individuals. Girls were allowed to study at these schools, but not in the official educational institutions and young women generally received private lessons in accomplishments such as cooking and needlework in order to improve their skills in maintaining a household. Hara (1995: 94–5) points out that, ‘The major strain of thought underlying the education of females was the Confucian conception of the role of women, which confined them to childbearing and child rearing and which held that learning was not only unnecessary but, indeed, harmful for women...’ It is often claimed that the ideal woman in those days can be seen in an eighteenth century document based on Confucianism, *Onna-Daigaku* (The Greater Learning for Women), which says that women should attend to their husbands as their lords, and should be submissive, faithful and ladylike, and that education for women was unnecessary. However, other scholars challenge this view of Confucianism’s association with patriarchal oppression. Tocco (2003: 195) refers to outstanding Confucian scholars during the Edo period, such as Ekiken Kaibara¹² (1630–1714) and Sadanobu Matsudaira¹³ (1758–1829), and points out that their Confucian thought showed diversity and was critical of female oppression. Arguments for girls to receive education alongside boys can also be seen. One of the reasons for this, Tocco (2003) suggests, is that women were expected to teach their children at home.

The circumstances surrounding women took a new turn after the Meiji Restoration. Early in the Meiji period, thousands of young men were sent to Europe and America in order to acquire skills and knowledge that could contribute to modernising Japan. Five young girls were included as members of these delegations. One of these girls, Umeko Tsuda¹⁴ (1864–1929), who later set up a women’s college in Japan, is well known as a pioneering educationalist who devoted herself to women’s education. Additionally, the Ministry of Education was established in 1871, and educational reform as the foundation of modernisation could begin. In the next year, 1872, the Fundamental Code of Education

¹² Ekiken Kaibara was a Confucian philosopher and also an educationist of the early Edo period. Kaibara (1710, in Tocco 2003) argued that girls and boys should be similarly educated, and encouraged parents to care about education for girls, who had had few opportunities to learn from the outside world in contrast with boys. It is mistakenly said that *Onna-Daigaku* was written by him, leading to the misunderstanding that Kaibara had a negative attitude towards women’s education (Tocco 2003).

¹³ Sadanobu Matsudaira was a member of Shogun’s Council of Elders during the latter part of the Edo period.

¹⁴ Umeko Tsuda was one of first Japanese girls to study abroad. When she was six years old in 1871, she was sent to America by the Meiji government. She studied in America for eleven years. After she returned to Japan, she became an English teacher and in 1900 founded a women’s college, the predecessor of the present-day Tsuda College in Tokyo, to provide liberal education for women, regardless of social class.

was promulgated, imposing a compulsory four-year elementary education for all, regardless of social status or sex. The Ministry of Education also announced that 53,760 elementary schools, 256 middle schools and 8 universities would be opened (Hara 1995). This was a turning point in achieving equal opportunities in education, which at least partially became a reality through the new educational system.

According to Hara (1995), there were two main streams of educational ideas. One was *bummei-kaika* (civilisation and enlightenment). This means, 'Education was to be one of the keys to meeting the challenges posed by the Western countries by providing skills required for military and economic development, promoting a common sense of nationhood, and opening the way to the full realization of the intellectual resources of the country' (Hara 1995: 95). This was based on ideas of equality for all, which came from Western thought; Sievers (1983) states that American advisers encouraged leaders of the Meiji government to employ co-educational and compulsory education. The other stream was conservative, based on Confucianism, which supported feudal thought, including a hierarchical social class system. Equal opportunities in education were first promoted under the influence of civilisation and enlightenment. However, Karasawa (1968, in Hara 1995) notes that the dominant notion that it was not necessary for women to study and only *bosei* had value for women still continued. In fact, there was only a small increase in children's school attendance. Even boys' attendance was only 40% in 1882, while that of girls was less than half that (Karasawa 1968, in Hara 1995: 96). This shows that conservative ideas, in which being submissive was considered to be a woman's virtue, were deeply rooted. Hara (1995) emphasises that, to put it the other way around, conservative people were afraid of the trouble and inconvenience that women who were educated and liberated could cause, thus disturbing the long-established social order. Therefore, women were kept away from critical thinking and self-advancement. As a result of the conflict between progressive and conservative opinions, the Meiji government defined women's role, promoting modernisation as well as oppressing women. Arinori Mori¹⁵ (1847–89), the first Minister of Education and a great advocate of civilisation and enlightenment, showed the attitudes of the state towards women in this 1887 statement:

The fundamental basis for an enriched country lies with education, whose basis is with women's education. This must not be forgotten. In the process of educating girls and women, we must put across the idea of serving and helping

¹⁵ Arinori Mori was a politician whose parents belonged to the *samurai* class. He studied in the West in the last days of the Tokugawa Shogunate. When he was the first Minister of Education (1885–89), he advocated the 'Good wife, Wise mother' national policy. On 11 February 1889, when the Constitution of the Empire of Japan was promulgated, he was assassinated by an ultra-nationalist.

their country. The models for women are a mother nurturing her child; a mother teaching her child; her son coming of age and being conscripted to go to war and leaving his mother with a good-bye; a son fighting bravely on the battlefield; and a mother receiving a telegram informing of her son's death in the war. (Mori 1887, in Morosawa 1978: 23–24, in Hara 1995: 96)

Women's role, as constructed by the state, was just that of a mother raising her child. What is more, women should send their sons to the battlefield and be proud of their deaths in war as a contribution to the state. This statement also defined a man's role as that of a brave soldier giving his life for his country, sacrificing his life for the state. Thus, the construction of women's and men's roles was based on nationalistic ideology, because 'the ultimate purpose of education, as envisioned by the Meiji leadership, was "to enrich the country and strengthen the army (*fukoku-kyohei*)"' (Hara 1995: 96). The Meiji government adopted this slogan in order to overcome threats posed by the great powers in advanced Western countries such as America, the UK and Russia, which had pressed Japan to open its door to the world. Then, education was the most effective way to plant this governmental policy in the younger generation. Simultaneously with the construction of women's role, what the state should be was gradually shaped. The Meiji Constitution, established in 1889, specified that the Emperor was the head of state and had sovereignty (Articles 1 and 4) and the people were subjects of the Emperor.¹⁶ In the following year, 1890, the Imperial Rescript on Education was issued by the Meiji government, to which Confucianism was conveniently applied, teaching schoolchildren to show loyalty to the Emperor as the head of the spiritual unity of the nation, and filial piety to their parents. Although in Confucianism loyalty and filial piety are different concepts, these were politically interpreted as being inseparable (Sato 1978, in Ueno 2009a). A copy of the Rescript was posted on classroom walls in every school, and was read aloud by teachers and schoolchildren. This Rescript was at the centre of pre-war education in Japan, serving as 'a tool of the state for molding a loyal and nationalistic citizenry' (Hara 1995: 97).

This artificial connection between loyalty and filial piety in Confucianism was embodied in the *ie*, a new family system, under the 1898 Civil Code, in which the father was given legal authority as the head of household, and women were expected to be obedient to their father or husband as the patriarchal head of household. This is merely because men have the same sex as the Emperor (Yoshitake 1979). The head of household was subordinated to the Emperor as head of the nation. In this structure of *tenno-sei* (the Emperor system), families, as the basic units of the state, were also chained to the Emperor as the patriarchal

¹⁶ The current constitution, enforced in 1947, states that the Emperor is the symbol of the State and of the unity of the People.

head. Miyake (1991) argues that the *ie* was constructed by the Meiji government in order to build the national structure, called *kazokukokka-kan* (the family-state ideology). This was a hierarchical power structure in which the state was likened to a family under the rule of the Emperor, and each family was likened to a mini-state with its head as ‘a mini-Emperor’¹⁷ (Yoshitake 1979: 89). ‘This ideology considered the family to be a part of the state apparatus for exercising power – contrary to the notion in civil society that the family is a “private” institution’ (Miyake 1990: 270). In fact, *Meiji-Onna-Daigaku* (The Meiji Greater Learning for Women), sponsored by the Ministry of Education in 1887, said, ‘the home is a public place where private feelings should be forgotten’ (in Nolte and Hastings 1991: 156). In 1899, the Meiji government also declared:

Girls marry, and become wives and mothers. Men and women help one another, and each carries on various duties. Since the family is the root of the nation, it is the vocation of women who become housewives to be good wives and wise mothers, and girls’ high schools are necessary to provide appropriate education enabling girls from middle-and upper-middle-class families to carry out this vocation. (Ministry of Education 1899, in Sievers 1983: 112)

The ideal women’s role, defined as ‘Good wife, Wise mother’, was popularised through education. Nolte and Hastings (1991) point out that this was national propaganda encouraging women to devote themselves to the nation through their diligence, living without wasting anything, taking care of their family and having responsibility for child-rearing. Indeed, women’s duty of domestic work, serving their families as well as maintaining the patriarchal family system over which the Emperor ruled, was defined as public service in terms of its contribution to national wealth. Additionally, women’s political activity was banned under the Public Order and Police Law of 1900, which succeeded the Law on Associations and Meetings of 1890. The prohibition on women’s participation in political meetings remained in effect until 1922, when feminists won its abrogation, but the ban on women’s membership of political groups remained until 1945. Nolte and Hastings (1991) suggest that the ‘Good wife, Wise mother’ was regarded as belonging to the group of civil servants, such as military officers, schoolteachers and temple officers, who were originally excluded from political activities, and that this categorisation implied a state prohibition on women’s political activities. ‘Their mission was a noble one that transcended petty partisan politics’ (Nolte and Hastings 1991: 157). In short, the aims of education for the ‘Good wife, Wise mother’, as well as the prohibition of women from political participation, was to contribute to *fukoku-kyohei* (enrich the country and strengthen the army), but it did not imply women’s incapacity in physical, mental or

¹⁷ My translation.

moral aspects. Actually, as Nolte and Hasting (1991) state, the Japanese state policy towards women was especially developed during the two decades from 1890 to 1910, while Japan was making progress towards becoming the only non-Western modern state¹⁸ before the First World War (1914–18). The idea of ‘Good wife, Wise mother’ was superficially withdrawn in 1945, when the Second World War was over, but this ideology still has effects on Japanese society (Koyama [1991] 2009).

Against the background that women were expected to become a ‘Good wife, Wise mother’ by the Meiji government, feminism began to grow, mainly among well-educated women. Mackie (2003) argues that feminism in those days was one response to women’s role being deep-rooted in nationalism. Feminists developed their ideas, which clearly arose from a heated debate about *bosei* during the Taisho period (1912–26).

1–3 The Debate about *Bosei* during the Taisho Period

During the Taisho period (1912–26), when the movement called ‘Taisho democracy’ emerged, literate women who had graduated from the new national education system brought a breath of fresh air into the discourse about the nationalism strategy and the ‘Good wife, Wise mother’. Well-educated women also encountered Western feminist ideas through books. The new developments gradually gave rise to a heated debate, especially about *bosei-hogo* (the protection and support of motherhood). Women also discussed other gender issues such as equal pay. Bernstein (1991) notes that Japanese women began to redefine their own female identity. Rodd (1991) states, too, that the state could no longer have its way in totally controlling gender divisions. A symbolic event of the period was the founding of a pioneering feminist group *Seito* (bluestocking) in 1911, the year before the Meiji period ended, which published a monthly feminist magazine from 1911 to 1916. Raicho Hiratsuka (1886–1971), a leading member of the group, rejected the passive image of the moon, instead choosing the active imagery of the sun, and opened the first issue with the words, ‘In the beginning, woman was the sun.’ Hiratsuka also insisted:

The power to fully develop... great hidden ability and genius makes it necessary to first remove all obstacles to women’s development,... including

¹⁸ Japan won the First Sino-Japanese War (1894–95) against the Qing Dynasty of China. In the Russo-Japanese War (1904–05), Japan also had a sweeping victory. This was a significant event as it showed the world that Japan had made rapid progress in less than forty years after the 1868 Meiji Restoration to rank alongside the Western great powers or even surpassing them.

outside pressures... and a general lack of knowledge... However, the most significant barriers lie within ourselves. (Hiratsuka 1911, in Sievers 1983: 164)

The aim of this magazine was to encourage women to develop their own abilities. In concert with this, the members started engaging in a debate about abortion, *bosei* and female sexuality in the magazine, so they became known as ‘new women’, like Nora, the main character in Ibsen’s play *A Doll’s House*. The members of *Seito* were highly educated and they absorbed the Western trend of thought early, including ideas of Western feminists. *Seito* provided a place for new women to discover and discuss gender issues.

One central issue was abortion. The Meiji government prohibited abortion in 1869. An article written in 1915 by Satsuki Harada (1887–1933), another member of *Seito*, appealing to public opinion that abortion should be accepted, was the origin of the controversy (Kano 1997). It was an epoch-making opinion to promote women’s control over their own reproductive capacities. Other members had different opinions. One of these, an anarchist and also a feminist, Noe Ito¹⁹ (1895–1923), totally disagreed with Harada, because she believed that all life should be respected. The debate on *bosei* during the Taisho period was a start in realising how important reproductive health and rights were. This issue is still much debated.²⁰

In the debate on *bosei*, which started around 1915, the most fundamental question was whether the state should protect *bosei* financially; for example, whether the state should support single-mother families. Nishikawa (1997) argues that this event was the start of first-wave feminism in Japan, when various different female perspectives began to emerge. In general terms, this was a controversy between individualism and maternalism. In the debate, there were three significant members of *Seito* and another feminist philosopher who later summarised and analysed this whole debate.

¹⁹ Noe Ito was influenced by Emma Goldman (1869–1940), a Western anarchist and also a feminist who was born in the Russian Empire and emigrated to America in 1885. Goldman’s article entitled *The Tragedy of Women’s Emancipation* was made available in Japan in 1914 after being translated by Ito.

²⁰ For example, although the Eugenic Protection Law, established in 1948 and revised as the Mother’s Health Protection Law in 1996, considered abortion acceptable only in the case of women with financial problems; thus it is easy to have an abortion because women are not required to submit official documents to prove financial problems. This is why, conservatives against abortion have appealed to exclude this condition. Kano (1997) points out that rights of abortion have always been threatened in Japan, and suggests that one of feminists’ tasks is to develop the principle of self-determination of *bosei*.

The feminist who started the debate was Akiko Yosano²¹ (1878–1942), an individualist feminist and a *tanka*²² poet. She argued that women who did not have enough money to have babies should not demand financial support from the state, even if giving birth and child-rearing was a contribution to the state, because women always depended on others without making efforts to be independent. In other words, only single mothers who managed financially by their own efforts should be supported by the state. Yosano's emphasis on economic independence came from her basic idea that feminism should be grounded in equal social, educational and legal rights, and that women should take responsibility for themselves. Her essay, entitled 'Women's Complete Independence', in a women's magazine *Fujin Koron* in 1918 clearly demonstrated her attitude towards the protection of *bosei*:

I cannot agree with the European women's movements' demand for special economic protection from the state for women during pregnancy and childbirth. I, who feel that it is slave morality for women to be dependent on men because of their procreation role, must refuse dependency on the state for the very same reason... I feel couples they (couples) should wait until they have enough earning power before marrying or having children. For example, even if the man has economic security, a couple should not marry until the woman, too, has security. (Yosano 1918, in Rodd 1991: 192)

Actually, Yosano was strongly independent and did more than support herself. She was the supporter of her family, including her twelve children, because her husband, a publisher of another magazine, could not make enough money. However, there was criticism concerning her emphasis on women's complete economic independence, which was that her argument was just bourgeois feminism, because she came from a wealthy merchant family and already had a high reputation as a *tanka* poet. Additionally, her stress on female economic independence was based on conditions of equal education and employment opportunities for both sexes, and that female suffrage should be realised, whereas these conditions had not yet been achieved at that time.

Secondly, against Yosano's individualism, Raicho Hiratsuka,²³ a strong maternalist feminist, argued that the value of *bosei* should not be related to women's financial situation, emphasising that working outside the home was irreconcilable with taking care

²¹ Akiko Yosano is well known as a *tanka* poet, who protested against war through her literary works. Her most famous work is 'Thou Shalt Not Die', published in 1904, and addressed to her brother, who was sent to the front in the Russo-Japanese War (1904–05).

²² *Tanka* is a traditional form of Japanese poetry. It consists of five units with a specific pattern of the number of sounds: 5-7-5-7-7.

²³ Raicho Hiratsuka was influenced by Ellen Key (1849–1926), a Swedish thinker and author of *Love and Marriage*.

of children inside the home. Hiratsuka's principle was that mothers had the right as a matter of course to demand state protection and support because they were the source of life and very important contributors to the state, being more than individuals. Kano (1997) states that there were two questions crossing each other at this stage: what *bosei* meant for women and who managed *bosei*. Thus, Yosano had to say specifically that *bosei* was not so important in order to refuse the state control of *bosei*. Hiratsuka had to demand state control of *bosei* in order to emphasise how important *bosei* was.

Thirdly, in 1918, a socialist feminist, Kikue Yamakawa²⁴ (1890–1980), argued against both Yosano and Hiratsuka, bringing a new argument from a socialist viewpoint, that the state, social and economic systems subordinating women should be reformed, thus replacing the original questions about what *bosei* meant and who should manage *bosei*. In the preceding year, the Russian Revolution had broken out, which overthrew the czarist autocracy and later founded a socialist country, the Soviet Union. This international situation reinforced and gave an air of authenticity to her argument. Yamakawa ([1918] 1990) also logically concluded from a Marxist position that women's domestic work was no more than unpaid work, which subordinated women to men and set a low valuation on female labour in the labour market. Thus, if women had to engage in paid work outside the home in order to have economic independence as well as unpaid domestic work, they would have to shoulder a double burden.

Finally, an analysis of these arguments over *bosei* was put forward by Itsue Takamure (1894–1964) in 1926. She was a maternalist feminist, an anarchist and also a philosopher who talked about the four feminist positions, as shown in Figure 1 (reproduced from Kano 1997: 203).

Standpoints of the Four Feminists in the Debate over *Bosei*

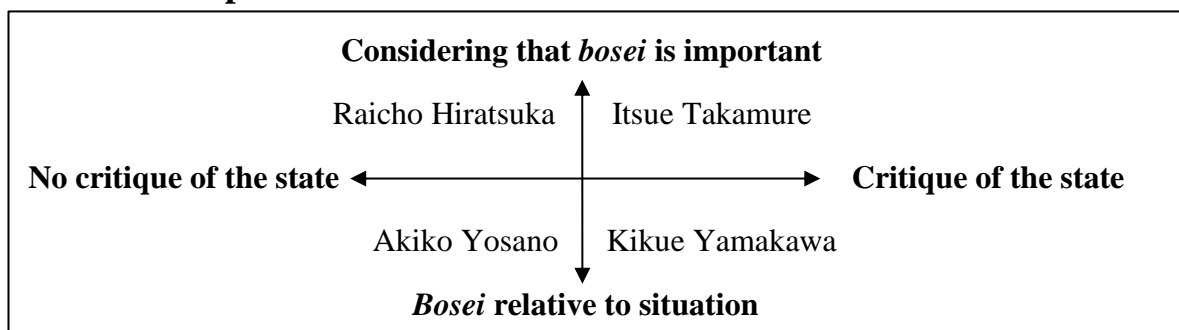


Figure 1 (reproduced from Kano 1997: 203, my translation)

²⁴ Kikue Yamakawa was also the first Director-General of the Women's and Minors' Bureau at the Ministry of Labour, which was established in 1947.

Hiratsuka's standpoint as a maternalist was placed at the upper left, arguing the state protection of *bosei* was primarily needed in all cases. This opinion was criticised as dependence mentality by Yosano. Yosano's opinion as an individualist was at the lower left, assessing the relative value of *bosei*. This means that, on the assumption that women are financially independent, she accepted the state protection of *bosei*. Yamakawa's view as a socialist was at the lower right, arguing that the state should be reformed before everything else.

Takamure's own standpoint was at the upper right, considering that *bosei* was important, but with a critique of the state. To put it concretely, she insisted that the state should be reformed from the perspective of the proletariat and anarchism in order to strongly protect *bosei*. Interestingly, her anarchism and anti-modernism, linking to anti-Westernisation, was transformed into ultra-nationalism through her research on *bosei*. After a couple of years, her support for the Japanese Emperor system and her praise of war clearly emerged. Her ideas, including the relation between *bosei* and war, were apparent in her essays, from the following essay written in the late 1930s onwards.

The maternal self sees humankind as one family. As our sacred war is a challenge to what interferes with this familyhood, the war is ours, for women... Fascism, which encourages women to have more children, values womanhood and therefore is liberating for women. (Takamure the late 1930s, in Ueno 1997: 296)

The graceful, delicate ladies of this country make the family the centre of their existence, and have an unquenchable longing for the whole world to become one large family. Thus, as our holy war had been launched against that which obstructs this, it can be said most positively that this is a war for women. Women's unfaltering purpose should be to encourage our children, our husbands, our older brothers, our younger brothers, and never to yield. In this great war we are not taking a stand 'even though we are women' but 'precisely because we are women'. (Takamure 1944, in Ueno 2004: 32)

The mother's will... is the Emperor's will. (Takamure 1944, in Kano 1979: 68–9, my translation)

Takamure clearly appreciated fascism from the point of view of thinking highly of *bosei*. Kano (1979) points out that Takamure's praise of *bosei* was deeply related to praise of the Emperor, and explains the zeitgeist during those times, including Takamure's views – It is our sacred duty, in the spirit of universal brotherhood, desiring to have all the corners of the world under one roof to see that this one will of mother and the Emperor extend beyond Japan, beyond Asia, and to the whole world. This means that mothers should bring up their children as the Emperor's children, and should gladly give their children's lives for the Emperor. Kano (1987: 160) also argues that, like other Japanese intellectuals,

Takamure's anti-modernism followed the return to 'Japanese spirits'²⁵ and enthusiastically participated in the Imperial Rule Assistance system during the fifteen years of war.²⁶ 'When one considers the results of Takamure linking together women's liberation and the quest to "conquer the modern", and that she pursued these with all her heart and soul, I cannot help feeling sorry for her' (Kano 1987: 160, in Ueno 2004: 30). Ohinata (1995: 202) argues, too, that: 'Mothers were to give birth to "the emperor's babies" and, as the phrase "the ones who will raise the boys and girls of the empire" illustrates, were considered an extremely important asset.'

Ueno (1997) claims that individualist feminists challenging male-dominated society seemed to Takamure, a maternalist feminist, to spoil the virtue of femininity. 'From the beginning, Japan's indigenous feminism defined itself as distinct from Western individualism... Takamure's emphasis on *bosei* and femininity functioned as an attempt to overcome Western individualism' (Ueno 1997: 297). The argument over *bosei*, including maternalist versus individualist, has been handed down to current feminism in Japan in all its aspects, and has wholly characterised feminism in Japan.

1-4 Female Workers in the Textile Industry

The early days of feminism were mainly populated by well-educated women, but it gradually spread to women of the working class. This occurred with an increase in the number of women working in factories, especially in the textile industry with the industrialisation of Japan. Raising women's consciousness came to occur through the labour movement after the 1920s.

Industrialisation after the Meiji Restoration also promoted people to jobs in the public sphere. This was the beginning of the conversion of the Japanese economy from primary to tertiary industries. At the time of the Meiji Restoration, the Japanese economy depended heavily on agriculture. According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications of Japan, in 1872 about three-quarters of the total workforce of Japan was engaged in primary industries, mainly small family farms, which became a source of labour for employment in factories (see Table 1).

²⁵ My translation.

²⁶ The fifteen years of war included a series of wars from the 1931 Manchurian Incident to the end of the Second World War in 1945.

Distribution of Labour Force by Sector and Sex from 1872 to 2010

Year	Female			Male		
	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
1872	77.2		22.8	69.3		30.7
1890	74.3		25.7	63.3		36.7
1900	71.6		28.4	60.4		39.6
1910	70.9	12.7	9.1	60.0	18.3	19.7
1920	63.6	16.6	19.8	49.6	23.6	26.8
1930	60.9	14.1	24.9	43.6	23.8	32.7
1940	57.5	15.7	26.9	36.3	33.0	30.8
1950	61.5	13.1	25.4	40.4	27.3	32.3
1960	43.2	20.1	36.7	25.9	34.9	39.2
1970	26.1	26.1	47.8	14.9	39.2	45.9
1980	13.7	26.1	60.1	9.2	38.2	52.6
1990	8.2	26.3	65.6	6.5	38.2	55.3
2000	5.5	20.4	74.1	4.8	36.3	58.8
2010	3.9	15.2	80.9	4.5	32.6	62.9

Table 1 Source: From 1872 to 1910 (reproduced from Kawashima 1995: 273). After 1920, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications of Japan (1920–2010) *National Census*.

The impetus for the shift of labour force from agriculture to waged employment came from the Land Tax Reform of 1873, which replaced tax-in-kind with tax-in-cash at high rates depending on the price of land in order to secure a new source of revenue for industrialisation and the reinforcement of the country's military strength. According to Kawashima (1995), this tax reform resulted in two changes. One was the commercialisation of farm products. The other was the collapse of smallholders, especially the poor, who could not pay the tax in cash. Farmers can be categorised into four groups (Kawashima 1995). The first group consisted of eldest sons as inheritors of the farm, while younger sons and daughters became paid workers outside their farms. The second group was *dekasegi* (temporary migrants like seasonal workers, who came back to their farms after working elsewhere for a couple of months or years). The third group was farmers with side jobs in the factories, the so-called semi-farmers and semi-wage workers in the factories. The fourth group was those whose whole family abandoned farming and moved from the countryside to big cities.

Women in the Factory Labour Force of Japan

Year	Factories	Total workers	Female workers
1894	5,985	381,000	239,000 (62.7%)
1898	----	412,000	235,000 (57.0%)
1899	6,699	423,171	264,378 (62.5%)
1903	8,274	483,839	301,435 (62.3%)
1905	10,361	612,177	369,233 (60.3%)
1907	11,390	649,676	400,925 (61.7%)
1911	----	793,885	476,497 (60.0%)

Table 2 (reproduced from Sievers 1983: 206)

According to surveys, women accounted for about 60% of all workers in factories during early industrialisation (see Table 2). The significance of waged employment for women in manufacturing continued until 1930, when heavy industry developed as a new core industry and rapidly started to employ more workers, mostly men. The main employer of female paid workers was the textile industry. In 1915 there were about 560,000 female workers in manufacturing industries, of whom about 90% were engaged in the textile industry (Hirota 1979, in Kawashima 1995: 273). As the model factories were built by the Meiji government, this was the core industry during early industrialisation, because light industry required less investment than heavy industry, and manufactured exportable products were needed to earn foreign exchange. Japan is a country poor in natural resources, so earning foreign exchange was indispensable in order to import materials. Silk was one of the nation's few exportable products: 'By the end of the Meiji period [1912], Japanese women had made their country the world's leading exporter of silk' (Sievers 1983: 56). The cotton textile industry grew rapidly, too, especially after 1900, and by 1914 world cotton manufacturing was dominated by Japan. This position was sustained until just before the Second World War. Overall, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, 40% of GNP and 60% of foreign exchange were generated by the textile industry (Nolte and Hastings 1991: 153). This rapid progress meant that Japan was successful in establishing both heavy industry and military strength independently without debt. 'Without the work of Japan's women, the apparent miracle of Japan's economic growth might not have been possible; it is as difficult to underestimate their contribution as it is to deny the social costs that were a part of it. Given the chance, Meiji working women

might well have been among the first to ask for a redefinition of Japan's economic success' (Sievers 1983: 56–7).

Despite female workers' contribution to the nation, the environment provided for them was actually very poor. At the beginning of the Meiji period in the 1870s, young women who were encouraged to serve their country, mainly from the *samurai* class or wealthy farmer class, were recruited by spinning and textile factories built by the Meiji government. However, as the industry developed, new factories were built and during the 1880s the demand for labour increased. Thereupon, instead of young women in the *samurai* class, young unmarried women from the poorest farm families in the countryside became the main source for the workforce in these factories. They were forced to sell themselves under the indenture system, because of poverty. 'To supplement their parents' impoverished income from farming, they worked in the remote factories as *dekasegi* for two to three years before marriage. Their pay was often paid to their parents in advance. As a result, they were obliged to work for the employers for a fixed number of years, usually two to three years' (Okochi 1952: 4, in Kawashima 1995: 274). This contract system, which chained young women to the factories, was one-sided. The following is a typical contract.

- 1 The period of work covered by this contract is five years.
- 2 The worker must give evidence that there is no employment relationship with another company at the present time.
- 3 There is to be no betraying of company secrets.
- 4 Factory employers' and supervisors' orders and regulations will be observed now and in the future.
- 5 Except in extreme cases, no one will be allowed to leave work before the contract expires.
- 6 The company may dismiss workers at any time at its own convenience.
- 7 Wages are paid at company convenience.
- 8 The company may decrease or confiscate the wages of employees for a violation of company regulation or of the contract. (Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce of Japan 1903, in Sievers 1983: 62)

Wakizo Hosoi's documentary book entitled *Joko-Aishi* (The Pitiful History of Women Workers) published in 1925, a well-known classic of research on female employment during early industrialisation, reported how female workers were managed in the cotton textile factories under severe working conditions. He described that it was the general case that young rural girls were indentured under contract. They accepted the circumstance as their fate without bitterness as a consequence of their underdeveloped awareness of the rights of labourers. Sievers (1983) points out that the contract system was uncommon in Japan, and that it 'could not have worked without the accompanying façade of traditional paternalism erected by the mill owners and their recruiters' (Sievers 1983: 62–3). From

Molony's (1991) point of view, the value system in Japanese society, which attaches great importance to filial piety and obedience, encouraged female workers to passively accept the contracts. 'According to this interpretation, most young women returned to their villages to marry after saving for a dowry, and remained unsullied by their industrial experience' (Molony 1991: 223). Devoting themselves to their parents through endurance and hard work was a virtue. In consequence, they were regarded as dutiful daughters. There was also a survey conducted in 1927, which showed that female workers said they hoped to work, rather than being forced against their will: 69.3% of female workers in factories hoped to support their family's finances, and 17.2% hoped to make money to support themselves (in Molony 1991: 225). The background that they were suffering extreme poverty, of course, should not go unheeded.

As to the severe conditions in the textile factories, in general, they worked as probationers without pay for the first three months. After training, they worked twelve-hour shifts, 6:00am to 6:00pm or 6:00pm to 6:00am. In their dormitory, ten to twenty women lived in each room, sharing one set of bedding between two persons. Sanitary conditions were poor, too. Workers became infested with lice and tuberculosis spread. Food was provided to all workers four times a day, at 6:00am, noon, 6:00pm, 00:00am, but was poor in nutrition and taste. Moreover, their wage was very low. Notwithstanding the fact that they were offered sixty sen²⁷ a day in wages beforehand, the reality was generally eighteen to twenty sen.²⁸ While they were at work, they hesitated even to have toilet breaks as they were strongly criticised for stopping work. Their only pleasure was during holidays, four days a month in the 1920s, to write a letter to their parents, chat to their roommates, or go to the cinema. However, as long as they were in debt to the factory, they were not allowed to go out even during holidays, as if they were chained to the dormitory, like birds in a cage (Molony 1991).

As a response to the cruel working conditions, the labour movement emerged. There was an increase in the number of strikes during the 1920s (see Figure 2). Relatively, there were a small number of strikes in which only female workers participated, but these doubled in frequency, from 19 in 1924 to 38 in 1930, so a rise in the consciousness of the rights of labour can certainly be read. The frequency of strikes in which female and male workers jointly participated increased two and a half times, from 114 in 1924 to 291 in 1930. In total, there was an increase of nearly three times, from 333 in 1924 to 906 in 1930 (in

²⁷ Sen is unit of currency in Japan.

²⁸ In those days, eighteen to twenty sen were equivalent to one-tenth of the wage of a worker in New England, America.

Molony 1991). As female workers lived in dormitories, their demands covered all-round everyday life, not only working conditions such as an increase in their wages, shorter working hours and the provision of sick rooms, but also living conditions such as removal of the control and confinement of female workers who had not yet paid off their debt to their employers, the improvement of food and securing healthcare. During the late 1920s, in some cases their demands included maternity leave. As a consequence, their working conditions were improved. For example, Molony (1991) notes that Fuji Boseki, a spinning factory established in 1886, cut back working hours to eleven after a strike in 1925. Other factories partially accepted workers' demands. In addition, after 1925 the government prohibited women from doing late-night shift work from 11:00pm to 5:00am.

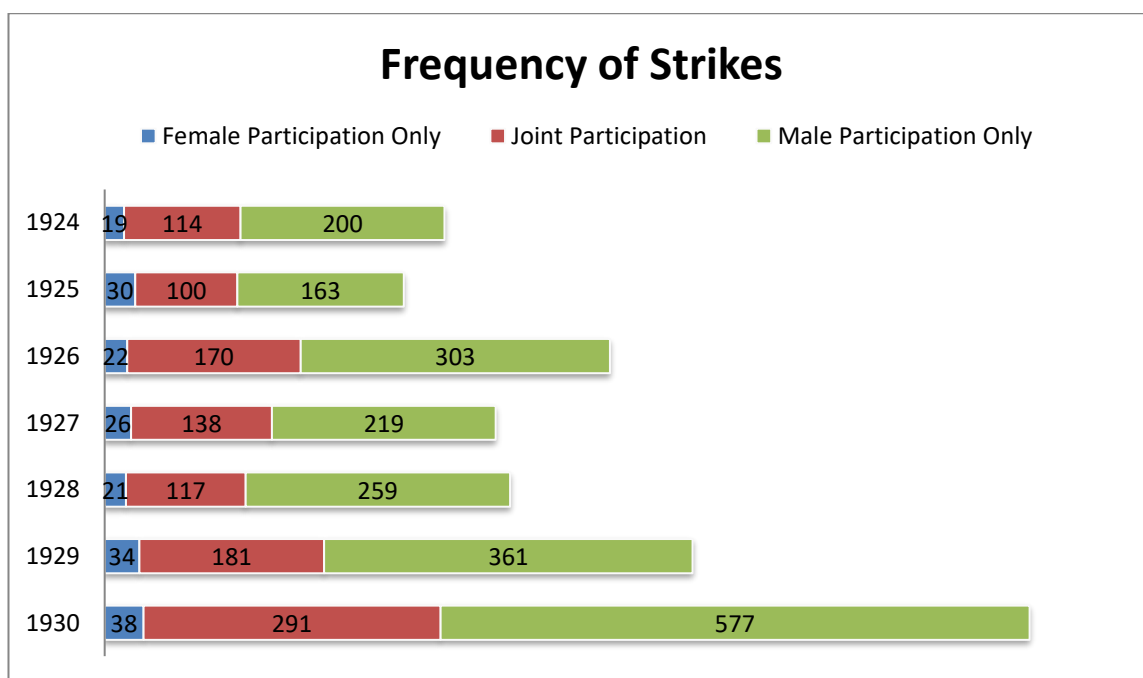


Figure 2 (reproduced from Molony 1991: 235)

However, the proportion of women who were unionised was extremely low, only 1% of all female workers, as compared with 16% of male workers (in Molony 1991), so that in union activities female workers were still outside the mainstream. Concerning the reasons, Molony (1991) notes two situations surrounding female workers. One was that women were shut up in the factories and dormitories, being under control for twenty-four hours a day, in contrast to many male workers, who were commuters. Living together encouraged female workers to band together mentally, but this confinement led to them being afraid of losing their jobs as a result of struggling against their employers. The other reason was that

women were intentionally eliminated from mainstream union activities by male workers. For instance, male unionists bargained with their employers, making employers meet their demands by ignoring female workers' demands. Most male unionists also disagreed with the idea that women's sections should be established in unions, because they regarded women's demands as special issues that strayed from the main topics in labour-management negotiations. Thus, eliminating female workers from the mainstream in union activities by various means, including hostile feelings towards women, brought advantages to both male workers and their employers.

However, female workers were not always passive. Once they called a strike, they actively asserted their demands. In 1930, women working in the textile factory Tokyo Moslin organised a demonstration march and interrupted traffic, even trains in that area. Although they were still positioned outside of the mainstream in union activities, the fact that female workers in the textile industry gradually developed their consciousness as workers, especially during the 1920s, was the point of departure for the women's labour movement of today. During the later wartime period, factory women as home-front workers continued to support the state, in which *bosei* was politically ideologised and used under war conditions to nationalise women.

1–5 Women Centred in the Family System during Wartime

From the 1930s to the middle of the 1940s, the early years of the Showa period (1926–89), Japan faced a chain of wars, collectively called 'the Fifteen Years War'. The opening was the Manchurian Incident in 1931. The next to break out was the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937, developing into the Pacific War, which broke out in 1941 as part of the Second World War. In August 1945, the Second World War finally came to an end. According to Miyake (1991), there were double expectations of women's roles during wartime. The first was as mothers, especially being active in patriotic organisations under national mobilisation, of which the government thought a great deal. The second was as workers in munitions factories, replacing the absent men who were fighting on the battlefield.

On the home front, it is clear that the expectation of women's role as mothers was to promote population growth in order to supply soldiers and colonists under imperialism. Miyake (1991) states, however, that this was not enough to explain why the Japanese government had primarily limited women's role to that of mothers until 1944, the year

before the end of the Second World War, when it finally decided to forcibly send women as workers to the munitions industry. Even then, only unmarried women and widows aged twelve to forty were called up. Women who were *konjiku* (pivotal) to their family, namely mothers, were excluded from factory work, notwithstanding the acute lack of labour. This shows that the government was in a dilemma as to whether to reproduce more men as soldiers and colonists or to produce more arms, but that it had great hope in women as mothers, hesitating to mobilise them for war work. As to why the Showa government had an obdurate attachment to women's reproductive roles, Miyake (1991) argues that it regarded fecundity as a state power. Moreover, 'In the case of Japan, the government assigned women to reproductive roles for the primary purpose of revitalising the family system, which formed the basis for the ideology of Japanese nationalism, known as *kazoku kokkakan* (family-state ideology)' (Miyake 1991: 268).

As I explained in the early section of this chapter, the family-state structure was shaped by the Meiji government between the 1880s and the 1890s. The 1889 Meiji Constitution defined Japanese people as subjects of the Emperor. The 1890 Imperial Rescript on Education instructed schoolchildren to be dutiful to their parents and to remain loyal to the state. The 1898 Meiji Civil Code defined the *ie*, which transformed the ideology of the patriarchal family system into law. In addition, in the slogan of women's roles 'Good wife, Wise mother' constructed by the Meiji government, women's reproductive roles were primarily regarded as indispensable in the public sphere, contributing to the state and, to put it concretely, maintaining the family system *ie*, rooted in the Emperor system and, by the same token, supporting nationalism. At the same time, another slogan '*fukoku-kyohei*' (rich country and strong army), advocated by the Meiji government during industrialisation, encouraged young women to marry and become reproducers of the next generation, too. However, by the 1920s the family-state ideology had become weak, because capitalist economic development after the middle of the Meiji period came to undermine parts of the *ie*, such as neighbourhood associations for farm work and kinship organisations. Individualism and the idea that the family belonged to the private sphere were gradually developing, too. Additionally, after the Manchurian Incident in 1931, the men who were the heads of their families or who would become the head of a family in the next generation, were called up into the army one after another, excluding only very young or old men, which undermined the fundamental structure of the *ie*. As a result, the Showa government expected women to restore the *ie* instead of the absent men by re-setting a high valuation on women's reproductive roles (Miyake 1991).

The Outline for Establishing Population Growth Policy, issued by the Ministry of Welfare in 1941, aimed to increase the domestic population from 73 million to 100 million within 20 years. This indicates how enthusiastic the government was about reinvigorating the family system and redefining women's roles as mothers. It did so by listing specific measures for the promotion such as the bounty system for fecundity. The policy came under the imperial mission to build '*Dai-Toa-Kyoei-Ken*' (Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere). The state officially took possession of women's reproductive capacity, thereby intervening in private matters such as marriage. Consequently, private matters were no longer private, but public. The Outline for Establishing Population Growth Policy is as follows:

- 1 The family system should be strengthened and unsound thoughts eliminated.
- 2 Matchmaking or marriage consultation should be actively offered by public bodies or municipal agencies.
- 3 Marriage expenses should be minimized and a loan system established.
- 4 The existing school system should be reformed out of consideration for population policies.
- 5 Girls' high schools and girls' community schools should provide the knowledge and techniques of childrearing and hygienics needed [*sic*] to foster sound mothers who are aware of their national mission of motherhood.
- 6 Only women under the age of twenty should be employed, and the working conditions and employment conditions that hinder early marriage should be modified or improved.
- 7 Tax policies should be modified in accordance with population policies. They should be designed to lessen the burden for people with many dependents and to increase taxation on single persons.
- 8 A family allowance system should be introduced to lessen the burden of medical expenses, education expenses, and other family expenses. For this purpose the state must implement a special budget, called 'resources for assisting families with straitened finances'.
- 9 Big families should be given preferential treatment in receiving rationed goods, awards and bonuses.
- 10 Pregnant women and their babies should receive protection by the systematic improvement of maternity hospitals and baby hospitals. Ways should be devised to secure [the] rationed medical material[s] necessary for childbirth.
- 11 Artificial methods of birth control, such as contraception and abortion, should be prohibited, and special efforts should be made to eliminate venereal diseases. (Ministry of Welfare of Japan 1941, in Miyake 1991: 278–9)

Interestingly, this policy introduced by the Showa government – women centred in the family system – produced differences in women's positioning from the Meiji government, even though women were assigned the same role as reproducers. The Meiji government had made the power of male household heads stronger and more stable by giving them

legal authority under the 1898 Meiji Civil Code. At this stage, women's place was limited to inside the home under the control of men, which means that women were mothers within families. On the other hand, in the Showa version, women as reproducers were not only placed at the centre of their family instead of the absent men, but also on an almost equal footing with soldiers from the point of view of the state's strategy to preserve the family system, which means that women were transformed into mothers of the state (Mori 1945, in Miyake 1991). According to government documents, which emphasised the importance of women's role and the family-state structure, published by the Ministry of Education of Japan, such as *Kokutai-no-Hongi*²⁹ (The Cardinal Principles of the National Policy 1937), *Shimmin-no-Michi*³⁰ (The Truth of the Subject 1941) and *Senji-Kateikyoku-Shido*³¹ (Guidelines for Home Education 1942), 'Woman's role in preserving the family system was a crucial analogue to the male role of soldier fighting the "sacred war" for the Japanese family-state' (Miyake 1991: 271). Moreover, the family-state ideology in the Showa emphasised 'the imagery of fecundity and warmth of blood relations associated with mothers' (Miyake 1991: 271). Consequently, although many soldiers died in action during wartime, people believed in the immortality of Imperial Japan as long as the prolific mother-centred family system existed. Thus, *bosei* was used as an instrument, named *kokkateki-bosei* (*bosei* in the interest of the state), in order to maintain the family system and, by the same token, to develop Imperial Japan.

Under the slogan of the Showa government, 'Be Fruitful and Multiply for the Prosperity of the Nation,' women were encouraged by various means to have many children. One of the embodiments of the governmental policies was the Mother-Child Protection Law, enacted in 1937. In Japan this was the first law to protect *bosei*, and it guaranteed the provision of financial support and medical services for poor mothers who had young children. It was enacted against a social background within which the number of single, poor mothers who had committed suicide with their children had been increasing, and feminists had demanded that the government pass legislation to help poor mothers.

There was also encouragement to join patriotic associations sponsored by the government. The smallest units were *tonari-gumi* (neighbourhood associations), consisting of five to ten

²⁹ *Kokutai-no-Hongi* emphasised an unbroken line of emperor, descended from the gods and starting with the legendary first Emperor Jimmu in the seventh century BCE. This also stated that the Sovereign of Japan was the Emperor.

³⁰ *Shimmin-no-Michi* described what people had to do in order to contribute to the state.

³¹ In *Senji-Kateikyoku-Shido*, importance of family as a basic unit supporting the state was emphasised, in which women were strongly encouraged to see themselves as mothers bringing up the next generation, the future of the state.

households, which were formed under the 1938 National Mobilisation Law and the 1940 Reinforced Neighbourhood Association Law. Their activities basically depended on women. To put it concretely, people helped each other in the neighbourhood associations, when they had fire-fighting exercises and drew their rations. The associations also played a key part in the surveillance of private daily life among neighbours and in controlling them. Simultaneously, women were encouraged to become members of female patriotic associations.

Elite women belonged to the Patriotic Women's Association,³² founded in 1901. The original purpose of this association was to visit and offer pain relief to wounded soldiers and the families of the war dead, but this purpose changed into what the Showa government expected women to do after the Manchurian Incident in 1931. In response to this incident, a new organisation, the Greater Japan National Women's Defence Association, was set up in 1932, mainly consisting of petit-bourgeois housewives and working-class women. It developed nationwide from the Osaka Women's Defence Association, founded by a housewife in March 1932, which shows how quickly women responded to the Manchurian Incident. Under the slogan 'National defence starts in the kitchen',³³ women proudly wore white aprons as their uniforms, with white sashes resist-dyed with the name of their association, so that their white aprons became a metaphor for patriotic mothers. By 1941, when the Pacific War broke out, the Greater Japan National Women's Defence Association had about ten million members, exceeding the number of members of the Patriotic Women's Association by four million. In 1942, these female patriotic associations and others were integrated into the Greater Japan Women's Association under the umbrella of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association formed in 1940. All women, excluding single women under the age of 20, were forced to join the Greater Japan Women's Association, saving money, collecting unwanted materials or having fire drills. The defence of the home-front was their important task.

Considering why women's patriotic networks spread throughout the country so quickly, initially without compulsion, Kano (1987) argues that this anti-revolutionary organisation took women out of the kitchen into the streets and gave them opportunities to liberate, identify or express themselves in the public sphere. Their slogan 'National defence starts in the kitchen' was originally intended to tie women to the kitchen, but they actually radiated

³² The Patriotic Women's Association was founded by Ioko Okumura (1845–1907) in 1901. When Japanese troops were sent to North China during the Boxer Rebellion (1900–01), Okumura went with them. There she realised that the wounded would need proper care, which motivated her to establish the association.

³³ My translation.

their energy outside their homes. Women wearing white aprons and sashes strutted in the high street, even if their activities were small, such as organising a fund-raising campaign, seeing soldiers off at the railway stations or having a meeting. Some of them behaved like military police, warning other women against their flamboyant dresses. ‘Women could get a taste of liberation and equality. They could go out on the pretext of their patriotic activities supporting soldiers. White aprons as their uniform also gave working-class women, especially poor factory women and sex workers who were looked down on or pitied, the illusion of equality as human beings’³⁴ (Kano 1987: 83). The patriotic activities, which were originally very conservative, ironically took on board the reformist demands of ordinary women for a degree of liberation. In other words, the wars enable women to advance into the public sphere, which brought excitement and new identities. As Kano (1987) suggests, this illustrates that both the conservatism, such as patriotic ideas, and the innovative reactions of women were components of fascism.

Feminists led women to nationalism in wartime, too. A key representative of these feminists is Fusae Ichikawa³⁵ (1893–1981), a suffragist who led the League for the Attainment of Women’s Political Rights, which was founded in 1924 and renamed the Women’s Suffrage League in 1925. She showed her patriotic attitudes in public, strongly supporting the government, despite the fact that she had been a pacifist until well into the 1930s. Making a complete volte-face from a pacifist to a patriotic stance, her aim in cooperating with the government was apparently to obtain female political rights. ‘Yet the state’s emphasis on women as the subjects of family-state ideology appeared to Ichikawa and other women as a step forward in their fight for sexual equality, because “for the first time” women were being given an officially acknowledged role outside the home’ (Miyake 1991: 273). An article by Ichikawa that appeared in the journal of the Women’s Suffrage League, just after the outbreak of the 1937 Second Sino-Japanese War, shows her purpose in detail:

It goes without saying that it has become more difficult to achieve women’s suffrage – the movement for legal reform. However, the reason for demanding women’s suffrage is so that we can co-operate with men and with the government in order to contribute to state and society from a women’s standpoint. If women devote their energies to overcoming this unprecedented national emergency, their achievements will be for the purpose of achieving the

³⁴ My translation.

³⁵ In Japan, women’s suffrage was enacted in December 1945. In 1953, Fusae Ichikawa was elected to the House of Councillors for the first time. She worked as a member of the House of Councillors for about twenty-five years, devoting herself to the enforcement of the 1957 Anti-Prostitution Law, a clean politics movement and a peace campaign.

aims of female suffrage, and may be one step towards the attainment of suffrage for women in legal terms. (Ichikawa 1937, in Mackie 2003: 107–8)

In order to meet the needs of the situation in wartime, Ichikawa dissolved the Women's Suffrage League on her own judgment in 1940 after 16 years of activities, and amalgamated it with the Women's Association for Research on the Emergency Situation, which she had chaired since 1939. Suzuki (1986, in Mackie 2003) argues that this breakup sounded the death knell for independent women's activities. In 1942, all women's organisations, including this association, were internally integrated into the Greater Japan Women's Association under the umbrella of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association, of which Ichikawa was a central committee member. In the same year, she also became a member of the board of directors of the Japan Patriotic Press Association.³⁶ These developments indicate that she was trying to ingratiate herself with the government, with the intention of gaining female suffrage. And, of course, she showed her approval of the government's population increase policy.

Through this piece of national policy women have reached the point at which, for the first time, their status as the mothers of the Japanese race is recognised, and their consciousness and cooperation are sought by the state... The fact that giving birth and bringing up children are treated [in this plan] not as a private matter of concern to the state and the nation, brings the greatest pride and joy to those who are able to give birth. (Ichikawa 1943, in Ueno 2004: 45)

Additionally, her attitude towards a female draft system was very aggressive, in contrast with that of the government. In response to the statement of the then Prime Minister, Hideki Tojo³⁷ (1884–1948), in 1943, that the female draft for war works would not be employed because it would destroy the Japanese family system, she spoke critically:

I do not think there is any need to hold back if women's labour is indispensable to the state in order to increase productive capacity... When it comes to female labour, I would like the government itself to have much clearer view of women's work... I am deeply vexed that, even having reached this current stage, the way that almost all men, at all levels of society from the government down, think about women has not advanced a single step from the feudal age. (Ichikawa 1943, in Ueno 2004: 41)

³⁶ The Japan Patriotic Press Association was founded in 1942 under the direction of the intelligence agency of the government that controlled the press. Highly educated people, including Fusae Ichikawa, were invited to become members of the association. The members had to campaign for the conduct of the war by writing articles for magazines and newspapers. After the Second World War, this association was disbanded and many members were barred from public office for a few years.

³⁷ Hideki Tojo was the 40th Prime Minister of Japan, from October 1941 to July 1944. After the Second World War, he was sentenced to death by hanging as a Class-A war criminal in 1948 by the International Military Tribunal for the Far East.

From Ichikawa’s point of view, the female draft system did not conflict with the family system at all. This was because maintaining women’s roles as both mothers and workers at the same time, along with the establishment of a *bosei* protection policy, were goals of the women’s movement. Thus, national mobilisation appeared to feminists, including Ichikawa, to be a favourable opportunity that would never come again – an innovation – which would certainly solve long-standing problems such as elevating the position of women, *bosei* protection and women’s participation in the labour market.

Towards the end of 1944, the expectations of female workers changed in response to the progress of the war, and the wartime government eventually mobilised young unmarried women for munition-factory work. On the other hand, there was an increase in the number of married women in the workforce during wartime, owing to the need to help out with the family budget, reflecting spiralling inflation (see Table 3). The most popular industry for women was still textiles, but the number of female workers in heavy industry increased, in the case of metalworking, more than six times: 8,000 women in 1931 to 50,000 in 1941, in the case of machinery, about sixteen times: 10,000 women in 1931 to 158,000 in 1941.

Changing Numbers of Workers by Industry and Sex (in thousands)

	1931		1936		1941	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Metals	8	81	21	232	50	375
Machinery	10	144	37	412	158	1215
Textiles	766	175	868	232	723	176
Miscellaneous	59	285	115	395	227	487
Total	886	767	1134	1450	1227	2496
(%)	(53.6)	(46.4)	(43.9)	(56.1)	(33.8)	(66.2)

Table 3 (reproduced from Miyake 1991: 282)

The situation surrounding female workers in the 1930s was investigated by the first female factory inspector in Japan, Setsu Tanino³⁸ (1903–unknown). According to her inspection,

³⁸ Setsu Tanino was the first female executive officer in the Ministry of Home Affairs of Japan. In the 1930s, she conducted an inspection of factories in order to record women’s employment. Her report, entitled *Fujin-Kojo-Kantokukan-no-Kiroku* (The Female Factory Inspector’s Record) and originally issued in the late

there was a high turnover of female workers in the machine industry, 47% within six months, because of very poor working conditions (in Miyake 1991). For example, women worked for eleven to twelve hours a day without having even a sufficient lunch break. Stand-up work for long hours and their periods caused them pain. On the basis of her inspection, in 1940 she appealed to the owners of factories to improve female working conditions, demanding a rise in women's wages, job training for women and the protection of women's childbearing function. Their working conditions, however, continuously declined, because of spiralling inflation, even though more female workers flowed to into heavy industry, especially after Japan entered the Pacific War in 1941. The government did nothing to improve women's working conditions, in contrast to the fact that equal pay for equal work was an incentive for female workers mobilised in America and the UK. In Japan, women's wages were only 30.6% of men's during the war. Female workers were inspired to make a greater contribution to the state under the slogan 'Labour in the Service of the State' (Miyake 1991: 281). This situation lasted until the end of the Second World War. Then, in 1945, about three million female workers were fired by the post-war government and forced to transfer from heavy industry to the textile industry, to make way for returning soldiers.

Miyake (1991), however, argues that in the long view, women's wartime working experiences in heavy industry, which was originally dominated by men, brought advantages in terms of reforming gender relations in the labour market. Their experiences proved their abilities in the workplace, which led to the post-war working women's movement and various legal reforms in order to achieve gender equality in the workplace.

1–6 Post-War Reforms

That feminists, from Fusae Ichikawa down, actively cooperated with national mobilisation during the war was due solely to their aim of securing female suffrage. Then, Japan lost the Second World War in 1945. With its defeat, social structures in the country dramatically changed under the post-war reforms controlled by the Occupation Force. Ironically, female suffrage, which feminists had fervently desired to gain since the 1910s, was given to

1930s and reprinted in 1985, appealed for protection of female workers. After the Second World War, Tanino devoted herself to establishment of the 1947 Labour Standards Law following which, in 1955, she became Director of the Women's and Minors' Bureau at the Ministry of Labour.

women as a part of post-war reforms. Additionally, various reforms such as Constitutional gender equality were carried out, with the aim of democratising Japanese society.

Looking at the circumstances behind Japan's defeat and the post-war reforms, in the final stage of the Second World War in 1945, two atomic bombs were dropped on two provincial cities in Japan by the enemy, America. The first was dropped on Hiroshima on 6 August and the second on Nagasaki on 9 August, and this is the only use of nuclear weapons in war to this day. As a result, 140,000 people, about 40% of the residents of Hiroshima,³⁹ and 74,000 people, about 30% of the population of Nagasaki,⁴⁰ were killed. On 14 August, Japan gave the Allies notice that it would agree to unconditional surrender under the Potsdam Declaration.⁴¹ On the following day, 15 August,⁴² the Japanese Emperor officially announced Japan's defeat to people on the radio. A representative feminist who responded to the situation quickly was Fusae Ichikawa, the suffragist whom I described in the previous section. She and other like-minded feminists were quick to adapt to the changing circumstances and on 25 August they organised the Women's Committee on Post-War Countermeasures, based on the women's networks that had existed during the pre-war period, to demand women's suffrage. Kaneko (1995) states that women's long struggle to secure suffrage during the pre-war period led them to band together just after the war. On the other hand, Ueno (2004) notes that there has been criticism of the quickness with which feminists, including Ichikawa, changed their tune, without sense of reflection or continuity in their attitudes.

On 30 August 1945, the Occupation Forces landed in Japan. The Allied Occupation began under General Douglas MacArthur, the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (SCAP). On 9 October, the Shidehara⁴³ Cabinet was formed. On 11 October, SCAP demanded that the Japanese government to carry out five basic reforms: the abolition of the secret police; the granting of full political rights to workers, including encouraging them to form labour unions; the granting of full political rights to women, including their enfranchisement; the liberalisation of education; and the democratisation of the economy such as the dissolution of the *zaibatsu* (financial combines). The aim of these reforms was to establish democracy in Japan and massive reforms were immediately carried out one

³⁹ Hiroshima City (n.d.). The number of victims is as of December 1945.

⁴⁰ Nuclear Weapon Data Collection Commission of Nagasaki 1950 (Nagasaki City 2009a, Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum n.d.b). The number of victims is as of December 1945.

⁴¹ The Potsdam Declaration is a statement consisting of thirteen articles, issued by America, the UK and China on 26 July 1945 that called for Japan to make an unconditional surrender. On 2 September 1945, Japan officially signed the instrument of surrender including implementation of the Potsdam Declaration.

⁴² In Japan, 15 August marks the anniversary of the end of the Pacific War.

⁴³ Kijuro Shidehara (1872–1951) was the prime minister of Japan from October 1945 to May 1946.

after another. In October, the 1925 Peace Preservation Law, the National Defence Security Laws and the Special Higher Police were abolished. In November, the Public Order and Police Law, which had prohibited women from joining political groups, was also repealed. On 17 December, the Election Law was revised, approving women's suffrage, and reducing the voting age from 25 to 20. Women and men aged over 25 became eligible for election. As a result, in the following year, on 10 April 1946, 39 of the 79 female candidates won seats in the first national general election after the war. The 39 successful women made up 8.4% of the House of Representatives.

Post-war reforms brought not only women's suffrage but also various new concepts, which brought about historic changes. The most notable reform was to establish the new Constitution of Japan, promulgated in November 1946 and enforced in May 1947 – extracting six significant articles concerning feminism from it: the redefinition of the position of Emperor as a symbol of the State and of the unity of the People rather than a head of state in Article 1; the declaration of the eternal renunciation of war in Article 9; respect for fundamental human rights in Article 11; a guarantee of equality under the law in Article 14; a guarantee of individual dignity and the essential equality of the sexes in marriage in Article 24; and the right to an equal education in Article 26.

Article 1. The Emperor shall be the symbol of the State and of the unity of the People, deriving his position from the will of the people with whom resides sovereign power.

Article 9. Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as a means of settling international disputes. In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized.

Article 11. The people shall not be prevented from enjoying any of the fundamental human rights. These fundamental human rights guaranteed to the people by this Constitution shall be conferred upon the people of this and future generations as eternal and inviolate rights.

Article 14. All of the people are equal under the law and there shall be no discrimination in political, economic or social relations because of race, creed, sex, social status or family origin. Peers and peerage shall not be recognized. No privilege shall accompany any award of honor, decoration or any distinction, nor shall any such award be valid beyond the lifetime of the individual who now holds or hereafter may receive it.

Article 24. Marriage shall be based only on the mutual consent of both sexes and it shall be maintained through mutual cooperation with the equal rights of husband and wife as a basis. With regard to choice of spouse, property rights,

inheritance, choice of domicile, divorce and other matters pertaining to marriage and the family, laws shall be enacted from the standpoint of individual dignity and the essential equality of the sexes.

Article 26. All people shall have the right to receive an equal education correspondent to their ability, as provided by law. All people shall be obligated to have all boys and girls under their protection receive ordinary education as provided for by law. Such compulsory education shall be free. (Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet n.d.)

In order to revise certain laws with the new Constitution, the Judiciary and Legislative Council was set up by the post-war government. The council had a heated discussion as to whether the *ie* system should be abolished under Article 24 of the new Constitution. However, one of the female members of the council, who was a consultant on personal affairs, gave an important speech supporting the reform: 'I have received as many as 70,000 letters, 90 percent of which were from women. These letters pointed out women's miserable lives. Some suffered because of economic problems, others because of family troubles. All these problems derived from the "ie" system' (in Kaneko 1995: 11). In truth, according to a survey reported in the *Mainichi Newspaper* in April 1947, 57.9% of respondents agreed with the reform of the *ie* system, and 37.4% disagreed (in Mackie 2003: 129). As a result, under the new Civil Code, issued in December 1947 and enforced in January 1948, the *ie* system was formally abolished. This meant that women legally became free from the patriarchal *ie* system and also gained equality between a wife and a husband in the family.

Moreover, with Article 26 of the new Constitution, the Fundamental Law of Education was established in 1947, which provides compulsory, free education for nine years, regardless of sex. Coeducation, which had been limited to elementary schools until then, spread to all levels, too. Under the new higher education system enforced in 1949, women's higher educational institutes were reformed into junior colleges, colleges or universities. In contradistinction to the earlier policy in education for women, 'Good wife, Wise mother' and the *ie* system, 'women were henceforth to be encouraged to develop their potentials as individuals and as contributing citizens to society', although the pre-war ideology has revived now and then during the post-war period (Hara 1995: 104).

The Labour Standard Law was also enforced in September 1947. The principle of equal pay for equal work was stated in Article 4. There was also provision for maternity leave in Article 65, nursing leave in Article 66 and menstruation leave in Article 67. Article 63 prevented women from doing dangerous work, and Article 62 protected women from night

work or too much overtime. By this law, the protection of *bosei* and the female reproductive function in the workplace was authorised.⁴⁴

As things turned out, defeat led Japanese society to democratisation, and these legal reforms after the war were enthusiastically welcomed by feminists. Raicho Hiratsuka, a leading founder of the pioneering feminist group *Seito* during the Taisho period, whom I previously described in this chapter, said in an essay in October 1948:

In 1911, when I was twenty six years old, I lamented that ‘In the beginning woman was the sun. An authentic person. Today, she is the moon; living through others; reflecting the brilliance of others.’ But now, thirty seven years later, I am overjoyed, and want to cry out: ‘Look! The day has come! Now is the time. A big, big, sun is shining out from the hearts of Japanese women!’ (Hiratsuka 1948, in Mackie 2003: 120)

Hiratsuka was looking back to the past when she started the feminist magazine *Seito* with other feminists in 1911, and in the quote above she refers to her own words ‘In the beginning woman was the sun...’, which opened the first issue. She was then visibly excited at the post-war reforms that destroyed long-established gender discrimination and approved women’s rights. In this way, the reforms feminists had campaigned for were unexpectedly enabled by Japan’s defeat.

1–7 The High-Growth Period of the Economy

Post-war reforms undoubtedly brought gender equality in various areas, such as constitutional equality and female suffrage, but the high-growth period of the Japanese economy, which occurred mainly from 1955 to the Oil Crisis in 1973, created new a definition of women’s role, emphasising their gender role, namely as a housewife and also a part-time worker. This still has an influence on current social norms for women.

After the Korean War⁴⁵ (1950–53), which placed special procurement demands on Japan, the Japanese economy entered a high-growth period. In 1960 the then Ikeda Cabinet drew

⁴⁴ Protection of *bosei* and the female reproductive function under the 1947 Labour Standard Law raised controversy about gender equality, when the Equal Employment for Opportunity Law for Men and Women was introduced in the 1980s. See the last section in this chapter.

⁴⁵ The Korean Peninsula came under the rule of Japan in 1910, but Japan renounced its sovereignty in 1945 under the Potsdam Declaration. In 1948, the Korean Peninsula was divided into two countries along the 38th parallel north, South Korea, supported by America, and North Korea, supported by the then Soviet Union. In 1950, the Korean War broke out. This war was also called a war of proxy of the Cold War. An armistice was declared in 1953.

up a new policy, the ‘income-double plan’, which promised that personal incomes would double within ten years. In order to achieve this target, an annual economic growth rate of at least 7.2% was needed, but the economy actually grew at an average rate of 10.8%, so that Japan successfully attained income-doubling before the end of the 1960s. In this growing economy, there was a growing demand for labour. The number of male waged employees increased continuously, from 43.7% in 1950 to 86.7% in 2010 (see Table 4). What should be noticed is that male waged employees finally became a majority in the labour force, 62.1% in 1960. Although the word ‘housewife’ has existed since the early twentieth century, ‘It was only in the post-war period that the housewife became the archetypal figure of womanhood, in the same way that the *salaryman* (a male salaried worker) became the archetypal figure of masculinity’ (Mackie 2003: 123). With urbanisation, family structures also changed, from a big family to a nuclear family.

Distribution of Labour Force by Work Status from 1950 to 2010 (%)

Year	Female			Male		
	Self-employed	Family worker	Waged employee	Self-employed	Family worker	Waged employee
1950	15.0	62.5	22.4	37.0	19.3	43.7
1955	14.7	57.7	27.6	34.0	18.8	47.2
1960	15.8	43.4	40.8	27.4	10.5	62.1
1965	14.5	36.8	48.6	23.4	7.8	68.8
1970	14.2	30.9	54.7	22.4	6.0	71.5
1975	14.3	25.7	59.8	20.1	3.9	75.8
1980	13.7	23.0	63.2	19.4	3.3	77.1
1985	12.5	20.0	67.2	17.9	2.8	78.9
1990	10.7	16.7	72.3	16.3	2.5	80.8
1995	9.0	12.5	78.3	14.3	1.8	83.7
2000	7.8	10.6	81.4	13.8	1.7	84.3
2005	6.3	8.6	84.7	13.0	1.5	85.0
2010	5.5	5.9	88.2	12.0	0.9	86.7

Table 4 Source: From 1950 to 1990 (reproduced from Kawashima 1995: 274). After 1995, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications of Japan (1995–2010) *Labour Statistics: Employed Person by Status in Employment*.

At first, labour supply came from rural areas, but this soon ran out. It became difficult to employ new graduates from junior high school, because the proportion of students who wanted to go on to high school increased year after year. As a result, in order to make up the labour shortage, women, especially housewives, became the new labour pool, due to both supply and demand factors. On the demand side, automation was employed in the production system, which resulted in a simplification of work. This enabled unskilled workers, including housewives, to enter the labour market easily. On the supply side, improvements in home electrical appliances, the commercialisation of some housework and the development of childcare systems within the community enabled women to enter the labour market. Additionally, with a continuously growing economy, people were hopeful of having better lives, which facilitated middle-aged housewives' participation in the labour market as unskilled part-timers. Therefore, there was an increase in the number of female part-timers, from 4.4 million in 1955 to 10.7 million in 1970, representing 12% of female waged employees (Kawashima 1995). This might indicate that there was an agreement of supply and demand, but the treatment of part-timers directly depends on economic trends. The status of part-timers on low wages is basically unstable. When business is good, many part-timers are employed, but when business is bad, they are fired. 'Employers hire part-timers, mostly middle-aged women, to reduce labour costs and to be able to adjust the size of employment without provoking labour disputes' (Kawashima 1995: 279). Thus, the system of employing part-timers was established in order to meet employers' own convenience. It is also important to note that the government has encouraged housewives to work part-time (Kawashima 1995, Mackie 2013). For example, the government still gives some tax benefits to full-time housewives and part-timers. One of these is a tax exemption for a salaried person whose spouse⁴⁶ has an annual income of less than 1,030,000 yen (approximately £5,700),⁴⁷ which was introduced in 1961. Additionally, a salaried person's spouse whose annual income is under 1,300,000 yen (approximately £7,200) is exempted from pension tax under the tax scheme revised in 1985.

On the other hand, there is a critical view of the attitudes of female part-timers towards their work. Ochiai (2004) argues that a part-timer cannot move beyond the stage of a housewife, because not only are their labour conditions poor, but also they tend to think that they can take a rest from their work as a matter of course whenever they have to do

⁴⁶ According to the *Nikkei Newspaper* (July 2014), approximately 14,000,000 people claim tax deduction for a spouse.

⁴⁷ In February 2015, one pound was equivalent to approximately 180 yen.

anything for their families. This means that they have strongly identified themselves as housewives rather than workers. ‘Women might seem to have advanced into society after the war. However, this is not true. They shut themselves up in their homes and became housewives’⁴⁸ (Ochiai 2004: 19). Nishikawa (1997) points out, too, that even though gender equality seemed to be achieved under the new Constitution and the revised Civil Code of Japan after the war, the post-war women’s movement accepted the gendered division of labour until the end of the rapid growth of the economy – women doing domestic work in the private sphere and men working in the public sphere.

Employers’ intentions, the government’s manpower policy and housewives’ wishes to help out with the family budget in order to have a better life, all resulted in a new pattern of women’s work. This is called ‘the M curve’,⁴⁹ which is a line graph in the shape of a letter ‘M’, representing the change in the proportion of women participating in the labour force by age (see Figure 3). According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications of Japan (1956–2012), the percentage of female workers aged 20–24 reached a peak of 66.4% in 1956, at the beginning of the rapid growth of the Japanese economy. The percentages for the age group 25–54 were in the 50% range. In those days, about 60% of female workers were family workers, also engaged in primary industries (see Tables 1 and 4). Hence, women tended to continue as family workers on their farms after marriage, so that the M curve still did not clearly appear. However, by 1971 in the midst of the rapid growth of the economy, when about 50% of female workers were waged employees, also engaged in the tertiary industries (see Tables 1 and 4), the M curve had clearly appeared (see Figure 3). The percentage aged 15–19 dropped, from 46.7% in 1956 to 32.3% in 1971, because of the expansion of higher education. The peak in 1971 was 64.9% in the age-group 20–24. Then, there came a great drop at ages 25–29, to 39.1%, which was the valley of the M curve. After that, the percentage increased again for age groups over 30. The second peak was 60.8% at ages 45–49. This shows that women tend to leave their jobs when they marry or have babies, and return to the labour market again when their children reach school age.

⁴⁸ My translation.

⁴⁹ The M curve indicates that women tend to stop working when they get married or have a child, and return to the labour market, mainly in part-time jobs, when their childcare responsibilities reduce. The M curve can also be seen in South Korea. In the case of other countries such as America, Sweden and Thailand, the line currently follows a trapezoidal shape, similar to male workers.

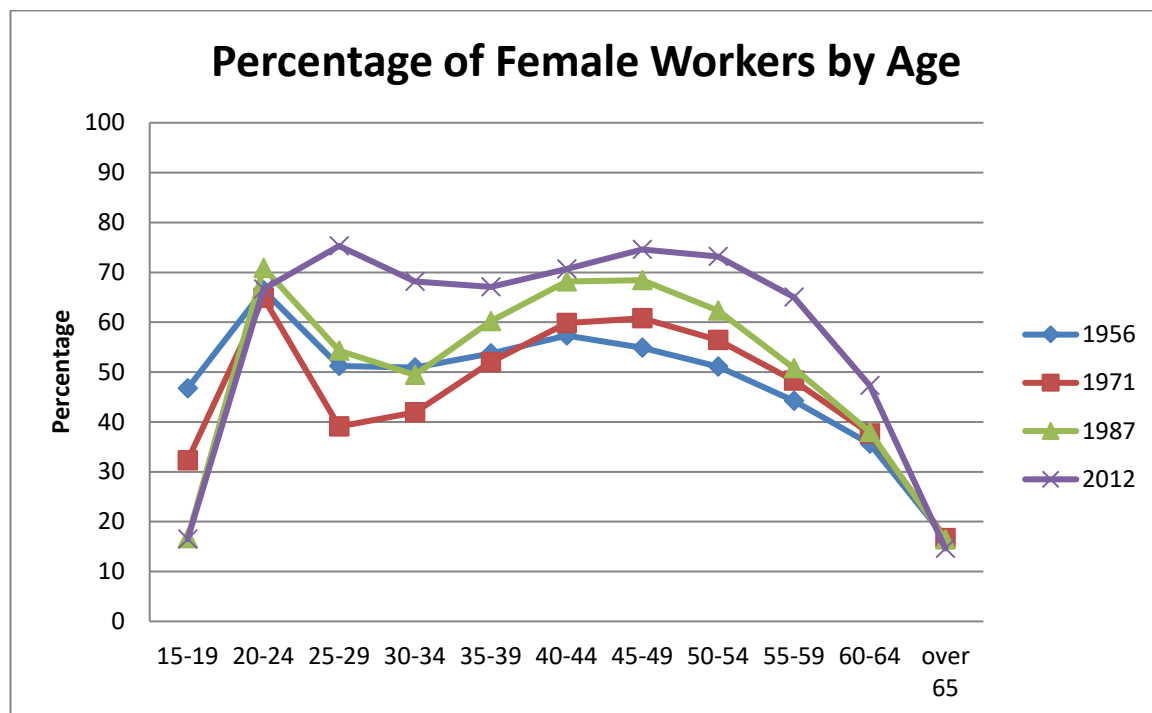


Figure 3 Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications of Japan (1956–2012) *Employment Status Survey: The Labour Force by Age*.

In 2012, the first peak was 75.3% at ages 25–29, and the valley of the M curve was 67.1% at ages 35–39. The second peak was 74.6% at ages 45–49. The M curve became more gently sloping than in 1971 because of higher academic achievement, later marriage, fewer children and a change in people’s consciousness. However, the M curve has still characterised the new role of women since the rapid growth of the economy, dividing it into four life stages – a regular employee of a company before marriage, a full-time housewife devoting herself to child-rearing, a part-timer who also does domestic work as a housewife, and a full-time housewife.

On the other hand, the second half of the rapid growth of the Japanese economy was the period when the new women’s liberation movement, namely the *Lib*, emerged during second-wave feminism. On 21 October 1970 many women gathered in a main street in Tokyo, with placards reading: ‘What Is Womanliness?’ ‘Let’s Examine Our Feminine Consciousness!’ ‘Mother, Are You Really Happy with Your Married Life?’ ‘What Do Women Mean to Men? What Do Men to Women?’ and ‘A Housewife and a Prostitute Are Raccoons in the Same Den’ (Tanaka 1995: 343). This event is generally defined as the beginning of the *Lib* of the early 1970s in Japan. On 14 November 1970, about 700 women attended a meeting entitled ‘Protesting Sexual Discrimination: A discussion for Liberation’ and had a lively discussion based on their own experiences of sexual discrimination. As the

women's liberation movement in America during second-wave feminism adopted the slogan 'The personal is political', so in Japan women also stood up and took action to challenge the dominant social identity of women as mothers and wives, which until then had been regarded as private issues in the private sphere. Hence, women started to recognise themselves as the victims of sexual discrimination, and to identify themselves as individual women through consciousness-raising by talking about their personal experiences. As Mackie (2000) states, the new women's movement became more feminist, being derived from their own experiences of female oppression, and directly challenging women's identification with the family and *bosei*.

Two factors led to the new movement. One was that the existing women's movement could not respond to the new situation against the background of rapid economic growth, where women's role was restricted within narrow limits as housewives in the private sphere, despite constitutional gender equality, including married couples. Even single women who had graduated from four-year universities were subjected to a system of wage differential between women and men. Additionally, typical employment opportunities for married women became part-time jobs. As Tanaka (1995) argues, women deeply internalised for themselves that they should be in the home, as a 'Good wife, Wise mother', and so it was also the case that women came to have self-restricting attitudes.

The existing women's movement could not tackle these dominant social norms, which were based on gender biases, as it was 'a unified front of the middle class women's movement and the socialist-oriented women's movement, in spite of internal debates and conflicts' (Inoue 1981: 178, in Tanaka 1995: 344). With constitutional gender equality included in post-war reforms, the middle-class women's movement lost sight of its significant goals, such as the achievement of gender equality, and 'retreated to the goal simply of promoting the full utilization of each woman's ability in the work place [*sic*]' (Inoue 1981: 179, in Tanaka 1995: 344). As a result, the socialist-oriented women's movement became the mainstream, but the movement still strongly supported traditional Marxism, whose idea was that a classless society would remove the female oppression inherent in capitalism. The main aim of the movement was to recruit women into the labour unions, ignoring individual gender issues such as the establishment of self-identity in the new social conditions. Thus, a new women's movement tackling personal issues was needed.

The other factor was disappointment and criticism of the New Left movement of the late 1960s⁵⁰ from within. Many radical young people, especially university students, joined the New Left movement. However, the structure inside the movement was clearly rooted in gender discrimination. Indeed, women's tasks were limited to preparing food, cleaning rooms and raising funds, and they were eliminated from significant positions. In other words, the movement itself had built its structure of authority and hierarchical order based on sexism. This strongly motivated women to establish their own movement that would liberate themselves.

According to Tanaka (1995), the *Lib* can be characterised by five elements. Firstly, the aim of the *Lib* was primarily to identify oneself as an individual woman. This resulted from criticism that the post-war socialist women's movement regarded organisations as being much more important than individuals. Secondly, what women did in order to establish their own identity was to realise themselves as victims of sexual discrimination and to remove their own 'inner feminine consciousness', which was embedded in their behaviour through social expectations and their own experiences of sexual discrimination (Tanaka 1995: 345). Thirdly, up until that time it had been thought that one of the factors of sexual discrimination was a class society, but the new movement focused on not only the rulers in a class society but also men ruling women. This realisation came about through women's experiences such as the New Left movement controlling women as assistants to men. Thus, the *Lib* clearly found that men oppressed women everywhere, even in the family as the private sphere. Fourthly, a specific issue for the *Lib* was 'sexual liberation', which implies women's liberation from men who existed by controlling or exploiting female sexuality. To put it differently, 'Sex had existed as a fundamental means of human subordination' (Group *Tatakau-Onna* 1971: 139, in Tanaka 1995: 346). A core member of the feminist organisation, Group *Tatakau-Onna* (Fighting Women) in the *Lib*, Mitsu Tanaka, wrote a manifesto entitled '*Benjokara-no-Kaiho*' (Liberation from the Toilet) in 1970:

According to the masculine consciousness which shapes our understanding of sexuality, men are unable to see a woman as an integrated whole who has both the emotional quality of gentleness and the sexuality which is the physical expression of this gentleness. As far as men are concerned, a woman is split into two images – either the expression of maternal love: a 'mother', or a vessel for the management of lust: a 'toilet'. (Tanaka 1970, in Mackie 2003: 144)

⁵⁰ The 1960s was the decade of radical activism in Japan; campaigns such as against the renewal of the US-Japan Security Treaty in 1960 and the Anti-Vietnam War movement emerged during this time.

This argument was symbolic of the movement, shocking society and providing severe criticism. Lastly, the *Lib* tackled the dominant cultural norms in Japanese society in which women were regarded as being less productive than men in terms of the economy, because of their reproductive function. Feminists challenged rapid economic growth and the uncritical pursuit of productivity and profit in technology and science. The *Lib* also realised that disabled people and old people had been left behind, due to discrimination against the less productive.

In those days, there were similar new women's movements in Europe, America and Australia. Mackie (2000: 186) states that women in these advanced capitalist countries had the same experience of realising 'the contradictions of an education which seemed to promise self-fulfilment, and a labour market based on inequalities of class and gender'.

The *Lib* reached a peak in 1972, when a revision of the Eugenic Protection Law was proposed in the National Diet in order to prohibit abortion for economic reasons. The *Lib* strongly protested the revision, so that the proposal was finally scrapped in the Diet in 1974. Tanaka (1995: 346) states that the *Lib* gained new significance in transforming 'the entire cultural outlook from the standpoint of the oppressed segments of society through the consciousness-raising of women'.

1–8 Legal Reforms since 1975

Feminism in Japan entered its next phase during the second half of the 1970s. In 1975, declared International Women's Year by the United Nations, a newer women's movement appeared, taking the place of the *Lib*. For example, the International Women's Year Action Group, established in 1975, on the initiative of female members of the Diet, including Fusae Ichikawa, focused on more specific discrimination against women in employment, education and the media, rather than the consciousness-raising on which the *Lib* had focused during the early 1970s. Kano ([1994] 2005) argues that the United Nations Decade for Women (1975–85) was a transitional phase that overshadowed the achievements of the *Lib* and which also led many feminists in Japan to focus on legal reforms.

In the middle of the United Nations Decade for Women, in 1979, the CEDAW was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, and came into effect in 1981. The Japanese government signed it in 1980 and ratified it in 1985. In order to carry out legal reforms in line with CEDAW, the Equal Employment Opportunity Law (EEOL) was

enforced in 1986. This law was a reflection of international pressure rather than the result of the women's liberation movement of the 1970s, stemming from international criticism of Japanese post-war economic structures, in which there was clearly discrimination against women (Kawashima 1995). Additionally, this new law could be characterised by a difference between exhortation and prohibition: exhortation in the sense that the law stated that firms shall endeavour to treat women equally to men in recruitment, employment, job arrangements and promotion, and prohibition insofar as the law also said that firms shall not discriminate against women in job training, employee welfare, retirement, age limits and dismissal. On this point, Lam (1993) claims that the EEOL gave women very few new rights, from a Western perspective. This is because the prohibition against discrimination applied only to areas in which there had already been changes before the law was established, and in the most important areas, such as recruitment, employment and promotion, the law could 'merely exhort'⁵¹(Lam 1993: 207). With regard to the background of this distinction, 'the law was a product of the compromise' (Kawashima 1995: 284) between business organisations and labour organisations, among government agencies and departments, and among women, so that the law did not include any penalties for violence.⁵² 'The law has created a loophole for employers to earmark jobs for women only' (Lam 1993: 219), so that the degree to which firms obeyed the law depended on their goodwill and administrative guidance.

There was also a heated controversy over the issue of equality versus protection from the point of view of *bosei* during the preparation of the draft of the law. Firms argued that protection should be abolished in exchange for equality in order to increase productivity. Some women agreed with the idea of abolishing protection, because of the perfect achievement of equality. However, in general, working women argued that some protection should be maintained as long as women had the responsibility to take care of children and do housework imposed upon them by socio-cultural norms. As a result of political compromise, the new law retained menstrual leave⁵³ with the modification that women could take it when they had period pain disturbing their work, extended maternity leave and changed the restrictions on women's working hours. Menstrual leave is unusual in industrial countries and tends to be regarded as a symbol of the backwardness of

⁵¹ Discrimination against women in areas such as recruitment, employment, job arrangement and promotion has been prohibited since the EEOL was amended in 1997.

⁵² Penalties have been specified in the EEOL since it was revised in 2006.

⁵³ The Labour Standard Law, enforced in 1947, guarantees that women can take menstrual leave; however, there has been a decrease in the proportion of women taking menstrual leave, from 26.2% in 1965 to 6.0% in 1988 and 1.6% in 2004 (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan 1965–2004).

Japanese women by other countries (Kawashima 1995), but it indicates the strong emphasis that Japanese socio-cultural norms place on *bosei*. Maternity leave was extended, from six weeks before and six weeks after childbirth to six weeks before and eight weeks after. On the other hand, although the old Labour Standard Law said that women should not work overtime more than two hours a day and prohibited late-night working, except for some professionals such as nurses, under the EEOL these restrictions were removed for women in managerial and some specialist positions. In short, the EEOL ostensibly maintained protection of *bosei*, but required women to be as flexible as men in overtime work, night shifts and night duty.

The reaction of firms towards the EEOL was remarkable. After the passage of the EEOL, they employed a dual-track system of labour policy, which indicates that they had prepared their escape in advance. The dual-track system consists of career track and non-career track. The career track is for women who want to work in managerial positions in the future and includes the acceptance of overtime and transfers. The second, non-career track is routine work without transfer, which limits promotion. There is of course a wage gap between them. The dual-track system gives two choices to all candidates, regardless of sex, which seems to achieve gender equality. However, men are actually given only one choice, career track, whereas women are given two choices, career track and non-career track, so that women tend to feel pressure to choose non-career track⁵⁴ (Kawashima 1995). This indicates that firms basically regard women as secondary workers. Additionally, women tend to opt for non-career track in order to avoid transferring or working overtime because of housekeeping and child-rearing. They also tend to accept low wages because their purpose in working is to supplement their family budget (Kawashima 1995). On the other hand, quite a few women who have chosen career track have difficulties in surviving in a workplace dominated by men (Kawashima 1995). Kawashima (1995) points out that they are expected to follow rules in the workplace that were created by men, so that many of them become frustrated, burn out or quit their jobs, resulting an attrition rate of about 50%.

In brief, even since the EEOL was enforced in 1986, the circumstances of women in the labour market have changed little. Kawashima (1995) also argues that as long as the male-dominated corporate culture and the social norms dictating that women's primary tasks should be housekeeping and childrearing do not change, the ambivalent attitudes of women

⁵⁴ In 2011, 11.6% of women workers were in the career track and 86.0% in the non-career track (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan 2011).

towards work, by which they put themselves in a secondary position, will persist and spread to the next generation.

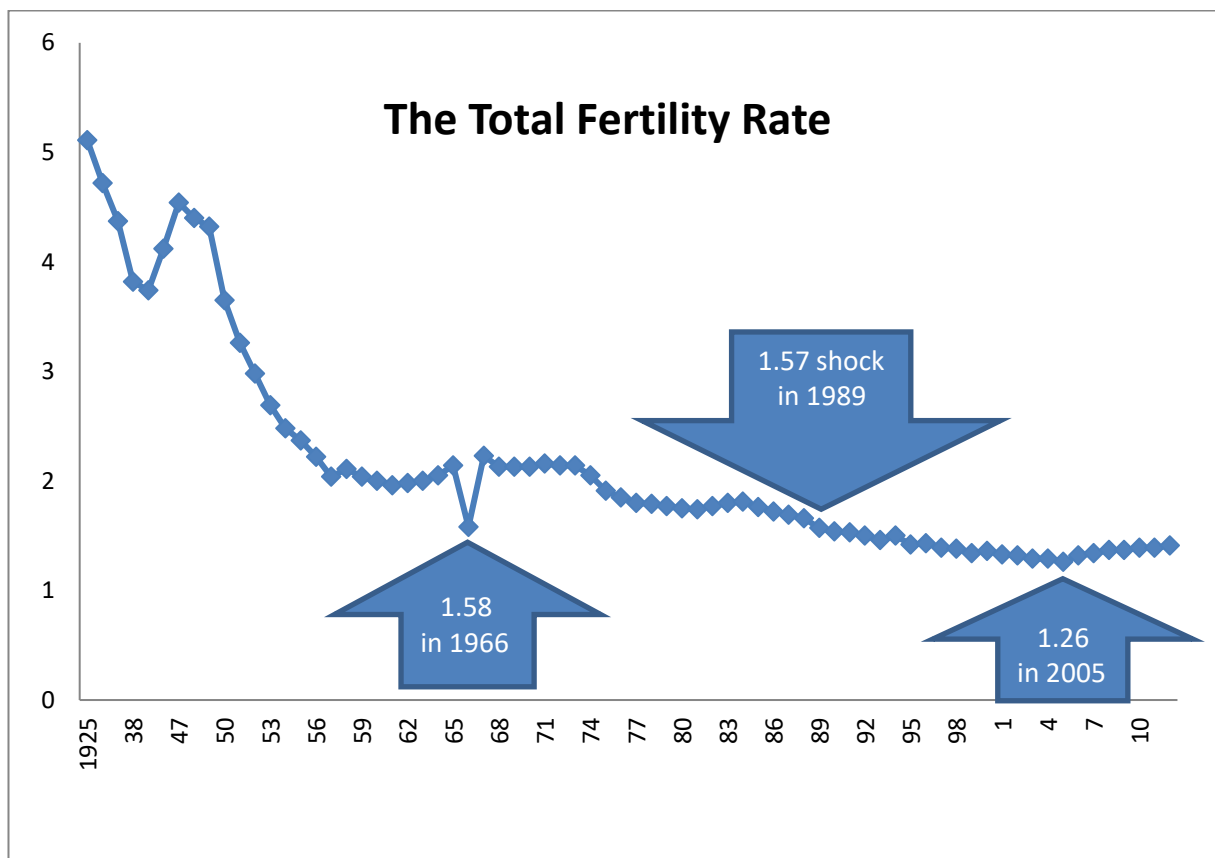


Figure 4 Source: National Institute of Population and Social Security Research of Japan (1995, 1999–2014) *Demographic Statistics*.

During the second half of the 1980s, after the EEOL was established, the declining birth rate became a matter of serious concern. According to the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research of Japan (1995, 1999–2014), the total fertility rate was 1.57 in 1989, which was the lowest since the Second World War (see Figure 4). Before that, the lowest rate had been 1.58 in 1966, the 43rd in the sexagesimal system of counting years, in which it is superstitiously said that women born in this year kill their husbands. The fact that the total fertility rate was less than 1.58 in 1966 gave Japanese society a shock. This was called the ‘1.57 shock’, which made Japanese society realise the necessity to solve the problem immediately. The rate declined to 1.26 in 2005, which was the lowest rate during the post-war period, although since then it has increased again, rising to 1.41 in 2012 (see Figure 4). Connected to the fewer children issue, there is a tendency to delay the age of first marriage: in 1950 the average age of a bride was 23.0 and a groom was 25.9,

increasing to 29.2 and 30.8 respectively in 2012⁵⁵ (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan 1950–2012).

At the same time, Japan has entered an era of ageing population. In 2013, the life expectancy for women was 86.61 years, which was the highest internationally, and for men it was 80.21 years, which was the fourth highest (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan 2013a). The estimated proportion of people aged over 65 was 25.1% in 2013, which was the highest internationally (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications of Japan 2014). This unprecedented situation will not improve. The data, estimated by the National Institute of Population and Society Security Research of Japan (2012), indicates that there will be an increase in the proportion of people aged over 65, to 39.9% by 2060. An ageing population due to a low birth rate has become increasingly essential to politics, and also more important to feminism.

In response to this situation, the Childcare Leave Law was enforced in 1992, and this was revised into the Childcare and Family Care Leave Law in 1995. The 2009 revised version guarantees that either the mother or the father can take childcare leave until their baby is twelve months old⁵⁶ without pay or with a pay cut. In the case of no pay, the Japanese government provides a benefit⁵⁷ instead of wages. This law also guarantees that workers can take leave in order to care for family members who need to receive nursing care.

In terms of legal reforms since 1975, women have certainly obtained various rights, not only through the EEOL, and the Childcare and Family Care Leave Law, but also the Basic Law for a Gender-Equal Society⁵⁸ (1999), the Anti-Child Abuse Law (2000), the Anti-Stalking Law (2000) and the Anti-Domestic Violence Law (2001). There are also 89 women's centres, managed mainly by local government, now called centres for the promotion of gender equality (National Council of Women's Centres 2014).

Internationally, under the sponsorship of the United Nations, the Fourth World Conference on Women was held in Beijing, China, in 1995. This conference, at which the Japanese

⁵⁵ The date in 2012 is rounded number.

⁵⁶ In the case where both the mother and the father take childcare leave, the period can be extended until their child is fourteen months old, as long as each parent's leave does not exceed twelve months. Additionally, the term of childcare leave can be extended until the child is eighteen months old, if space at a nursery school is not available.

⁵⁷ As of April 2014, the childcare leave benefit is 50–67% of a person's wage.

⁵⁸ The aim of the Basic Law for a Gender-Equal Society is to promote establishment of a gender-equal society, in which both women and men can realise their abilities as individuals, with due respect for human rights and individual dignity.

government and many Japanese NGOs participated, adopted the Beijing Declaration⁵⁹ and Platform for Action.⁶⁰

However, the various legal reforms have only had a small influence on gender inequality. For example, the government has encouraged parents, especially fathers, to take the childcare leave, but the proportion of people who took it was 83.6% of women and only 1.89% of men⁶¹ (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan 2012a). Internationally, Japan's position in gender equality tables is low in comparison with other developed countries. The Japanese government has set a target that the proportion of women holding a position of leadership should increase to at least 30% by 2020, but the proportion of female members of the National Diet was only 8% in 2014, which was much lower than the international average of 22%, and Japan ranked 127th out of 189 countries, which was the lowest position among developed countries (*Sankei Newspaper* March 2014, Maekawa 2014). The Global Gender Gap Report 2013, published by the World Economic Forum (2013), placed Japan 105th on the gender gap index⁶² among 136 countries. Gender gaps in Japan in the fields of economics and politics were especially large, which reduced the rank.

An additional factor is that the younger generation of post-feminists has expanded. Although the younger generation agrees with feminist ideas that women and men should be equal, they tend to think that feminism is old-fashioned, because feminist ideas have become a matter of course (Ehara 2000). Takemura (2003) argues that a younger generation of people who mistakenly think that they have no experience of gender discrimination has emerged since the 1986 EEOL, which makes actual gender discrimination invisible. Furthermore, a new trend of young women wanting to become full-time housewives has become apparent. In fact, there is a survey showing that the younger generation tends to be conservative. According to the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research of Japan (2013), there was a slight increase after a decrease in the proportion of married women who strongly agreed or agreed with the idea of a gender division in which men should work outside their homes and women should be full-time housewives: 54.5% in 1993, 54.3% in 1998, 42.9% in 2003 to 47.7% in 2008.

⁵⁹ The Beijing Declaration consists of 38 action points for achievement of gender equality, such as the fact that women's rights are human rights.

⁶⁰ The Platform for Action comprises strategies in various areas such as poverty, education and violence against women.

⁶¹ The plan by the Japanese government in 2012 states that the proportion of men taking childcare leave should increase to 13% by 2020 (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan 2012b).

⁶² The gender gap index reflects the degree to which gender equality has been achieved in the fields of economy, education, health and politics. In 2013, the country ranked first was Iceland and the UK was ranked 18th.

After that, it dropped slightly to 44.9% in 2013, but this was still higher than in 2003 (see Figure 5).

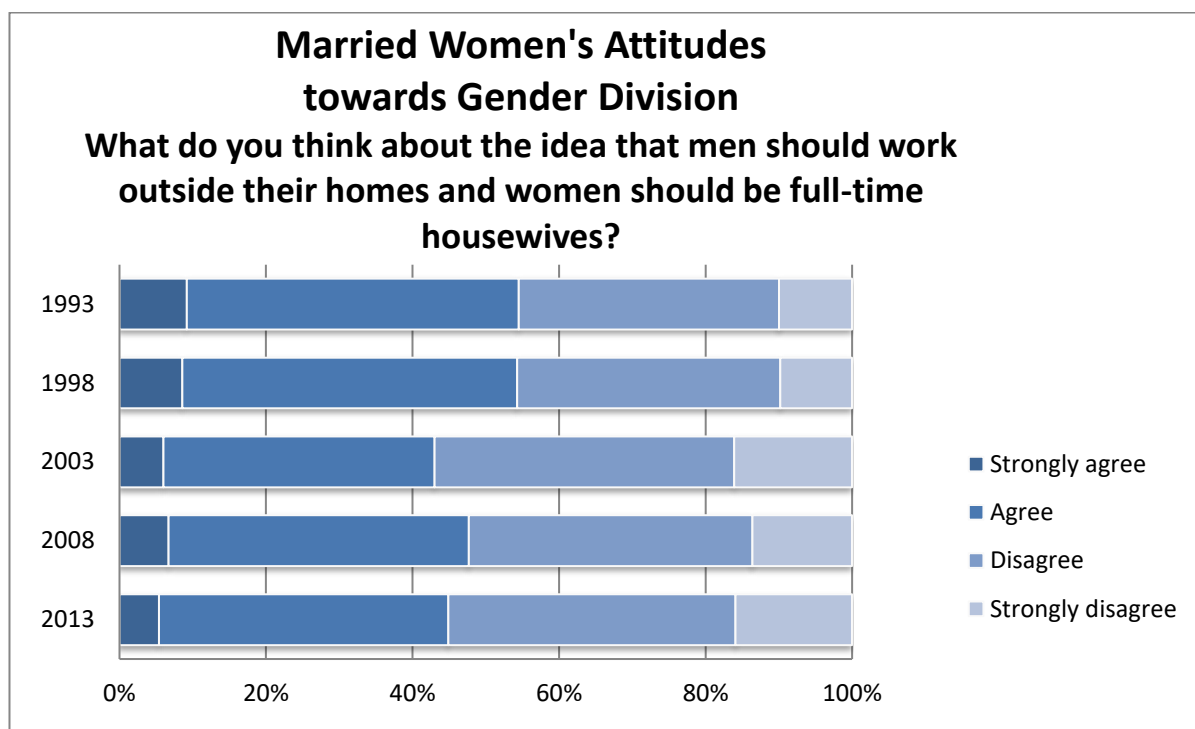


Figure 5 Source: National Institute of Population and Social Security Research of Japan (2013), *The 5th Survey of Tendencies in Family Life*.

Looking at the same data by age, excluding women over the age of 70 (see Figure 6), the percentage of those aged 50–69, who started to work before the 1986 EEOL, decreased with every survey. In contrast, the percentage of those aged under 49, of whom the majority started to work after the 1986 EEOL, began to increase in 2008. After that, it dropped slightly again. The results in 2013, in percentage order, highest first, were 53.5% for age 60–69, 41.6% for those under 29, 38.9% for age 30–39, 38.2% for age 40–49, and 36.0% for age 50–59. This indicates that married women aged under 29 were the second most conservative group, after women aged 60–69. Gill (2007: 247) argues that there is a new trend amongst the younger generation in the West: ‘Women are endowed with choice so that they can then use their “feminist freedom” to choose to re-embrace traditional femininity.’ Being conservative is now one of the choices for the younger generation in post-feminism. In the case of Japan, as Takemura (2003) states, the turning point towards post-feminism seems to be the 1986 EEOL. Women who were in their 40s and 50s in 2013 were the least conservative among all the age-groups. I suggest that this is because these

age-groups, which include me, were arguably influenced by the impact of a chain of events in order to achieve gender equality, such as the enforcement of the 1981 CEDAW and the 1986 EEOL, through their own experience when they started to work. By contrast, for the younger age-groups, who fully enjoy the EEOL, gender division might be attractive. In addition, employment uncertainty today might be one of the reasons, and should not go unheeded. Under the Temporary Workers' Law,⁶³ enforced in 1986, the proportion of irregular employees⁶⁴ among all employees, except executives, has increased over the last 25 years, among women from 37.1% in 1987 to 57.5% in 2012, and among men from 9.1% to 22.1% (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications of Japan 1987–2012). Being in the insecure position of temporary workers might encourage younger people to be more conservative.

Married Women

Who Strongly Agree or Agree with the Idea of Gender Division by Age (%)

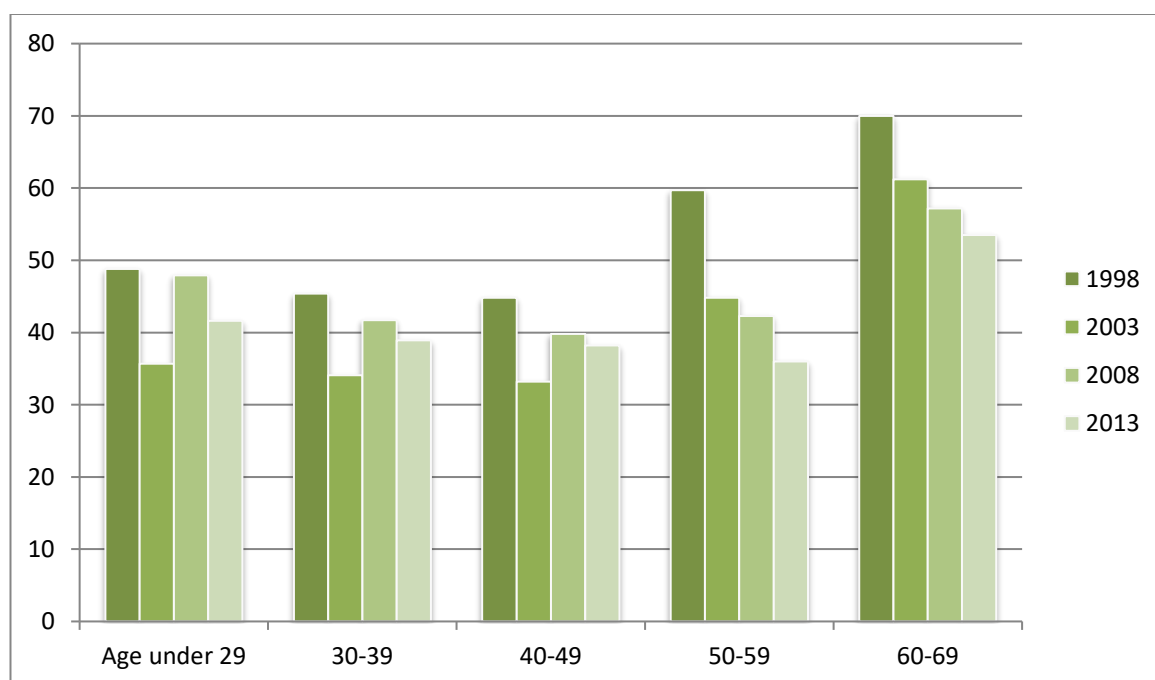


Figure 6 Source: National Institute of Population and Social Security Research of Japan (2008, 2013), *The 4th and 5th Survey of Tendencies in Family Life*.

⁶³ The Temporary Workers' Law approves setting up of private temporary workers agencies, so that companies came to employ even more temporary staffs in order to cut down on personnel expenses.

⁶⁴ Irregular employees include part-time workers, temporary workers, and short or long-term contract employees.

1–9 Conclusion

During the last 150 years of modernisation, the social norms of womanhood have been constructed or transformed with time. Today, against various backgrounds such as the delay in the age of first marriage, fewer children, and legal reforms to achieve gender equality, women have gained more choices about how to live than they had in the past. On the other hand, it is clear that women still have minority status. In such a situation, the fact that younger women tend to be more conservative than older people is ironic. Given current employment uncertainty, becoming a housewife whose husband makes enough money to support the family might be a shortcut to economic stability. It is more difficult even for men to be regularly employed, so that a housewife is likely to be a synonym for a successful woman. I am exploring how younger people following this post-feminist generation will perceive feminism. The crucial moment has come for feminism, but I expect that feminism has the potential to change society.

2 Representing Feminism in Japan: A Review of the Literature

2-1 Introduction

Whereas in the last chapter I took descriptive approach to the development of feminism in Japan, here I focus more on how contemporary scholarship has represented this development. As I stated in the Introduction, there are various academic works related to feminism in Japan, but I could not find comprehensive research on feminism itself. Therefore, the literature which I will review here is neither comprehensive research on feminism in Japan nor does it always aim to mainly examine the particular characteristics of Japanese feminisms. In other words, these works present fragmentary views of feminism in Japan in terms of dealing with specific issues, events or periods. Much existing feminist scholarship is also historical, discussing feminism against the backdrop of politics, symbolic events and the spirit of the time. In parallel with Chapter 1, I have organised my discussion chronologically, covering authors' views on feminism from the Meiji period to the present time. First, I focus on how academics have characterised the emergence, spread and development of feminist consciousness during the early period of modernisation. I then discuss feminism after Japan's defeat in the Second World War, as a number of authors have discussed how the post-war reforms⁶⁵ led to significant improvement in women's rights, at least in institutions such as suffrage, constitutional gender equality and the abolition of the *ie* system.⁶⁶ I also discuss literature on how feminism in Japan subsequently developed by focusing on some key events and issues.

2-2 The Origin of Feminism

In discussions on the origin of feminism in Japan, five issues feature prominently in the literature: first, the relations between feminism and modernisation; second, the influence of overseas ideas, such as Christianity, on feminism; third, the role of women in the

⁶⁵ See Chapter 1.

⁶⁶ See Chapter 1.

Movement for Civic Rights and Freedom mainly during the 1880s; fourth, the connection between feminism and socialism; and finally, female activists' attitudes towards the Imperial State of Japan. These issues are also related to each other, for example, modernisation leading to the encounter with foreign ideas.

The origin of feminism in Japan is often discussed in relation to modernisation. Mackie (2003) maintains that feminist consciousness in Japan was constructed as a part of modernity. Mackie (2003: 2) points out that modernity, which is described in terms of economic and social developments with the rise of capitalism, is defined in opposition to 'tradition'. Mackie (2003: 2) then states, 'In the Japanese case, the "tradition" against which modernity was defined was that of a feudal economy, hierarchical relationships, and the military rule of the Shoguns'. Following this, I will argue that while modernity differs from pre-modernity in terms of the abolition of feudalism and building of the modern state, modernity cannot be seen as wholly 'anti-tradition'. Hobsbawm (1983: 1) points out that the origins of most 'traditions' that seem to be old are actually very recent and sometimes intentionally constructed. Vlastos (1998: 1) also argues that various norms, values and systems in Japan which are seemingly 'age-old' traditions are inventions of modern Japan. As Ueno (2009a) demonstrates, for example, the *ie* system tends to be regarded as a relic of the feudal times, but this was political invention of the Meiji government in order to support the family-state ideology. Machotka (2014: 91) points out, too, that the social norms of womanhood, 'Good wife, Wise mother',⁶⁷ adopted by the Meiji government, came to be regarded as an indigenous 'tradition' of Japan, since it linked to Confucian familism. Thus, feminism in Japan as a part of modernity can be seen as challenging invented new traditions as well as older traditions.

Regarding this transitional period between feudal society and modern state, academics often focus on the influence of overseas ideas on the more recent discussion about women in Japan. For example, Molony (2010) argues that the earliest conversation about women and civilisation mixed popular notions of anti-authoritarianism carried over from the Edo period with the works of John Stuart Mill and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. According to Anderson (2010), feminist conversations were initiated by men in the early 1870s, just a few years after the Meiji period started in 1868. This was because men occupied more powerful positions, for example, as leading politicians, intellectuals and journalists, who could present their arguments in public. Due to their social status, they also had more opportunities than women to encounter foreign ideas. Anderson (2010) gives an example:

⁶⁷ See Chapter 1. Koyama ([1991] 2009) also sees 'Good wife, Wise mother' as a modern idea.

in 1867 on the eve of the start of the Meiji period, Yukichi Fukuzawa,⁶⁸ a male translator and later reformer, bought a geography textbook in America, where he was sent by the Tokugawa Shogunate. This textbook described the place of women in other countries from the viewpoint of the West: ‘Half-civilized nations... treat their women as slaves. China, Japan, Turkey, and Persia are the principal countries of this class’ (in Anderson 2010: 5). At that time, women in the West were also struggling to establish their rights, but this critical view of Japan seemed to encourage Fukuzawa to reflect on the relation between women and civilisation. Fukuzawa then illustrated how ordinary women were treated in Japan around the end of the nineteenth century and criticised the subordination that the majority of women experienced within their families:

Women’s lives are nothing but a series of services, first to parents when young, then to husbands and parents-in-law when married, and when children come, they are busy caring for them and supervising the food and kitchen work.
(Fukuzawa, in Dales 2009: 14)

Fujiwara (1988, in Dales 2009) maintains that Fukuzawa’s critique is indicative of two facts. First, feminist ideas already existed quite early in the modernisation period long before the *Lib*. Second, there were arguments for gender equality even in the midst of the Meiji revival of patriarchal ideas. In addition, Dales (2009) notes that such writing about female subordination was inspired not only by the work of John Stuart Mill but also key female activists in Japan, which shows that feminist conversations started to develop independently within Japan in parallel with the engagement with overseas thought.

Many scholars focus on Toshiko Kishida (1863–1901) as a symbolic figure among pioneer female activists, who gave public speeches between 1882 and 1884 in the Movement for Civic Rights and Freedom, the principles of which were influenced by the works of foreign thinkers such as Mill and Rousseau (Sievers 1981 and 1983, Nishikawa 1986, Mackie 1997 and 2003, Fujieda 2011). Kishida’s arguments against female subordination and for gender equality clearly attacked Japan’s male-dominated society, which indicates that feminist consciousness started to grow among women just after the start of modernisation. In fact, following Kishida, other women joined the movement and began to discuss women’s issues. Sievers (1983) points out a limitation – that female activists in the Movement for Civic Rights and Freedom missed an opportunity to develop relations with working women – but Mackie (2003) argues that the movement was the birthplace of feminism in Japan.

⁶⁸ Yukichi Fukuzawa (1834–1901) was an educator, proponent of Western ideas and liberal social critic. He is also known as a founder of Keio University in Tokyo.

Among the foreign influences on the development of feminist consciousness, Fujieda (2011) views the impact of Christianity, especially Protestantism, as important for feminism during the early modernisation period. Mackie (1997, 2003) also argues that the influence of Christianity can be seen particularly in the sphere of education for girls, through the many secondary schools for girls founded by foreign missionaries or Japanese Christians during the early years of the Meiji period. Fujieda (2011) and Mackie (1997, 2003) note that these Christian mission schools advocated improving the place of women and educated girls to become modern women who would enjoy freedom of thought, replacing the Confucian view of women. Monogamous marriage, in which a couple consists of supposedly equal partners, was also supported, particularly by Protestantism. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, when the Emperor system and the *ie* system were established, this impact of Christianity gradually weakened because of a backlash against Westernisation.

However, Mackie (1997, 2003), Fujieda (2011) and Molony (2010) argue that in the Meiji period, transnational Christianity had an influence on many intellectuals directly or indirectly and led to the development of new ideas such as humanitarianism, socialism and feminism. This contribution can clearly be seen in women's activism. One example that Mackie (1997) cites is *Jogaku-Zasshi*, the women's education journal, edited by the principal of the Christian girls' school *Meiji-Jogakko*, where several feminist leaders were educated or had connections with. This journal provided a space to discuss women's issues freely, such as women's political rights, resulting in improvement of feminist consciousness. Fujieda (2011) focuses on five leading female believers and describes how they had direct connections with Christianity or Christian activities. Two of them, Kishida and Suga Kanno (1881–1911) were Christians. Kishida's direct follower, Hideko Fukuda (1865–1927), who realised the importance of women's financial independence because of her own impoverished status, sympathised with the Christian faith. Toyoko Shimizu (1868–1933) worked as a writer for *Jogaku-Zasshi* and argued for women's political rights. The fifth woman was Kajiko Yajima (1833–1925), the first president of a Christian mission school for girls *Joshigakuin* in Tokyo, the first head of the Tokyo Women's Christian Temperance Union and also of the Japan Christian Women's Organisation.⁶⁹ This organisation is often cited by scholars as a classic example of the direct relations

⁶⁹ In 1886, the Tokyo Women's Christian Temperance Union was founded by women who had attended an American temperance activist's lecture in Japan, and was modelled on the Woman's Christian Temperance Union in America. The union evolved into a nationwide group in 1893, the Japan Christian Women's Organisation. This organisation not only promoted temperance, but also campaigned for monogamy, and abolition of the licensed prostitution system, influenced by Christianity.

between Christianity and feminism. Fujieda (2011) also views Yajima as a pioneer organiser of women's activism and participation in social works, and argues that this was the starting point of a movement for women's liberation and rights. The Christian Temperance Union then founded the Japan Women's Suffrage Association in 1921 in order to abolish public prostitution through women's advance into the political sphere, which further became a matrix of the League for the Attainment of Women's Political Rights, founded in 1924 (renamed the Women's Suffrage League in 1925; see Chapter 1). Mackie (2003) argues that as in America, where Christian reform movements were an essential precursor of feminist activism, in Japan Christian women's activism was one of the foundation stones of feminism. Molony (2010) also states that women's activism in global Christian organisations in Japan played a major part in forming feminist theories of citizenship in Japan, and views such Christian women's activism as representative of transnational feminism in Japan at the turn of the century. Molony (2010: 93) then argues that such overseas influences on feminism indicates that '[t]ransnationalism took many forms and embraced feminisms with varying primary interests'.

On the other hand, Mackie (1997) identifies the drawbacks of Christian influence on feminism in Japan, because in the Christian view, women were restricted to the domestic sphere. Mackie (1997) gives an example that *Jogaku-Zasshi* argued for women's education and rights, but that this promotion of women's education was for the sake of their future children in the context of monogamous marriage encouraged by Christianity. Thus, while the Japan Christian Women's Organisation provided opportunities for women to join social reform activities, in which women were given a positive position in society, Mackie (1997) argues that this activism was an extension of the 'Good wife, Wise mother' role. Sievers (1983: 194) also points out that the Christian Women's Organisation 'had an unfortunate tendency to treat working women as social problems or potential converts, mirroring differences imposed by class and Christianity'. In addition, Suzuki (1994) notes that this organisation initiated the purity movement in order to contribute to the construction of the pure state as well as to the campaign for abolition of the licensed prostitution. According to Bristow (1977), historians generally regard social purity movements in the UK as evangelical, repressive and anti-sex movements. Rover (1970, in Jeffreys 1984) also notes that such movements have been criticised for not supporting sexual freedom or women's sexual pleasure. This indicates that the strict sexual mores advocated by the purity movements suppress sexual freedom while protecting women from sexual exploitation.

In contrast to the scholars who emphasise the influence of imported ideas on the early development of feminism, Sievers (1999) argues that while many early feminists were relatively well-educated, so they were familiar with imported feminist ideas, they identified their feminism as a response to Japan's rapid modernisation rather than simply as borrowed ideas. Sievers (1999) also emphasises that the majority of early feminists thought that they created their own feminism, owing little or nothing to the ideas developing overseas. This is because they had already perceived that women's issues were universal: '[Toshiko] Kishida was convinced that social progress relative to women's issues in the nineteenth century was universally uneven, that no society could be called truly civilized since none had allowed women the place any rational examination showed they deserved' (Sievers 1981: 612). Sievers (1999) then argues that the focus on the influence of imported ideas on feminism in Japan, including the *Lib*, derives from an ethnocentric Western view that Western knowledge was indispensable to modernisation in Asia. This debate about birth of feminism in Japan, as imported versus indigenous, continues, as I will discuss further in Chapter 6.

Mackie (1997, 2003) and Sievers (1983) also argue that early feminism had close connections with socialism, as exemplified by leading early female activists who later became socialists, such as Fukuda Hideko and Suga Kanno. Mackie (1997, 2003) points out that both feminism and socialism were derived from the Movement for Civic Rights and Freedom, and states that socialist ideas at the time can be seen in the left wing of this movement, in Christian social services and in studies of labour activism⁷⁰ in America and socialism in the UK.

One symbolic stronghold of socialist activism, on which Mackie (1997, 2003) and Sievers (1983) focus, was *Heiminsha*⁷¹ (The Commoners' Society), founded in 1903. This organisation adopted the new principle of *Heiminshugi* (commonerism) as the basis for socialism, advocated by Soho Tokutomi⁷² (1863–1957), who was part of the Movement for Civic Rights and Freedom towards the end of the nineteenth century. Mackie (1997: 46) states that the beginnings of the connections between feminism and socialism can clearly be seen in *Heiminsha*, where socialists attempted to address the 'woman question', women and men met together, and they discussed various feminist and socialist ideas. Mackie

⁷⁰ At the time, the labour movement was also important in the development of socialism (Mackie 1997).

⁷¹ *Heiminsha* was a socialist association, founded by Shusui Kotoku (1871–1911), a journalist, and Toshihiko Sakai (1870–1933), a politician, which published the newspaper *Heimin-Shimbun*, whose essential theme was pacifism. Like Suga Kanno, Kotoku was executed in the Great Treason Incident.

⁷² Soho Tokutomi was a journalist and published a journal *Kokumin-no-Tomo* (The Nations' Friend).

(1997) then refers to a female member of *Heiminsha*, Fumiko Nishikawa (1882–1960) and cites her speech on her view of socialism at a meeting of *Heiminsha*:

When you mention socialism, there are many people who understand it as something violent, but socialism is in fact a set of ideas deep in mercy. Thus, I believe that women, who are naturally gentle and full of sympathy[,] must agree with socialism, and women's (voices) will be heard on certain points. I think that the power of women is stronger than has been supposed, and women should give up being shy and reticent, and devote all their energies to socialism. (Nishikawa 1904, in Mackie 1997: 43)

According to Mackie (1997), this speech indicates two points – the humanistic direction of early socialism in Japan and gendered forms of participation in political activities. Like Nishikawa, some women who struggled with gender discrimination found a new path in socialism through *Heiminsha*; however, Mackie (1997) states that women's encounter with socialism is often misunderstood because many women in socialist groups had romantic or marital relationships with male socialists, so that women's independent commitment to socialism is often questioned. Mackie (1997) argues that women's motivation to be involved in socialist activities cannot be explained only by the influence of their partners, and women found by themselves what they had been looking for in new ideas of socialism. Indeed, some women spontaneously approached the socialist movement. Mackie (1997) notes how Kanno was independently involved in the socialist movement after she read socialists' writings and heard their speeches, and that Nishikawa's motivation was her view that the inheritance of private property gave rise to inequality. Other women were interested in poverty. In Mackie's view (1997), rather than being motivated by romance with male socialists, compassion for the various difficulties that ordinary people faced in real life brought women to socialist activism.

Nonetheless, Mackie (1997) points out that *Heiminsha* remained male dominated. According to Mackie (1997: 49), the problem was that *Heiminsha* metaphorically identified itself as 'an extended family', where female activists were regarded as 'wives', namely supporters of male members, which reminds us that women were politically defined as helpmates to the militarist state, namely 'Good wife, Wise mother'. This indicates that there was gender division even in the socialist movement. In addition, Sievers (1983) points out that although *Heiminsha* was a site of intersection between feminism and socialism, few male members primarily focused on women's issues, and there were few women in the headquarters of *Heiminsha* who were not wives or relatives of male members. This indicates that *Heiminsha* as well as the Movement for Civic Rights and Freedom were dominated by men.

As socialist women focused on more specific issues for women, they realised the need for their own independent activism and thus socialist women's activism gradually developed beyond *Heiminsha*. Another site for socialist women's activism, which Mackie (1997, 2003) and Sievers (1983) discuss, was the socialist women's newspaper *Sekai-Fujin* (Women of the World), published by Hideko Fukuda between 1907 and 1909. This was '[t]he most prominent of the early socialist women's publications' (Mackie 1997: 48). According to Mackie's analysis (1997), one central issue for socialist women was the dominant expectation of women as helpmate to the state. In a word, it was a challenge to the official gender policy, 'Good wife, Wise mother'. Mackie (1997) and Sievers (1983) both cite an editorial that summarised the principles of *Sekai-Fujin*.

... We have seen the activities of the Patriotic Women's Association⁷³ from the time of the recent Russo-Japanese War. All of the tens of thousands of members of this organization, from the president down, are women without political rights under Japanese law. Yet everyone, from members of political parties to the general public praises the success of this organization.

Recently, we often see press reports of the interesting fact that women have been described as 'servants of the state' (*hanninkan no ninmei*), but I feel that people should look critically at [such statements]. After all, the law of Japan which designates women as 'incompetents' (*munoryokusha*) is the same law which appoints women to the role of serving the state.

In the midst of the 'success of the Patriotic Women's Association' and 'the appointment of women as servants of the state' – of all this glory and recognition for women – it should be said that women are not free. The 'success' of women who are not free is the success of slaves... (Editorial, *Sekai-Fujin* 1907, in Mackie 1997: 61).

Mackie (1997) and Sievers (1983) focus on that fact that the editorial criticised the gendered division for '[t]he "success" of women who are not free is the success of slaves...' This was exemplified by a promilitary group, the Patriotic Women's Association, which was one of the most powerful "women's organizations" governed by men, an organization whose functions were shaped by male definitions of women's political roles...' (Sievers 1983: 115). Sievers (1983) points out that only socialist women could have criticised this association, which indicates that they played an important role in challenging the state. From Mackie's view (1997), this criticism of the patriotic women's activities then led to the campaign against Article 5 of the Public Order and Police Law,⁷⁴ which prohibited women from participating in or organising political activities. This campaign was carried out between 1904 and 1909 by women who were interested in

⁷³ See Chapter 1.

⁷⁴ See Chapter 1.

socialism, and it was the first group action organised by women in Japan in order to gain political rights on the same footing as men. Mackie (1997, 2003) states that *Sekai-Fujin* logically supported this campaign by trying to construct the concept of women as citizens, and socialist women established practical ways of campaigning, such as distributing flyers and collecting signatures and presenting a petition to the government. Mackie (2003) also points out that their political activities were quite moderate in comparison with the militant activities of the suffrage movement in Britain. Another contribution of *Sekai-Fujin* to early feminism, which Sievers (1983) and Mackie (1997) discuss, is that *Sekai-Fujin* intended to make people realise the issues of women's political rights as global issues by reporting overseas news about the suffrage and women's labour movements in Australia, America and the UK. Making connections with foreign feminist movements in this way indicates that transnational feminism was already beginning to grow during the initial stage of feminism in Japan. One more characteristic of *Sekai-Fujin*, which Mackie (1988) highlights, was the link between feminism and pacifism, as it also reported overseas pacifist activists.

However, Mackie (1997) notes that with the government's gradual crackdown on socialism in Japan, *Sekai-Fujin* was forced to close in 1909. The Great Treason Incident occurred in 1910, which led to twelve socialists and anarchists being executed on the charge of attempted assassination of the Meiji Emperor. The following decade, the 1910s was called 'the winter years' for socialism in Japan. Nonetheless, Mackie (1997) views the 1910s as a starting point for women's participation in organised labour movements. As the number of female workers increased, especially in the cotton textile industry (see Chapter 1), socialist women began to focus on working women. Here, a woman who is widely regarded by academics as a representative activist descended from socialist women in Japan is Kikue Yamakawa⁷⁵ (Nolte 1986, Mackie 1997, 2003, Liddle and Nakajima 2000, Molony 2010). Yamakawa clarified her own position as a socialist in the feminist debate about *bosei* during the winter years (see Chapter 1) and founded *Sekirankai* (the Red Wave Society) in 1921 with other women, the first socialist women's organisation in Japan, which was reorganised as *Yokakai* (the Eight Day Society) in 1923. While Ueno (2004) questions whether socialist women, such as Yamakawa, who were critical of mainstream feminists, can be categorised as feminists, Yamakawa is described by other scholars as 'the first socialist feminist in Japan' (Imai 2002: 189) or 'the pre-eminent socialist feminist of the pre-war era' (Molony 2010: 100). It is possible to say, however, that Yamakawa had a role

⁷⁵ See Chapter 1.

in the recognisably socialist feminist current in Japan developed from the coming together of feminism and socialism following the Movement for Civic Rights and Freedom.

Looking over feminism in the early days, Fujieda (2011) argues that the women's movement in the days prior to the Second World War was essentially characterised by rebellion or opposition to conventions constructed in the process of building modern society. Fujieda (2011) argues that six notable female activists of the day symbolised the rebellion in various ways – Toshiko Kishida, Hideko Fukuda, Toyoko Shimizu, Suga Kanno, Kajiko Yajima and Fusae Ichikawa.⁷⁶ (Fujieda (2011) also points out that all these activists except for Ichikawa were influenced directly by Christianity.)

The rebellious elements in these activists, on which Fujieda (2011) focuses, seem persuasive in terms of opening up a path towards establishment of gender equality. For example, Kishida, who viewed the family as the site of female oppression, made speeches in 1883 challenging marriage based on hierarchical relationships, which resulted in her imprisonment because criticism of the family was seen as direct criticism of the state, which intended to establish the family-state ideology upholding the Emperor. Fukuda, who was Kishida's direct follower and later became a socialist, was one of the activists involved in the Osaka Incident⁷⁷ in 1885. Her arrest, trial and imprisonment made her famous as Japan's 'Joan of Arc'. Shimizu, who was a journalist for the *Jogaku-Zasshi*, wrote articles in which she attacked the repressive government and the dominant ideas that women should not participate in political activities. Kanno is known as the first female political martyr in the Great Treason Incident of 1910. Yajima led the Japan Christian Women's Organisation, which founded the Japan Women's Suffrage Association in 1921, playing an important part in the suffrage movement. Another key figure in this campaign, which was a new phase in the fight for women's suffrage as a women's right (Anderson 2010), was Ichikawa.

Fujieda (2011) explains the historical backdrop of the time in terms of defining principles of the pre-modern period such as Confucian patriarchy along with ideas of biological inferiority of women. Halliday (1975) also points out that the Movement for Civic Rights and Freedom emerged during early modernisation, but this movement focused on *samurai* rights, which was a long way from a movement for popular democracy. Sievers (1983)

⁷⁶ See Chapter 1.

⁷⁷ The Osaka Incident in 1885 involved the left wing of the Liberal Party, the first political party in Japan to derive from the Movement for Civic Rights and Freedom and founded in 1881. The left wing had drafted a proposal for reforming the domestic administrative procedure of Korea. This plan was leaked out before it could be formally announced, resulting in the arrest of 139 activists.

states that the *samurai* leaders of the early Movement for Civic Rights and Freedom took no more interest in women's political participation than the founders of the liberal tradition in Europe during the eighteenth century. Patriarchy was also authorised as the *ie* system by the 1898 Meiji Civil Law (see Chapter 1), so it is easy to imagine that female activists had a hard time being accepted by society. In that, they challenged fundamental aspects of Japanese society, and Fujieda's argument (2011) – that women's movements before the Second World War can be substantially characterised as rebellion or opposition to conventions – seems to capture the specific characteristics of the feminism of those days.

However, I am left with the question of whether attitudes of female activists towards the Imperial state were *always* rebellious. Molony (2000) points out that their views of the state actually changed with time:

By the interwar era, feminists and others came to view the state as a fixed entity. Although feminists in the late 1890s had believed that both women and men could take part in state formation as long as they had the personhood that accompanied education, later feminists came to view the state as an established institution capable both of protecting rights against societal or civil oppression and of denying rights to groups or individuals who then would either resist the state or struggle for inclusion in it. The evolution of rights discourse to focus on the struggle for women's inclusion led, by the 1920, to the demand for women's suffrage. (Molony 2000: 645)

As academics points out, this suffrage movement, in which the Japan Christian Women's Organisation and Ichikawa were involved, then came to curry favour with authority (see also Chapter 1). Kaneko (1995) demonstrates that the suffrage movement changed its focus from women's suffrage to other issues such as local consumer problems in order to survive during the pre-war period. Suzuki (1994, 2002) also points out that suffragists, including Christian women influenced by Christian notions of egalitarianism, identified themselves as Imperial subjects under the nation-state upholding the Emperor, gradually turning to fascism through their support of the war policies. Thus, they demanded their political rights as Imperial subjects. Additionally, Sievers (1983) notes that many members of the Japan Christian Women's Organisation also joined the Patriotic Women's Association. Sievers (1983) states that the choices for women's movements in those days were limited for women who wanted to gain political rights, so such contradictions emerged. These diverse developments indicate tensions within women's activism, which both challenged and supported the state. On these grounds, Fujieda's argument (2011) that women's movements before the Second World War can be characterised as rebellion does not always grasp the complexity of feminism in Japan.

The existing literature, on the one hand, indicates that there was a gulf between socialists and suffragists during the pre-war period (Nolte 1986, Mackie 1997, Molony 2010, Suzuki 2002). Molony (2010: 101) notes that the socialist feminist Yamakawa criticised the New Women's Association,⁷⁸ founded by Ichikawa and Raicho Hiratsuka⁷⁹ in 1919, as 'bourgeois', and points out that Yamakawa never accepted 'bourgeois' feminism in terms of its cooperative relationships with the state. Nolte (1986) also gives an example that Hiratsuka, of whom Yamakawa was critical, stated that there were two women's movements, the proletarian and the bourgeois. Suzuki (2002) describes the two streams as the proletarian versus the women's rights movements. According to Suzuki (2002), Yamakawa intended to tackle gender, class and ethnic discrimination at the same time. By contrast, the women's rights movement focused on suffrage and did not address class and ethnic minority issues. Additionally, the proletarian socialism was derived from the Movement for Civic Rights and Freedom during the Meiji period, while suffragist leader Ichikawa (1974, in Fujieda 2011: 335) identifies herself as 'one of the liberals baptized by Taisho democracy'.⁸⁰ Anderson (2010), from a different angle, suggests that the socialists did not state whether they were agitating for their own rights or those of the nation, because they thought that both were intertwined, but the suffragists felt forced to choose between the two.

On the other hand, Molony (2010) points out that these two streams did not break off all relations with each other. As Mackie (1997) notes, there was cooperation between women of the left and the liberal feminists on the demand for women's political rights. In a word, 'Yamakawa treated bourgeois feminism with contempt in theory and cooperation in practice' (Nolte 1986: 701). Molony (2010: 101) argues, 'Feminism was one cause that women of diverse national and transnational ideologies could promote together... diverse groups actually collaborated frequently across the ideological divide'.

Fujieda (2011) notes that during the early 1940s, all women's movements were banned or co-opted into patriotic activities in accordance with the state's war policies. Suzuki (2001, 2002) states that the socialist women's movement gradually weakened, because Yamakawa's feminism was outside of mainstream feminism and could not successfully overcome patriarchy and ethnic prejudice within the proletarian socialist movements. In contrast, Suzuki (2002) describes how attitudes of feminists in the women's rights movement towards the state transformed into patriotic enthusiasm little by little – the

⁷⁸ See Chapter 1.

⁷⁹ See Chapter 1.

⁸⁰ See Chapter 1.

means through which the majority of women were mobilised during the war. Fujieda (2011) states that this stream of the women's rights movement, led by Ichikawa, then survived after the Second World War by challenging the political sphere previously dominated by men (see also Chapter 1).

2–3 Charting Post-War Development

The existing feminist scholarship indicates that after the Second World War, feminism in Japan entered a new phase of development against the backdrop of the post-war reforms and the rapid growth of the Japanese economy.⁸¹ In this process, three issues are often discussed as specific to feminism in Japan: first, the impact of the women's movement on post-war reforms; second, *bosei* in relation to events such as the debate since 1955 about housewives; and third, relations between nationalism and feminism.

Regarding feminism just after the end of the Second World War, scholars often focus on feminists' quick response to the sudden change in Japan's situation (see also Chapter 1). Kaneko (1995) notes that on 25 August 1945, just ten days after Japan accepted the Potsdam Declaration, suffragist Ichikawa formed the Women's Committee on Post-War Countermeasures with the network of the suffrage movement from the pre-war period, in order to demand women's rights to vote once again (see also Chapter 1). Buckley (1994) also states that socialist Yamakawa helped found the League of Democratic Women in 1946 and became the first head of the Women's and Minors' Bureau of the Ministry of Labour. Fujieda (2011: 333) states that the women's movement, which appeared in public immediately after Japan lost the war, was recognised as 'an indispensable party of the effort to democratize the society'. Buckley (1994) then points out that although women faced difficult decisions during the war – those who argued against the war were imprisoned, some kept silent, others chose to be patriotic in exchange for improvements of their positions – feminism adapted to the changing circumstances while maintaining close relations with the pre-war women's organisations. 'Postwar feminism in Japan has demonstrated a high level of tolerance and understanding toward the complexity of the choices faced by women in wartime' (Buckley 1994: 151).

With regard to post-war reforms, Yoneyama (1999, 2005) states that the various changes in Japan's national policies were highly gendered, a point that was clearly reflected in

⁸¹ See Chapter 1.

women's political liberation. Here, how feminism influenced policymaking on women's rights in the post-war reforms such as constitutional gender equality, women's suffrage and the abolition of the *ie* system has been much debated. In brief, it is disputed as to whether such women's liberation was gifted by the Allied Occupation or whether it was the fruit of feminist efforts before and just after the war. According to Kelsky (2001), there was a clear division on this point among the then feminist leaders. For example, Shizue Kato (1946, in Kelsky 2001: 56), one of the first thirty-nine female Diet members, formally stated to General MacArthur, 'We, the women members of the Japanese [D]iet... thank you very much for granting us suffrage and educating us as to the use of it to establish democracy in Japan'. In response to Kato's statement, suffragist Ichikawa (1979, in Kelsky 2001: 251) argued, 'It is ridiculous that Mrs. Kato and other female members of the House of Representatives went to MacArthur thanking him for granting Japanese women suffrage! Women's suffrage in the U.S. and Britain was achieved as the result of many women's hard work. We should appreciate such women instead of MacArthur!' In Yoneyama's view (2005: 897), Ichikawa believed that Japanese women would have gained the right to vote soon enough even without the occupation, because of 'their active participation in the war effort'.

This debate has continued among academics. Pharr (1987) argues that the impact of feminism on the policies was quite limited, because feminist leaders devotedly lobbied for suffrage but not for other reforms, such as equal rights, under the new Constitution of Japan. Yamazaki (1997, in Kelsky 2001: 56) also points out the American victory liberated women in Japan because 'the rights they had been fruitlessly fighting for since the Meiji Restoration were granted in a single gesture'. In contrast, Ito (1974, in Kelsky 2001: 56) argues that women's liberation was ultimately 'the result of women fighting to make their own demands known'. Inoue (1967, in Kelsky 2001) also argues that women's rights to vote would have been achieved soon even without the Allied Occupation's decision.

Despite the clear difference between these two positions, Kelsky (2001) points out that at least some women felt that they had been liberated through Japan's defeat and American Occupation, and that, in any case, the Occupation is seen as a turning point in women's liberation. Buckley (1994: 151) also states that the Occupation period was regarded as 'a once-only opportunity' to demand the rights that women had struggled to gain for a long time. Unlike others, Yoneyama (2005) offers a different view, that women's political liberation was a key part of the Occupation's propaganda to create a narrative that privileged America's role in democratising Japan. 'At the same time... it undoubtedly

constructed American women as the feminist forerunners who would teach Japanese women proper understandings of gender, equality, and liberal democracy' (Yoneyama 2005: 897–98). Yoneyama (2005) then points out that this strategic discourse was also used in America's cold war campaign for global hegemony based on ideas of modernity, equal rights and democracy.

Following the post-war reforms during the Allied Occupation (1945–52), the Japanese economy grew rapidly, and a new gender division started to emerge – between the housewife and *salaryman* (a male salaried worker) (see Chapter 1). Feminism in Japan since 1955 is widely associated with the series of debates about the housewife (Ueno 1986a, Buckley 1994, Kano 1997, Mackie 2003, Kano 2005). According to Mackie (2003), the first stage of this debate, which emerged in the women's magazine *Fujin-Koron* (Housewives' Forum), was triggered by an article in 1955 by an activist, Ayako Ishigaki (1903–96), which criticised women who left their jobs after marriage. Others put forward counterarguments, that being a housewife should be recognised as a job, or that housewives who played an important part in political activism, such as the maternal campaigns against nuclear weapons, should be appreciated.

Buckley (1994) states that this debate can be divided into two streams – pro-work versus pro-motherhood – but notes that readers of *Fujin-Koron* were generally pro-motherhood. Mackie (2003) then discusses how during the early 1960s this debate evolved into its second stage, with the focus on the controversy about how women's domestic labour should be valued. Some argued that the value of their domestic labour should be included in their husbands' salaries, others that domestic labour should be paid. Ueno (1986a) states that the argument that domestic labour should be paid work should be seen as groundbreaking in terms of its attempt to apply the principle of exchange value to domestic labour, and compares this argument with the socialists' counterargument that domestic labour has use-value but no exchange-value. Ueno (1986a) then points out that both sides of the debate tried to apply Marxist concepts to domestic labour. Mackie (2003) also suggests that this debate about domestic labour indicates that Marxist ideas, which had been suppressed as dangerous political ideologies during the pre-war period, had an influence on feminism in Japan in the post-war period against the backdrop of the new constitutional freedom around political activities and speech. Kano (1997) refers to a new argument in the third stage of the debate during the early 1970s: that women who voluntarily chose to become housewives and take care of their children or help the weak such as disabled people are liberated. Kano (1997) states that this argument was notable in

terms of its opposition to the capitalistic ideology that encouraged women to be financially independent. In addition, Ueno (1986a) points out that the argument positioning housewives' situation as one to be proud of was a product of the high rate of economic growth, because of which people in Japan generally identified themselves as middle class. However, this series of debates has been criticised for paying little attention to the question why domestic labour is performed by women (Kano 1997, Mackie 2003).

Kano (1997) suggests that this series of debates since 1955 about housewives is linked to the debate about *bosei*⁸² during the Taisho period (1912–26), and points out that such debates have continued to resurface intermittently. For example, encouraging women to have a job links in with Akiko Yosano's argument (1918, in Kano 1997) that women should financially be independent. The ideas that domestic labour is unpaid work can be seen in Kikue Yamakawa's socialist view (1918, in Kano 1997), in the stream of which there is Ueno's Marxist feminism (1990). Giving due respect to the housewife by valuing her domestic labour is related to Raicho Hiratsuka's maternalism (1918, in Kano 1997). In the repeated debates about housewives, Kano (2005) states that some arguments, such as the positive view of housewives who participate in social activism, have been strengthened. Mackie (2003) also notes respect for women's participation in political activities as one of the significant elements of this debate in terms of their identity as a mother or housewife and points out that the emphasis on *bosei* in women's activism continues to be a topic of feminist debate in Japan. These analyses indicate that *bosei* is a central issue for feminism in Japan.

Bosei is also frequently considered as a central issue for the *Lib*, because the *Lib* activists refused the idealised *bosei* (Ehara 1985, Nishikawa 1997, Ueno 2009b, Shigematsu 2012). On the one hand, according to Shigematsu (2012), the *Lib* fundamentally criticised the way that *bosei* and *bosei-ai* (maternal love) had been employed as a national ideology,⁸³ and how women's natural reproductive capacity had been controlled through the patriarchal national family system. Shigematsu (2012) then points out that the *Lib* rejected not only these state-sanctioned ideologies of *bosei*, but also the idealisation of *bosei*. Ehara (1985) and Ueno (2009b) also argue the *Lib* clearly rejected the *bosei* illusion that expected women to devote themselves to their families. Nishikawa (1997) states that this rejection of the *bosei* illusion indicated that the *Lib* identified the state as well as their homes with female oppression.

⁸² See Chapter 1.

⁸³ See Chapter 1.

On the other hand, these scholars argue that the *Lib* activists never let go their hold on *bosei*, such as reproductive sexuality being central to womanhood (Ehara 1985, Nishikawa 1997, Ueno 2009b, Shigematsu 2012). Buckley (1994) and Mackie (2003) state that a significant aim of the *Lib* was to liberate women's bodies. Ueno (2009b) also argues that the *Lib* never abandoned *bosei* with regard to reproductive sexuality, in comparison with some feminisms in Western Europe, which chose to reject this argument. On this point, academics focus on a particular characteristic of the *Lib*: that the *Lib* activists emphasised that they were *onna* (woman [女]) rather than *fujin* (lady [婦人]) or *josei* (the generic term for woman [女性]). According to Shigematsu (2012: xvi), the *Lib* politicised the term *onna*, which was 'imbued with sexualised connotations'. Nishikawa (1997) states that the *Lib* argued for women's rights related to sexuality, such as their reproductive health and bodily autonomy, through the use of the term *onna*.⁸⁴ One exemplary event (Shigematsu 2012: 19) indicating how the *Lib* made use of the term *onna* was the demonstration and rally on Mother's Day 1972 in Tokyo, organised by *Lib* activists, which adopted the slogan 'Let's fix the world: Overthrow patriarchal authority', and whose pamphlets advocated, 'Let's smash a Mother's Day that robs the *onna* from motherhood (*bosei*)'. Points '*Ribu*'s reclamation of *onna* was linked with its rejection of the legitimacy of the gender-conforming roles of *shufu* (housewife) and *haha* (mother) that were rooted in the family system' (Shigematsu 2012: 4).

Additionally, Nishikawa (1997) and Dales (2009) state that there was a commonality between the *Lib* and feminists who contributed to a magazine *Seito* during the Taisho period, in terms of focus on reproductive sexuality. Buckley (1994) also addresses the *Lib*'s interests in female sexuality, but points out that the *Lib* hardly questioned heterosexuality, so that lesbians felt marginalised within the feminist movements. Shigematsu (2012) states that while the *Lib* had space for lesbianism, it was not theorised or accepted as a progressive alternative to an enforced heterosexist order, due to the *Lib*'s heterosexual dominance, the flip side of the *Lib*'s focus on reproductive sexuality.

The *Lib*, which highlighted *bosei*, is generally seen as a radical women's movement, but scholars also focus on the silent majority, namely ordinary middle-class housewives, who did not seemingly participate in the *Lib* but tried to achieve self-actualisation. Ueno (2009b) argues that there is a definite discourse around housewives' *Lib* in Japan, which emerged under the impact of the *Lib* and was evident in women's journals such as *Agora*,

⁸⁴ In Chapter 6, I will discuss how participants perceived the attitudes of Japanese feminisms towards reproductive health and rights.

founded in 1972, and *Onna Erosu* (Woman Eros), started in 1973. According to Mackie (2003), *Agora* investigated the legislation protecting *bosei* that not only prohibited female workers from undertaking night duty and excessive overtime work but also guaranteed maternity and menstruation leave. *Agora* also discussed the guilt working mothers felt about their latchkey children. Mackie (2003: 151) then points out that the policy adopted by *Agora* reflected the typical housewives' commitment to feminism: 'a group of women meet to try to solve some problem close their own lives – pollution, childcare, consumer issues, the usurpation of community land by military bases'.

This specific feature of the housewives' *Lib* in Japan is widely recognised. One of the seven sections in *Feminism in Japan*⁸⁵ 1: *The Lib and Feminism, New Edition* (2009), edited by pioneer feminist scholars including Ueno, is entitled 'The Housewives' *Lib*'.⁸⁶ The three activists' articles included in this section discuss how housewives restrict themselves or are restricted within the private sphere, how they struggle to achieve self-discovery (Ito [1978] 2009, Takahashi [1986] 2009), and how ordinary women perceive feminists who seem to be powerful (Tanaka [1992] 2009). As an editor, Ueno (2009b) comments that during the 1970s, when a new gendered division – the *sengyo-shufu* (full-time housewife) – was constructed, the majority of women, who were housewives, silently supported the *Lib* and looked for their own identities. Ueno (2009b) cites a passage from Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* ([1963] 1972: 17) and states that housewives in Japan shared 'the problem that has no name' with housewives in America. Ueno (2009b), on the one hand, endorses the argument of one of the authors of these articles, Tanaka ([1992] 2009), that women in Japan never let go of their family and children, but on the other hand, she (2009b) argues that housewives undoubtedly questioned their own identities. Ueno (2009b) then gives an example: that women's grass-roots movements in Japan from which various activisms such as social entrepreneurship and non-profit organisations are derived are supported mainly by housewife activists. Ueno (2009b) refers to another author, Ito (1973, in Ueno 2009b), who argues that housewives' issues are one of the starting points of discussing women's issues because women are oppressed as long as they are chained to the norm that women should be housewives. Ueno (2009b) states that housewives' struggle with their identity contributed to the foundation of women's studies in Japan, which began to be established in the second half of the 1970s, because women's studies questions the

⁸⁵ See Introduction.

⁸⁶ My translation.

fundamental social norms of womanhood rather than only specific women's issues such as prostitution.

After the *Lib*, during the 1980s, the second half of which were the economic-bubble years, women's advancements in the labour market and the issue of gender equality versus protection of *bosei* were frequently discussed, culminating in the enforcement of the Equal Employment Opportunity Law for Men and Women in 1986 (EEOL, see Chapter 1). At the same time, the housewives' issues gave rise to various controversies. Dales (2009) points out that these two images – career women and housewives – were two sides of the same coin. The reason Dales (2009) suggests this is that during the 1980s, the ambition of young married women to maintain both a marriage and a career was criticised even by women. To illustrate this point, Dales (2009) cites from an article by a female writer, Tanaka, entitled 'Working Mothers and Lonely Children' (1979, in Dales 2009), which discusses how housewives were unsatisfied with their life, but argues that mothers who neither give up their jobs nor hobbies are clearly selfish. According to Fujita (1989: 72), as the cultural ideology in Japan, this anti-working-mother discourse is based on the three idealised images of motherhood in various contexts in Japan: first, 'the mother is the best care-taker and educator of children'; second, 'the mother-child bonding is the most natural and fundamental one in human relationships (*ningen kankei*)': finally, 'no other job is better or more suitable for women than mothering'.

At the same time, academics point out that ideal motherhood differed from before. Dales (2009) and Kunihiro (2011) note that unlike the norm of full-time housewife during the rapid growth of the economy, the ideal of the full-time housewife during the 1980s did not always demand that they should fully devote themselves to domestic work, which indicates that they potentially had freedom to try to pursue self-fulfilment within the opportunities available to them; for example, they participated in campaigns for natural food, protection of the environment and improvement of the education system, or in political activism. Rosenberger (2001) also states that in comparison with the 1970s, middle-aged women during the 1980s tended to agree with the idea that middle-class housewives could and should go out in order to enjoy their own time, which was a new strategy for them to develop personhood under the impact of individualism. At the same time, they carefully accommodate their family members, relatives and neighbours (Rosenberger 2001). Ueno (2009b) cites that Shiba (n.d., in Ueno 2009b: 17) named these women 'active full-time housewives',⁸⁷ and points out that during the 1980s, full-time housewives became a

⁸⁷ My translation.

privileged class, who could enjoy freedom by participating in social activism as long as she remained a full-time housewife who was financially dependent on her husband.

In comparison with Western countries, where legislation was gradually reformed to encourage women to be financially independent, Shiota ([1992] 2009) points out that the status of housewives is more stable in Japan. In Shiota's analysis ([1992] 2009), the 1986 EEOL barely reformed gender divisions,⁸⁸ while Japan's tax and pension systems⁸⁹ gave preferential treatment to housewives, such as tax benefits, discouraging women from fully entering the labour market. As a result, despite the 1986 EEOL, when women enter the labour market, the majority of them choose to take up part-time jobs with the assumption that women's place is in the home. In other words, Shiota ([1992] 2009) points out that middle-class and well-educated women, who might be expected to support feminism, have arguably chosen to enjoy the full-time housewife's privilege of achieving fulfilment as activists outside the capitalist employment system, which seems to them to be an easier choice than taking up a full-time job, which would offer a direct challenge to Japan's male-dominated society. Thus, Shiota ([1992] 2009) suggests that contemporary feminism that encourages women to be financially independent and criticises gender divisions cannot easily be accepted in Japan, where women who have a strong sense of independence and enough economic capital are in a minority. Consequently, Shiota ([1992] 2009) argues that support for feminism in Japan during the 1970s to 1980s was transformed in that it came from housewives rather than working women. Shiota ([1992] 2009: 122) then calls feminism in Japan during the 1980s 'housewife feminism'.⁹⁰ Endorsing Shiota's view of 'housewife feminism' ([1992] 2009), Ogura argues that feminism during the second half of the 1980s to the first half of the 1990s was led mainly by full-time housewives (Ueno and Ogura 2002).

Academic discussion about 'housewife feminism', with which the discourse about 'the housewives' *Lib*' also came to be identified, expanded to include the debate. Mackie (2003) notes that some scholars appreciated that housewife activists acted on their own initiative, but others criticised their complicity with patriarchy and capitalism in terms of giving up challenging gender divisions. Kanai (1996) points out that 'housewife feminism' has impacted women's activism, but it also gives rise to various contradictions, for

⁸⁸ In response to the EEOL, firms employed a dual-track system of labour recruitment: a career track and a non-career track. All candidates should be offered both choices, but in reality only women are given the two choices, which indicates that women tend to be pushed into choosing the non-career track. See Chapter 1.

⁸⁹ See Chapter 1.

⁹⁰ My translation.

example, women who have accepted the gendered position as housewives arguing for gender equality. Kanai (1996: 15) then argues, ‘It is now time for the women’s movements to escape from “housewife feminism”’. Ueno questions ‘housewife feminism’ itself (Ueno and Ogura 2002). In Ueno’s analysis (Ueno and Ogura 2002), it is a fact that women’s daytime seminars on weekdays, organised by the civil services of that time, were attended by full-time housewives, and women’s activism was supported by many married women. However, these situations do not always imply that feminism was supported mainly by them. While Ogura claims that she does not like feminists who are married (1989, in Ueno and Ogura 2002), provoking housewife feminists’ antipathy, Ueno suggests that, on the one hand, housewives’ dissatisfaction with their married life is the very reason why they need feminism and join activism (Ueno and Ogura 2002). On the other hand, Ueno argues that being a full-time housewife and feminism are irreconcilable, because housewives financially depend on their husbands, supporting the gendered divisions of unpaid and paid work; their conservative choice to be a full-time housewife has been idealised as a role model for women, but which has actually oppressed their children (Ueno and Ogura 2002). Ueno (2009b) also points out that tensions and confrontations between housewives and working women have continued into current feminism in Japan.

As these discussions about housewives, the attitudes of the *Lib* towards *bosei*, and ‘housewife feminism’ during the 1980s indicate, *bosei* issues, from the debate about *bosei* during the Taisho period, have frequently been focused on by scholars. In connection with *bosei* issues, Ueno (1986a) divides feminism into two types: first, individualist feminism, embodied in the love marriage ideology, which was imported as a variety of modern individualisms; second, communalist feminism, exemplified in the *bosei* ideology (see Figure 7). Ueno (1986a) states that individualist feminism, in which equal partnerships are respected, is inconsistent with the maternalism of communalist feminism, in which relationships between a mother and her children are based on mutual dependence. Ueno (1986a) refers to Firestone’s argument ([1970] 1971) as exemplifying extremely individualist feminism that rejects women’s reproductive capacity,⁹¹ in strong contrast to which Itsue Takamura’s maternalist feminism.⁹² Ueno (1986a) then argues that mainstream feminism in Japan developed in favour of maternalism, so the *bosei* ideology of communalist feminism is a deep-rooted tradition in feminism in Japan. For example, Ueno

⁹¹ Firestone’s view of biological reproduction as a central factor in women’s subordination ([1970] 1971) is not shared by most other feminists. Most reject such biological determinism (Jackson 2010). Firestone ([1970] 1971: 142) also rejects love: ‘For love, perhaps even more than childbearing, is that pivot of women’s oppression today’.

⁹² See Chapter 1.

(1986a) suggests, maternalism was privileged over individualism in the debate about *bosei* during the Taisho period, and that maternalism of communalist feminism can be seen in a *Lib commune Tokyo Komu-unu* [東京こむうぬ].⁹³

Ueno's Categorisation of Feminism

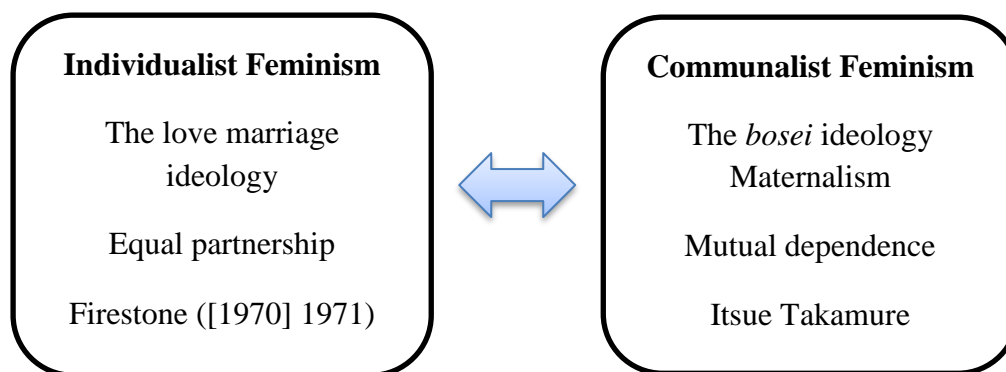


Figure 7 Source: Ueno (1986a), my translation

In addition, Ueno (1986a) refers to McFadden's categorisation of feminist theories (1984: 495, original emphasis) that '[t]he *minimizers* opt for structures which unite the female with human enterprises from which she has too often been excluded, and the *maximizers* articulate patterns expressive of the unique perspective of the female', and argues that in comparison with America, feminists in Japan tend to endorse the maximizers. Ueno (1986a) cites Rosaldo's analysis (1974) that the emphasis on gender differences is often employed as feminist strategy in society where gender division is deeply rooted. Ueno (1986a) then suggests that the ultimate goal of feminism in Japan might be to construct a maternalist society where people considerately help each other. In other words, Ueno (1986a) suggests, a maternalist feminism might reflect the communalism in Japanese society. Ehara (1985) endorses Ueno's view of mainstream feminism in Japan as maternalism (1986a). Suzuki (1995) also points out that maternalist feminism in Japan, exemplified in Raicho Hiratsuka's arguments, was the mainstream ideology of post-war women's movements, such as mothers' campaigns for peace and women's labour movements, with the emphasis on the *bosei* protection.

⁹³ *Tokyo Komu-unu* was a *Lib* commune, founded in 1972, and took its name by abbreviating and combining the terms for giving birth (*ko-umi*) and commune, where four *Lib* women and their children lived together in order to explore new relationships between women (*onna*) and children (Shigematsu 2012).

In contrast, Ehara (1985) points out that mainstream feminism in Japan, exemplified in Raicho Hiratsuka's maternalism, regarded child-rearing as a women's primary 'job',⁹⁴ so it has lacked a critical view of gender divisions. Suzuki (1995) also states that maternalist movements in the post-war period could not go beyond gender divisions. Suzuki (1995) then demonstrates that while male-centred labour unions were not interested in female workers' demands for gender equality, they tended to accept women's demands for *bosei* protection, because *bosei* protection strengthened gender divisions and consequently never challenging patriarchy. Ueno (1986a) points out that feminism stays within its culture, because feminist ideologies, including its weaknesses, are products of that culture.

Unlike *bosei* issues, which have quite often been focused on by scholars, the state had hardly been discussed in recent years. Nishikawa (1997) points out that although first-wave feminists could not discuss anything without thinking of the state, against the backdrop of the strength of nationalism, Japanese society after the war, including feminism, seemed to avoid discussing the state at all, for example, the feminist debates about housewives did not refer to the state at all. Yamashita (2000) notes that the *Lib* identified the state and family with female oppression, but never developed a fully critical analysis of the state. Additionally, in Nishikawa's analysis (1997), a dualistic view of market versus family, excluding the state, can be seen in the mid-1980s symposia organised by the Women's Studies Society of Japan. Ueno (2004) also critically reflects back on her dualistic view of market versus family in her earlier book *Patriarchy and Capitalism: The Horizon of Marxist Feminism* (1990), which indicates that she hardly mentioned the state.

Nishikawa (1997) suggests that one of the reasons why the state had hardly been considered might be because of the transformation of Japan to a democracy after the war. Other scholars' views of the relations between feminism and the imperial state in Japan seem to suggest other reasons. Looking back to the debate about *bosei* during the Taisho period, Mackie (1988) points out that maternalist values might have easily linked to fascism. Ehara (1985) also notes that the maternalism of mainstream feminism in Japan used to have a close connection with the state in terms of women's contribution to the state through childbirth and child-rearing. Suzuki (2006) demonstrates that although leading feminists in Japan during the pre-war period and wartime used to mobilise women to support Japan's war of aggression, these women's responsibilities for war were taboo even in the academic sphere of women's history. Mackie (2003: 3) focuses not only on feminism but also on the wider society, and maintains that Japanese people identified

⁹⁴ My translation.

themselves as imperial subjects: “‘imperial’ in the twin senses of serving an emperor and of being expected to provide support for an imperialist state’. These views indicate that the honeymoon period between mainstream feminism and the state at one time resulted in the lack of feminist discussion about the state after the war.

The existing literature indicates that feminism in Japan began to focus on the state during the 1980s. For example, Suzuki (2006) notes that academic discussion among historians in Japan about women’s war guilt finally started during the 1980s, although scholars who focus on this issue are still a minority. During the 1990s, scholars then focused on the comfort women issues⁹⁵. Suzuki (1997) argues that the comfort women system, as approved by the Japanese state, was the authorised rape system. Ueno (2004) views this issue as the most radical in terms of questioning the relation between the nation-state and gender. Yamashita (2000) observes that whether feminism in Japan can go beyond nationalism has been questioned through the comfort women issues. Nishikawa (1997) notes that during the 1990s academics in Japan also focused on the relations between the modern family and the nation-state in the debate on definitions of the modern family, while pointing out that feminism in Japan has developed against a formidable problem, namely nationalism.

2–4 Conclusion

Each of the scholarly contributions that I have reviewed in this chapter tells us something about the characteristics of feminism in Japan and from a variety of perspectives. They offer a fragmented view, but do suggest some key features of feminism in Japan. In particular, the lack of discussion about the state after the Second World War contrasts sharply with the many debates on *bosei*. This is interesting for me, since it seems to indicate a flip side of mainstream maternalist feminism, which used to have a supportive link with the state in the name of the contribution to the state through women’s reproduction. This also seems to suggest that *bosei* is a central issue of feminism in Japan. On the basis of reviewing these various academic works, in order to further investigate feminism in Japan, in the next chapter I will focus in depth on five influential feminists in Japan, whose works cover some key issues for feminism in Japan.

⁹⁵ See Chapter 1.

3 Key Figures' Perspectives on Academic Feminism

3-1 Introduction

Academic feminism, which started to become established during the 1970s, is a young discipline that lodges an objection against male-dominated society, so it is still a minority field. There are not many feminist researchers, but they have tried to analyse various issues that reflect Japanese historical, cultural and political contexts. Following Chapters 1 and 2, in which I described the development of Japanese feminisms in historical context and reviewed the existing feminist scholarship about Japan, in this chapter I approach the picture of Japanese feminisms by focusing on key Japanese figures' perspectives. I have chosen five scholars' works, which have brought essential issues such as *bosei* in Japanese feminisms into sharper relief. Four of them, born in the 1940s, have broken new ground in women's studies since the 1970s, analysing the *Lib*, introducing Western feminist theories to Japanese society or debating various issues from a fresh feminist point of view. I shall call them 'the pioneer generation'.

The first scholar is Chizuko Ueno, well-known as a Marxist feminist,⁹⁶ whose analysis of patriarchy, capitalism and domestic labour (1990) reflects her reliance on some feminists such as Christine Delphy's materialist view⁹⁷ (1980, 1984). Ueno also challenges the *ie* system and current gender divisions, which are generally regarded as traditional ideas, and discusses how they became established. Because she is a leading feminist who has influenced not only the mainstream of academic feminism but also society at large, I have allowed more space for reviewing her works, which I have divided into three topics: feminism; the modern family and female labour; and nationalism. The second researcher is Yoshiko Kanai, a moral philosopher who discusses corporate-centred patriarchy. Japan is often seen as a corporate society, so her argument skilfully captures key characteristics of Japanese cultures. I then consider historians Kimiyo Kano and Yuko Suzuki, who are two of the feminist researchers tackling the Emperor system. In Japan, where maternalism

⁹⁶ Ueno (2010) defines a Marxist feminist as a feminist who challenges the dogmas of Marxism.

⁹⁷ Delphy (1984) views housework as productive labour that is excluded from the labour market and takes place within domestic mode of production and patriarchal mode of exploitation. This view has been very controversial in the West, and is challenged by most Marxist feminists (Jackson 1996).

tends to be respected in order to maintain the family line under Confucianism, the family was used politically as an ideology, especially during the pre-war period and wartime, and is still a place for women to rely on. Kano challenges the word ‘*bosei*’, arguing that it was constructed and spread through the introduction of Western feminist ideas and the feminist debate about *bosei* during first-wave feminism. Meanwhile, Suzuki argues that mainstream feminism in Japan during the pre-war period was imperialist, in which feminists supported fascism, but defined themselves as victims after the war to avoid accepting war guilt alongside the Emperor. Finally, I will outline Kaku Sechiyama’s view of patriarchy and the social norm of the ‘Good wife, Wise mother’⁹⁸ in East Asia. He is one of only a few male researchers in feminism and was born in the 1960s, representing the second generation of feminist researchers. By reviewing their works, I would like to create a picture of feminism in Japan.

3–2 Chizuko Ueno

As a public intellectual, Ueno, a sociologist born in 1948, is influential within Japanese society. Since April 2011, she has also been the third chairperson of the board of directors of the Women’s Action Network (WAN).⁹⁹ One central achievement of her work is that she introduced Marxist feminism to Japan during the 1980s. According to Ueno (1990), she first encountered Marxist feminism in 1980 and came to realise that she should focus on domestic labour without pay from a Marxist feminist perspective in order to tackle the core gender issues in Japanese society. Subsequently, in 1984, she translated a book into Japanese entitled *Feminism and Materialism: Women and Modes of Production* co-edited by Annette Kuhn and AnnMarie Wolpe (1978). She also started to analyse the relation between patriarchy and capitalism in Japan. She (1990) argues that Marxist feminism is almost the only theory that can identify female oppression and liberate women in modern industrial society.

⁹⁸ See Chapter 1.

⁹⁹ The WAN, founded in May 2009, is a non-profit organisation helping women to network and managing the only feminist portal site in Japan.

3–2–1 Feminism

In investigating how the two stages of the Women's Liberation Movement¹⁰⁰ emerged during the twentieth century, Ueno (1990) focuses on economic activities during those times and discusses their relation with feminism. First-stage feminism can be seen in some countries, including Japan, and was a consequence of the First World War. According to Ueno (1990), it may sound paradoxical, but war can function to promote women's liberation, because women are encouraged not only to have babies who will become soldiers in the future, but also to work in the public sphere in the place of absent men. As a result, women came to realise that the reason why they are placed in the private sphere in peacetime is due to gender segregation, and this led to the campaigns for the extension of women's rights. In fact, after the First World War, women gained the right to vote in the UK in 1918, in Germany in 1919, and in America in 1920. The women's suffrage movement in Japan¹⁰¹ was a latecomer to first-stage feminism, but the members of the pioneer feminist group *Seito*¹⁰² started to do pioneering work through the debate about abortion and *bosei*.

Likewise, during the 1960s and 1970s, second-stage feminism simultaneously emerged in developed countries that were attempting the revitalisation of industry, including Japan, where it was known as the *Lib*. Ueno (1990) argues that it is a misunderstanding that the *Lib* in Japan was an import from America. 'There is no doubt that American feminist ideas made an impact on the *Lib* in Japan, but in both Western countries and Japan, women realised an issue rooted in highly-developed capitalist industrialisation'¹⁰³ (Ueno 1990: 194). In other words, second-stage feminism inevitably emerged only in highly-advanced industrialised countries. The issue common to all these countries is a new gender division based on the 'modern family'¹⁰⁴ (Ueno 1990: 195) – women should be at home and men should work outside the home. In the case of Japan, the *Lib* arose in the context of a high rate of economic growth,¹⁰⁵ which occurred mainly between 1955 and 1973, when the population flocked from the countryside into large cities and the number of employees exceeded self-employed persons for the first time. The new modern gender division –

¹⁰⁰ The Women's Liberation Movement is divided into two eras, named as 'the first stage of feminism' and 'the second stage of feminism' by Fujieda (1985, in Ueno 1990, my translation). The first stage consisted of campaigns for the extension of women's rights during the early twentieth century and the second stage was the *Lib* in the 1960s and 1970s.

¹⁰¹ See Chapter 1.

¹⁰² See Chapter 1.

¹⁰³ My translation.

¹⁰⁴ My translation.

¹⁰⁵ See Chapter 1.

women devote themselves to domestic work and men work outside their homes – was established and popularised at that time.¹⁰⁶ This indicates that women as housewives were eliminated from the productive labour market and encouraged to attend to reproductive domestic work without pay, which is female oppression. ‘... [W]omen had certain reasons why they should fight against capitalism and patriarchy’¹⁰⁷ (Ueno 1990: 198). Thus, first- and second-stage feminism were events that were waiting to happen.

On the other hand, Ueno (1997) points out that feminism as a movement has already peaked in Japan. Ueno (1997: 274) also suggests: ‘... there is a certain limited span to the life of Japanese feminism and... we may be reaching the outer limit of that span.’ For example, ‘women’s vote’, i.e. how the majority of women vote in election campaigns, which the media has come to focus on in order to watch the trend of female attitudes towards political issues, is not always a feminist vote. Ueno (1997: 275) suggest that the women who make up the majority of the ‘women’s vote’ might create a dilemma for feminism in Japan, indicating that they have ‘set the limitation of a Japanese feminism over the past decade’. Ueno (1997: 275) names this new category of women ‘enjo-ist’, which is a newly coined word combining ‘enjoy’ and ‘join’ with reference to women’s networking. It describes ‘women who enjoy all the benefits of the networking but do not necessarily participate in the efforts to achieve those benefits.’ While they are interested in gender issues, they are different from feminists. They are generally well educated, middle class and urban. They also have a relatively high economic position gained through marriage and actively engage in civic movements such as consumer rights. They also have the remarkable characteristic that they tend to strenuously avoid divorce. Thus, in general, they have affirmatively settled themselves within a stereotyped gender division as an important social role.

These women have made very practical and realistic choices in the context of contemporary Japanese society. They take advantage of their status even though they are clearly a disadvantaged group... There is no question their husbands and society take advantage of these middle-class, educated, urban women, as full-time housewives who must care not only for children but also the elderly and handicapped. (Ueno 1997: 276)

Such a situation seems to be antithetical to feminism, but Ueno (1997: 280) suggests that it can be a positive opportunity to start developing a feminism that is rooted in a Japanese cultural context, because: ‘... in Japan the mothering and nurturing function is a key

¹⁰⁶ Like Ueno, Ochiai (2004) argues that the widespread image of the full-time housewife in Japan cannot be considered traditional, because this gendered role for women in the modern family was newly established during the high-growth period of the post-war era with the transformation of industrial structures.

¹⁰⁷ My translation.

concern of feminists and seen as something that must be protected. Our primary goal is not to be like men but to value what it means to be a woman.’ In fact, East Asian cultures give women very great power within the household, although non-Asian feminists, who have tried to gain individual rights and freedom, do not regard it as real power (Ueno 1997). To sum up, in Japan the domestic role of mothering and nurturing, which seems to be based on *bosei*, is highly valued and more important than the individualism of feminism in America.

This cultural norm, which is often attributed to Confucian cultures in East Asia,¹⁰⁸ is a disadvantage to women in terms of a fixed gender division, but in practical terms it secures women’s position as mothers in the private sphere. Despite the criticism of maternalism as essentialist, as long as *bosei* is accorded great importance not only by society but also by the majority of women, this norm is one of central issues for feminism, such as the feminist debate about *bosei*¹⁰⁹ during the Taisho era and the *bosei* ideology¹¹⁰ during the pre-war period and wartime.

3–2–2 The Modern Family and Female Labour

The central places in which women give full play to their *bosei* are their homes and families. Investigating the origins of attitudes towards the family in Japan, it is generally thought that the *ie* system,¹¹¹ specified in the 1898 Meiji Civil Code and regarded as one of symbols of traditional patriarchy, was established during the age of feudalism before the Meiji era. However, Ueno (2009a) argues that the *ie* system was created by the Meiji government at the beginning of the modern period, because before the Meiji era there were only patrilineal families in the *samurai* class, which represented only 10% of the population during the Edo era.¹¹² Other groups had a variety of family structures. For instance, matrilineal inheritance was commonly seen among rich merchants and farmers, because their sons did not necessarily have the aptitude to work as the head of a family.

¹⁰⁸ Confucian cultures in East Asia vary greatly and have been historically transformed, extended and adapted. Moreover, Ko, Haboush and Piggott (2003: 1) challenge the view of women as victims of Confucian patriarchy and regard them as ‘agents of negotiations who embraced certain aspects of official norms while resisting others’.

¹⁰⁹ See Chapter 1.

¹¹⁰ See Kano’s discussion in a later section.

¹¹¹ See Chapter 1. According to Aoki (1997), before modernisation, the actual power relationships between blood parents and their children were not very close in the countryside of Japan, and inheritance by the eldest daughter or a younger son was widely seen across the country. Only the *samurai* class obeyed the Confucian morality, and maintained the patriarchal relation of parents-children and inheritance, which were employed as important elements of the *ie* system.

¹¹² The Edo era extended from 1603 to 1868.

Thus, the *ie* system was the Meiji government's 'invention' (Ueno 2009a: 63), and it embodied the government's ideology.

Ueno (2009a) argues that the aim of this invention was to establish a new power structure in a modern nation-state, as the 1890 Meiji Constitution¹¹³ said that the Emperor was the head of state, having power to control the people. In other words, with the family-state ideology,¹¹⁴ the Meiji government defined the state as a huge family, of which the Emperor was the head, with the head of each ordinary family as a mini-Emperor under the *ie* system. Ueno (2009a) also maintains that Confucianism, which states that children should respect their parents, was employed by the Meiji government to support this new hierarchical power structure, in which the people were regarded as children of the Emperor. Although there is a clear difference between loyalty to the Emperor and filial piety in Confucianism, these two concepts were amalgamated in order to adapt the people to the *ie* system. Ueno (2009a) quotes a passage from Inoue (1908, in Ueno 2009a: 65): 'If the spirit of filial piety towards the head of a family is amplified to the whole nation, it will, not surprisingly, correspond to loyalty to the Emperor.'

The *ie* system was officially repealed under the 1947 Civil Law, but the new modern family structure came in rather gradually. Ueno (1990) points out that, during the rapid growth of the Japanese economy, a new gender division was popularised.¹¹⁵ Men hoped to become salaried workers and women dreamed of rising to become housewives, which indicates that women were essentially demoted into full-time domestic workers exploited by their husbands (Ueno 1990). Ueno (1990) argues that this is a new version of patriarchy in the modern period.

This modern patriarchy has one more characteristic, which is women's participation in the workplace (Ueno 2009a). Interestingly, Japanese society started to encourage married women to enter the labour market without disturbing patriarchy. One of the reasons for this was the change in the industrial structure after the 1973 oil crisis, from secondary industries such as steel manufacture and shipbuilding to tertiary industries such as software, information and services. There was also a specific circumstance in Japan: under the Immigration Control Law of Japan foreigners are only allowed to work in Japan if they are highly skilled and cannot be replaced by others. Ueno (2009a) states that this law has strictly limited immigrant workers, so that many part-time jobs were available for middle-

¹¹³ See Chapter 1.

¹¹⁴ See Chapter 1.

¹¹⁵ See the previous section.

aged and older married women,¹¹⁶ especially pink-collar jobs in the service industry. At the same time, there was a transformation in family structure and lifestyles. The most important factor was that there was a decrease in the birth rate, from 5.11 in 1905 to less than 2.0 in the 1960s. As a consequence, women began to reach the stage where they could take a rest from childcare at a younger age. Home electrical appliances helped to reduce domestic labour, too. However, housewives as reproducers taking care of their children tended to avoid full-time jobs.

Ueno (1990) argues that the strategy under capitalism and patriarchy was to expect women to cope with both their domestic labour and part-time jobs as the ideal female lifestyle. Therefore, female labour-force participation in Japan fits the M curve.¹¹⁷ Ueno (1990: 214) calls this new type of gender division, in which married women have part-time jobs, ‘the result of the compromise between capitalism and patriarchy.’¹¹⁸ Under this gender division, married women are forced to shoulder a dual burden as unpaid domestic labourers and low-waged, unskilled labours, being exploited by both patriarchy and capitalism. Their low wage does not disturb patriarchy at all, because the money that women make is exploited by their husbands, who use it to help out with the family budget. For example, this money is spent on their children’s education, which indicates that capitalism and patriarchy ironically charge women with a duty to ensure that their children become well-educated workers who will support capitalism and patriarchy in the future. This is intrigue against women (Ueno 1990).

More than ten years after the high rate of economic growth ended, the Equal Employment Opportunity Law for Men and Women (EEOL)¹¹⁹ was enforced in 1986. This law has opened the doors of the male-dominated workplace to women, but Ueno (1990, 2009a) points out that it has many loopholes, which means that it has merely thrown women into a male-dominated society. In response to the law, many companies have created a dual-track system, career track and non-career track,¹²⁰ which conceals gender segregation by making employees choose one of the tracks, so that female workers are divided into two groups, ‘the elite and the non-elite’ (Ueno 2009a: 55). Additionally, under the Temporary

¹¹⁶ According to the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan (2012c), the proportion of temporary workers among employees by sex was: women 54.5% and men 35.2% in 2012.

¹¹⁷ See Chapter 1.

¹¹⁸ My translation.

¹¹⁹ See Chapter 1.

¹²⁰ Workers on the career track leading to managerial positions are offered high wages, but must accept overtime work, transfers and business trips. Workers on the non-career track are not offered these conditions, instead assisting workers on the career track. See Chapter 1.

Workers' Law,¹²¹ enforced in 1986, the number of temporary workers has increased in various workplaces, including in the non-career track. As a result, the handful of women following the career track as the elite are expected to work like men, while the majority of women in the non-career track as the non-elite have been employed as staff dispatched for temporary work at low wages. 'A gap between women has been widened'¹²² (Ueno 2014).

I used to work as a journalist in the career track,¹²³ so I understand her argument about EEOL's loopholes. As Ueno argues, it is true that the dual-track system has divided women into two classes. The minority of women following the career track might seem to be the elite, but they are actually forced to obey rules that were established by men, and to struggle with male-dominated society. I became disgusted that I was compelled to follow the male-centred rules and quit my job. On the other hand, women on the non-career track tend to be in an insecure position as temporary workers. On either track, women are oppressed by men.

3-2-3 Nationalism

Ueno is known as a pioneer who has tackled issues of women's domestic labour without pay through Marxist feminism, but more recently she (2004) has reflected on her Marxist feminism and acknowledges that she underrated the state. Looking back on her viewpoint (1990), she regarded the separation of the public and the private sphere in modern society as the separation of the market and the family. Accepting the criticism of Mariko Adachi, another feminist in Japan, Ueno (2004) acknowledges that her dual dialectics of the market versus the family did not include a concept of the state. This motivated Ueno to study nationalism and gender.

Ueno (2004) states that the project of modernisation was designed to integrate the people into the state. In women's history, the nationalisation of women during the pre-war period and wartime has been debated since the 1980s through examining the relation between the nation-state and gender. This has produced a paradigm change in women's history, shifting women's standpoint from passive subjects to active agents who make history. This implies that women are no longer victims, but perpetrators who should accept war guilt in terms of

¹²¹ See Chapter 1.

¹²² My translation.

¹²³ See Introduction.

their support for the war. Ueno (2004: 15) names this new stream ‘the reflexive school of women’s history’, which is also retrospective and self-reflexive.

Considering nationalism and gender during the pre-war period and wartime, there is a question as to whether the subject of total mobilisation was the nation, regardless of gender, when the nation was defined as masculine – how and to what degree the state draws women who are placed in the private sphere in peacetime into the war without contravening the gender division. If the state encourages women to go to battlefields, this might mean that it is denying the division between masculinity and femininity in peacetime. Ueno (2004) focuses on this dilemma of the state, which lay on a dividing line between total mobilisation and gender domains, and she demonstrates two forms – integration and segregation – which link to the current confrontation between equality and difference feminism. This indicates a nationalisation of the private sphere while maintaining gender division assignment versus dismantling equality role assignment.

To put it concretely, the integration model means that women join the army as soldiers under the condition of gender equality. In fact, not only did America appoint women to be soldiers, but the UK also had a female conscription system. By contrast, under the segregation model, total mobilisation does not wipe out gender segregation – the gender boundary of the nation-state. Japan adhered to this model, which maintained the gender division. Under the strategy of gender segregation, the state encouraged women to have many children and to work for the state. Childbirth and the mobilisation of labour remained within the roles of wife and mother, which were controlled by the state. Of course, the Japanese army recruited women workers to maintain airplanes or to nurse sick and wounded soldiers. There were also female volunteer groups who supported male soldiers on the battlefield. Nonetheless, their tasks were limited to relief activities and so on, although there was a shortage of soldiers by the end of the Second World War. This segregation model was also accepted by many women. As a result, only men were permitted to die on the battlefield on behalf of the Japanese Emperor and to become heroes, called the ‘god of war’¹²⁴ after death. ‘The seat reserved for Japanese women by the gender strategy of segregation was not that of god of war but the “mother of a god of war enshrined at Yasukuni”’¹²⁵ (Ueno 2004: 20). In other words, women who experienced the indignity of not being permitted to die in battle could rank themselves with the ‘god of

¹²⁴ Soldiers who died on the battlefield were called the ‘god of war’.

¹²⁵ The Yasukuni Shrine is a Shinto shrine established in 1869 in Tokyo. About 2,500,000 fallen Japanese soldiers and others have been enshrined at the Yasukuni Shrine. Currently, there is argument about the Yasukuni Shrine as an affirmative symbol of war.

war' by presenting their husbands and sons to the state as combatants and becoming a 'mother of a god of war'.

However, Ueno (2004) claims that the difference between the strategies of integration and segregation was small during wartime. In fact, female soldiers were an exceptional minority in America and the UK and their roles were limited to supporting male soldiers. Consequently, at that time no nation state employed the gender integration strategy to include female combatants. Ueno (2004) also points out that if gender equality under the integration model were to be achieved, it would not always liberate women, because women's reproductive function is no more than a handicap in a society that is based on masculinity. Thus, women in both the integration and segregation strategies are positioned as 'the second-class citizen', 'the second-class labourer' or 'the second-class soldier' (Ueno 2004: 60 and 63). In order to solve these problems, Ueno (2004: 63) argues that: '...feminism must and can transcend the state', because 'Feminist analysis of the nation-state has made clear that gender equality is impossible in principle within a framework of modernity, patriarchy and the nation-state.'

In connection with nationalism and gender, Ueno (2004) focuses on the issue of military comfort women, which has its roots in nationalism in both Japan and Korea. Ueno (2004) notes that this affair became a political issue when three South Korean women who had been military comfort women filed a lawsuit against the Japanese government at the Tokyo District Court in December 1991 in order to claim an official apology and individual compensation.¹²⁶ The former military comfort women had been placed outside the targets of post-war compensation for people from former Japanese colonies, although the existence of these former comfort women was known. They were described in Japanese soldiers' diaries without any sense of shame. Consequently, the issue of the military comfort women system was not recognised as a crime committed by the Japanese military for half a century after the Second World War. Ueno (2004) argues that there are three crimes surrounding the military comfort women system – the rape crime during the war, ignoring the victims for half a century afterwards, and the rejection of the victims. Ueno (2004) also points out that this accusation against the Japanese government made an impact and led to four paradigms: the patriarchal paradigm of national shame; the military rape paradigm; the prostitution paradigm; and the sexual violence paradigm.

¹²⁶ One of these women, Hak-Sun Kim (1924–77), announced that she had been a comfort woman, which was the first announcement of the experience of former comfort women.

Firstly, there is the patriarchal paradigm of national shame. To put it concretely, being raped is women's shame from the viewpoint of Confucianism. This also humiliates Korean men, who did not protect their countrywomen's chastity. Korean men were further humiliated because they could not keep the women silent. 'Here we have a patriarchal logic that dictates that women's sexuality is the most fundamental right and property of men, and any infringement of this is not only an insult to the woman herself, but ends up being the most supreme insult to the male group to which she belongs' (Ueno 2004: 74). From the viewpoint of Japanese men, women's sexuality is part of 'the spoils of war' (Ueno 2004: 75). Therefore, former comfort women in Korea have to fight against not only Japanese but also Korean patriarchy.

Secondly, there is the military rape paradigm, which is a version of the patriarchal paradigm. This is generally thought to be due to the animal appetites of men separated from women, but Ueno (2004) agrees with Hikosaka's view (1991, in Ueno 2004), which rejects this explanation in terms of animal appetites and insists that men rape in order to emphasise their own power. Raping women on the enemy side also results in humiliating men on the enemy side.

Thirdly, the prostitution paradigm is often employed by conservative people justifying the military comfort women system. They insist that former comfort women voluntarily decided to become prostitutes in order to make money. At the same time, this paradigm implies 'a sexual double standard' (Ueno 2004: 85) rooted in patriarchy – wife/mother and prostitute, in which other women's chastity can be protected from sexual abuse by accepting the existence of prostitutes. Nonetheless, this paradigm cannot be applied to the comfort women system. According to the South Korean Council (1993, in Ueno 2004), 12 out of 19 former comfort women who testified about their experiences were deceived into becoming comfort women. Only three out of the 19 women received occupation currency as wages issued by the Japanese military, but in any case this became just paper after the war.

Finally, there is the sexual violence paradigm, whose keywords are women's rights and sexual self-determination. Ueno (2004) cites the Coomaraswamy Report¹²⁷ (1996), which states that the military comfort women system was a system of sexual slavery and that the

¹²⁷ The United Nations appointed Coomaraswamy to a Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women within the Human Rights Commission in 1993. She investigated the Japanese military comfort women system, interviewed former comfort women, and concluded that it was a system of sexual slavery.

Japanese government should formally apologise and compensate former comfort women. This report apparently denies the voluntarism of the prostitution paradigm.

The issue of military comfort women has finally become a subject of discussion since the 1990s, but there are still many former comfort women keeping silent. This means that this crime continues to be committed today by pressurising them into saying nothing. '[T]he biggest perpetrators here are the patriarchal societies of Japan and Korea' (Ueno 2004: 128). Ueno (2004) also states that what the former comfort women's lawsuit claims is that women's interests, bodies and rights do not belong to states – Japan and South Korea – which indicates a possibility that feminism can transcend nationalism. Of course, there are different attitudes towards nationalism among feminists. Ueno (2004) recounts that when she argued at the workshop on the comfort women issue at the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995 that feminism in both Japan and South Korea should transcend borders, a South Korean American who was participating in the workshop put forward a counterargument:

My country's borders were invaded by soldiers from your country. You should not be so quick to say that we should forget national borders. Stating that feminism has nothing to do with nationalism is surely no different from the ethnocentric thinking of Western feminism... Nationalism is an extremely important issue for feminism in Asia. (in Kim 1996: 285, in Ueno 2004: 143)

This counterargument indicates that a Japanese feminist's claim that feminism transcends national borders might nullify invasion by Japan and Japanese people. In response to this, Ueno (2004) states that caution is necessary about the fact that there may be an imposition of imperialist feminism on women of former colonies in the name of universalism. However, Ueno (2004: 145, original emphasis) argues, '...it is also true that feminism cannot remain within national borders. Feminism should cross national borders, and indeed it needs to do so', and 'The fight of the former comfort women – the idea that *I* want my dignity restored – has the character of not only a stand against the Japanese state, but a rejection of the Korean state's approach where representation of *my* human rights equals being spoken for by proxy.'

As Ueno (2004) points out, the comfort women issue has led to a dramatic paradigm, which has also had an impact on feminism in Japan. As a result, feminists have realised the necessity for transnational feminism. Of course, Ueno's argument for transnational feminism is reasonable, but this is from Japanese feminists' viewpoint and seems to be hurrying to jump to conclusions. It is understandable that people from former colonies feel an antipathy against people from former imperialist states, so that it might not be easy for

South Koreans to accept Ueno's argument. In order to break this deadlock, I suggest that frank conversation with each other on a long-term basis will be needed.

3–3 Yoshiko Kanai/ Corporate-Centred Patriarchy

In order to attack the issue of patriarchy, in contrast to Ueno, who employs Marxist feminism, Yoshiko Kanai (1996) focuses on radical feminism. Kanai, born in 1944, is a professor of moral philosophy at Rissho University. Her early research field was German philosophy, such as the work of Hegel, and early Marxist ideas. After that, she shifted her interest to French philosophy, especially French post-modern thought and feminism. Since publishing a book entitled *Tenki-ni-Tatsu-Feminism* (Feminism at a Turning Point) in 1985, she has placed a great deal more weight on feminism. Kanai (1996: 8) discusses the fact that women no longer have a common identity as women because of generational gaps, which has led to apathy concerning feminism, and also points out that feminism has failed to loosen the grip of 'corporate-centred patriarchy' that controls the life cycle in Japan, which is often said to be a 'corporate society'.

After the Second World War, Japan made rapid economic progress. At the same time, the circumstances of women superficially seemed to have improved, at least in terms of gender equality under the law. On the other hand, Kanai (1996) argues that it became very difficult to identify oppression against women, although women are still surely oppressed in various ways, because generational gaps among women make it difficult for them to share their experiences of oppression, discrimination and exploitation. Their common identity as women has already been destroyed, as well, so that they can no longer have a common voice to tell of their experiences of oppression as women. Kanai (1996: 3–4) suggests that women can be divided into three generations in Japanese society. The first generation is old women who have devoted themselves to their husbands and children in the belief that this is a 'woman's fate'. The second group is their daughters, immersed in post-war democracy and second-wave feminism, namely the 'feminist generation', in which women were given only one choice, work or marriage, and struggled with gender discrimination and trying to discover their own identities. The third generation consists of daughters of the women in the feminist generation, the so-called 'post-feminist generation'. Their attitudes towards feminism are clearly negative, and they do not hesitate to say that feminism is old-fashioned. Consequently, these three generations can no longer share a common feminist consciousness.

Kanai (1996) suggests that this situation in Japan, in which the post-feminist generation has been growing larger and female oppression has hardly been recognised, may also have an influence on global issues related to the North-South problem. In the world, in which women are divided into two worlds by hierarchical difference in economic, historical and cultural conditions – ‘...the freedom of women in the “North” standing on the oppression of women in the “South”’ (Kanai 1996: 4) – Japanese women are content with their privileged position because of merely being Japanese. In short, ‘Unless we remain conscious of this privilege, Japanese women will continue to stand on one side of a “vertical domination” over women in the “South”’ (Kanai 1996: 4). In other words, as long as they take part in the vertical domination, it will be difficult for them to realise that they have actually been oppressed by men.

In addition to the generational gap, Kanai (1996) also argues that the feminist movement and ideology should take responsibility for this situation in which the common grounds of female oppression have collapsed. Looking back to the 1980s, the Japanese government established special labour and welfare policies, including the revision of tax and pension schemes in favour of housewives.¹²⁸ This was designed to keep ‘post-war patriarchy’ supporting corporate society, which encouraged men to become ‘corporate warriors’ and women to turn into ‘professional housewives’ who could be a ‘re-employable labour force’ (Kanai 1996: 7). In other words, this is a ‘corporate-centred patriarchy, managed along the life cycle’ (Kanai 1996: 8), which has also led to the so-called M-curve¹²⁹ lifestyle of women. Furthermore, the EEOL, enforced in 1986 in response to the CEDAW, has ironically resulted in the division of working women into two tracks¹³⁰: women working on equal terms with men and those who are just assistants to men. In this two-track system, developed in the name of respect for choice, the majority of women have actually chosen the non-career track, which indicates that the ‘post-war patriarchy’ has successfully survived without conflicts with EEOL (Kanai 1996: 7). According to Kanai (1996), Japanese patriarchy consists of three elements. The first element is a social structure that binds the family firmly to the lifelong employment system, a seniority-based wage system and enterprise unions. The second is that the household is the basic unit in tax and pension systems. The third is that the welfare system is managed on condition of a gender division based on sexism. Kanai (1996) argues that the women’s movement has failed to weaken this patriarchal control of the life cycle. For example, during the United Nations Decade

¹²⁸ See Chapter 1.

¹²⁹ See Chapter 1.

¹³⁰ A career track and a non-career track have been created since EEOL was enforced. See Chapter 1 and the previous section 3-2-2.

for Women, it emerged that discrimination against women in Japan was mainly caused by the gender division represented by the corporate warrior and the professional housewife. As a consequence, this division of labour has been weakened to some degree, but Kanai (1996) suggests that feminism's recognition and analysis of gender politics in Japan is not developed enough.

In connection with the lack of a perspective on gender politics in Japanese feminisms, Kanai (1996) also criticises the fact that feminism in Japan has been led by the Japanese government and local government, which she describes as the 'crisis of feminism within administration' (Kanai 1996: 9). For example, women are encouraged to participate in society, including volunteer activities, by governmental administrative bodies. This seems to liberate women from being 'professional housewives', but 'I fear that these moves might lead to the restructuring of the patriarchal system into a new form' (Kanai 1996: 9–10). Thus, even though women independently participate in community activities for the nursing of old people, the movement promoted by governmental administrative bodies might establish a new social system based on women's unpaid work in the name of their participation in society. In other words, it is nothing but the exploitation of women's labour. Kanai (1996) quotes from Maria Mies and argues that it is no more than 'the grand mobilization of nonwage labour by the capitalistic patriarchal nation-state' (Mies 1988, in Kanai 1996: 10). This patriarchal control of unpaid female work still remains alive as a global system in conspiracy with capitalism and has spread throughout the world, including the South. Kanai (1996) argues that, both theoretically and practically, feminism in Japan should go beyond the administrative feminism reflecting the relation between patriarchal capitalism and women.

In addition, Kanai (1996) suggests that there are three issues which the feminist movement in Japan should tackle today. The first is to overcome nationalistic feminism, which condenses into the issue of former comfort women. The relation between nationalism and feminism should be challenged. At the same time, feminists should pay attention to women's oppression in other countries with huge gaps in the economy and different backgrounds to women's positions, such as the difference between the North and the South. This consideration will prevent feminism in Japan from falling into ethnocentrism. The second issue is to establish theories and movements of eco-feminism in Japan, because Japan should take responsibility for the destruction of nature in Asian and Third World countries. Consideration of this issue will keep eco-feminism away not only from conservative ideologies praising *bosei*, but also from nationalistic ideologies. The third

issue is to establish theories that challenge company-centred patriarchy and suggest alternatives to the current social power structure. As Kanai (1996) points out, women are positioned as professional housewives by company-centred patriarchy and are also encouraged to work in the name of social participation. Kanai (1996) claims that, unless people break free from company-centred patriarchy, 'feminism within administration' might theoretically be used as grounds for the exploitation of women's unpaid work. In order to accomplish this task, Kanai (1996) suggests that feminism in Japan should discuss the right to self-determination for women and minorities.

Kanai (1996) also suggests that the revival of radical feminism will contribute to achieving these goals, owing to the fact that radical feminism focuses on the power relation between women and men, namely patriarchy, and issues of gender politics. This suggestion is also a reflection of feminists' self-examination. According to Kanai (1996), radical feminism has not taken root in Japan, because feminists have not made enough efforts to discuss the psychological and cultural oppression of women, and because the concept of gender has developed in sociology rather than the field of feminism. This has resulted in a lack of radical feminism in Japan. The revival of radical feminism might be a key to opening the next door to break free from corporate-centred patriarchy.

Kanai's view of patriarchy in Japan as 'corporate-centred patriarchy' hits the mark. This patriarchy has clearly divided men and women into two roles, in which women take on the burden of domestic work. Additionally, not only part-time jobs with low wages, but also unpaid community activities promoted by local governments tend to add to women's gendered role. As Kanai (1996) argues, the crisis of feminism within administration is a serious issue. She does not mention how and when this crisis started, but I suggest that the turning point for feminism in Japan in the post-war period was 1975, when the *Lib* faded away and the United Nations Decade for Women started. After that, we can see that, instead of activism, political and legal reform became a central subject in feminism, of which the symbol was the 1986 EEOL in response to CEDAW. This mainstream has been supported everywhere by 89 gender equality promotion centres (National Council of Women's Centres 2009), established by the government and local government, mainly since the 1980s. While women's activism has arisen once again since the nuclear disaster in 2011, it seems that feminism has as yet been unable to get over this crisis. Kanai (1996) suggests that there is potential for radical feminism to achieve a breakthrough, but it might not be so easy to do so because of the rise of the post-feminist generation.

3–4 Kimiyo Kano/ The *Bosei* Illusion

One of key elements supporting patriarchy is *bosei*. This has always been one of the central issues for feminists in Japan, such as the debate on *bosei*¹³¹ during the Taisho era. During the pre-war period and wartime, the *bosei* ideology was used politically in order to encourage women to contribute to the state, and women, including feminists, actively met the demands of the imperialist state. It is clear that *bosei* is quite an essential issue, but Kimiyo Kano, born in 1940, a historian, argues that the word *bosei* was not used until the early 1910s, which indicates that the concept is an illusion. In connection with patriarchy and *bosei*, throughout her life she has also attacked the Emperor system, such as his war guilt, which might be motivated by her personal experience as a survivor of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima on 6 August 1945. Her analysis indicates that the *bosei* ideology, patriarchy and the Emperor system are intricately intertwined and also support each other.

Looking up the definition of the word *bosei* in Japanese in order to learn how it is generally understood in Japan, a Japanese-language dictionary, the fifth edition *Kojien* (1998) says that *bosei* is ‘the nature of woman as a mother’.¹³² The meaning of *bosei-ai* (maternal love) is ‘a mother’s inborn and instinctive love for her children’.¹³³ In a word, *bosei* is defined as a mother’s instinct. However, Kano ([1991] 2009) disagrees with this definition, because the word *bosei* did not exist in the Japanese language until the early 1910s.

Tracing the word *bosei* to its origin, Kano ([1991] 2009) refers to Yamada’s essay (1929, in Kano [1991] 2009) that the Japanese word *bosei-hogo* (the protection of motherhood) was originally invented through the introduction of the German women’s group ‘Band für Mutterschaft’, founded under the influence of Ellen Key. In fact, in Yamada’s husband’s essay about the German women’s group, published in 1916, the word *bosei* was used in the title. However, instead of *bosei*, the word *botai* (the state of being a mother) was used in the main body of the essay. According to Kano ([1991] 2009), the word ‘motherhood’ in English and ‘mutterschaft’ in German used to be translated not only as *bosei*, but also *botai* and *boken* (maternal rights) when translating Western feminist books in those days. In the case of *botai*, this is a specific and also simple situation in which a woman just becomes a mother, regardless of her nature. This accords with the definition of motherhood in an English-language dictionary, the sixth edition *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of*

¹³¹ See Chapter 1.

¹³² My translation.

¹³³ My translation.

Current English (2000), which gives the meaning as ‘the state of being a mother’. *Boken* means specific rights belonging to mothers, originally aimed at liberating mothers from social norms, the marriage system or gender divisions based on sexism (Kano [1991] 2009). In this way, there were three types of translation of motherhood at that time.

Kano ([1991] 2009) suggests that the popularisation of the new word *bosei* was triggered by Akiko Yosano’s¹³⁴ essay about *bosei* published in 1916. According to Kano ([1991] 2009), in the heated feminist debate over the protection of *bosei* from 1918, the words *botai* and *boken* were no longer used, and *bosei* was widely employed by feminists. As the word *bosei* spread, it became separate from the meanings of *botai* and *boken*, and transformed into an abstract concept based on the nature and instincts of women.¹³⁵ As a consequence, the word *bosei* ironically became a compulsory ideology for women. In other words, *bosei* became the social norm for women, giving them no other choice of identity, and binding them to the norm by themselves under the name of women’s instincts. In this way, the *bosei* ideology was imposed from both the outside and from within women. The imposition from inside was stronger than the imposition from outside, such as the slogan ‘Good wife, Wise mother’. Kano ([1991] 2009) points out that *bosei* emphasises that mothers never mind sacrificing themselves for their children and that mothers always forgive their children, as long as *bosei* is defined as mothers’ instinct. Kano ([1991] 2009) suggests that this concept of *bosei*, which forces women to exhibit self-sacrifice and forgiveness, might be related to the cult of the Bodhisattva of Mercy¹³⁶ with selfless love in Buddhism.

Over time, the *bosei* ideology came to be used to support the Emperor’s power. Kano ([1991] 2009) insists that admiring *bosei* encouraged women to have many children as future soldiers who would protect the Emperor and to bear up under misfortune if their sons were killed on the battlefield for the Emperor, especially from the Manchurian Incident in 1931 to the Second World War. This indicates that the *bosei* ideology played an important role in the conduct of the war of aggression in conspiracy with the Emperor’s authority. Kano (1979) refers to Itsue Takamure’s argument¹³⁷ (1944, in Kano 1979: 68–9): ‘The mother’s will...is the Emperor’s will’,¹³⁸ and poses the question of why a

¹³⁴ See Chapter 1.

¹³⁵ Itsue Takamure, whom I introduced in Chapter 1, defined *bosei* as a nature that was intrinsic to a mother, in her book *Renai-Sosei* (The Creation of Love) published in 1926.

¹³⁶ The Bodhisattva of Mercy in Buddhism tends to be seen as a symbol of benevolent mothers in Japan. See Chapter 7.

¹³⁷ See Chapter 1.

¹³⁸ My translation.

mother's will had to be authorised by the Emperor's will. Kano (1979) suggests that mothers realised their own will was merely an illusion, so that they unconsciously needed to borrow the Emperor's authority in order to make a false show of authority or to identify themselves. In this way, the *bosei* ideology and the Emperor system supported each other.

Similarly, a relation between women and the Emperor can also be seen in national policy during the early period of modernisation before the word *bosei* was created (Kano 1979, [1991] 2009). It is clear that the Emperor system is patriarchal, but when the Meiji government defined the Emperor as head of the nation under the 1890 Meiji Constitution and announced this new definition to the people, the Meiji government emphasised that the founder of the Imperial Family in Japan was the Goddess of the Sun, *Amaterasu-Omikami*,¹³⁹ rather than the first male Emperor, Jimmu.¹⁴⁰ Consequently, people were under the illusion that the Emperor was a merciful mother of the people (Kano 1979). In this context, mothers brought up their babies on behalf of the Emperor and returned their young sons to the Emperor as a matter of course when their sons were called into the armed forces.

In conclusion, Kano (1979) argues that mothers, including feminists, and the Emperor were accomplices in war crimes in terms of supporting the war in cooperation with the *bosei* illusion. This collusive relation has actually encouraged Japanese people to lack a sense of war guilt. Kano ([1991] 2009) also argues that unless the word *bosei* disappears from Japanese dictionaries, Japan's acknowledgement of war guilt will not improve.

I find myself convinced by Kano's argument that the word *bosei* was merely produced and spread during the process of importing Western feminist ideas and the feminist debate about the protection of *bosei*. In other words, it might be possible to say that *bosei* is an illusion constructed by feminists. In addition, the *bosei* ideology was used politically during the pre-war period and wartime. Like Kano, I think that *bosei* has also been needed by women in order to secure their status as mothers not only within their family but also in society. In fact, despite criticism of dualism, the emphasis on *bosei* continues to be used by women in various places, such as the current anti-nuclear movement. It also seems that this

¹³⁹ According to the mythological stories in the *Kojiki* (The Record of Ancient Matters), the oldest book of Japanese history, and the *Nihon-Shoki* (The Chronicles of Japan), *Amaterasu-Omikami* is considered to be an ancestor of the Imperial Family in Japan.

¹⁴⁰ The *Kojiki* and the *Nihon-Shoki* say that the first Emperor, Jimmu, a direct descendant of *Amaterasu-Omikami*, ascended the throne in 660 BCE.

essentialist concept, which perpetuates patriarchy, is widely accepted by men. The *bosei* illusion has developed into one of the central issues in Japanese feminisms.

3–5 Yuko Suzuki/ Imperialist feminism and War Guilt

The Emperor system as a symbol of patriarchy, supported by *bosei*, is another characteristic of Japanese society. Like Kano, Yuko Suzuki, born in 1949, is a historian who attacks the Emperor system and issues of former comfort women. In her work, the Emperor's war guilt, but also feminists' responsibility for war, is also couched in terms of their support for Japan's wars of aggression and their self-identity as victims after the war. She (2001, 2002) then argues that mainstream feminism in Japan was imperialist feminism.

In Japan, the Emperor was identified as the head of state under the 1889 modernised Constitution. Suzuki (2002) argues that the ideology of the Emperor system, with its gender, class and ethnic discrimination, emphasised Japanese superiority over other Asian people, and justified a chain of wars of aggression. As a result, Japan became the only imperial state in Asia, which encouraged Japanese people to identify themselves as a first-class nation. The Emperor was also placed at the top of a hierarchical pyramid based on the ideology of family-state,¹⁴¹ in which people were forced to devote themselves to the Emperor and risk their lives to fight to protect him. This 'national religion',¹⁴² in the name of the Emperor system has led to Japan's ethnocentrism (Suzuki 2002: 106).

Suzuki (2001, 2002) views mainstream feminism during the pre-war and war periods as being involved in this 'national religion'. According to Suzuki (2002), women's movements in Japan can be divided into two types. One of these was women's proletarian activism, which emerged around the 1920s under the impact of socialist feminism, attacking gender, class and ethnic discrimination. However, this was short-lived and not part of mainstream feminism, because of latent patriarchal ideas and ethnocentrism rooted in the male-dominated proletarian movements. The other strand was the campaign for the extension of women's political rights on equal terms with men with the New Women's Association,¹⁴³ founded in 1919 under the leadership of Raicho Hiratsuka¹⁴⁴ and Fusae

¹⁴¹ See Chapter 1.

¹⁴² My translation.

¹⁴³ The New Women's Association was the first political women's group in Japan.

¹⁴⁴ See Chapter 1.

Ichikawa.¹⁴⁵ In 1924, activists integrated several women's groups and established the League for the Attainment of Women's Political Rights. In 1925, the association name was changed to Women's Suffrage League, and this became the mainstream feminist movement and lasted for a long time. In those days, suffragists identified themselves with the nation under the family-state ideology, upholding the Emperor and actively supporting Japan's war of aggression. In fact, Hiratsuka (1936, in Suzuki 2002) stated that she was happy to uphold the Emperor, and Ichikawa (1941, in Suzuki 2002) declared that she would like to devote herself to the fascist movement. Suzuki (2001: 32, 2002: 113) argues that this activism in mainstream feminism was no better than 'imperialist feminism',¹⁴⁶ in which feminist leaders committed 'double crimes'¹⁴⁷ (Suzuki 2002: 8): They promoted fascism to Japanese women and also drove colonised people to despair.

In spite of these crimes, as soon as Japan was defeated, the majority of feminists changed their attitudes entirely. Suzuki (2002) points out that they turned a blind eye to their war guilt, started to emphasise only their victimisation and suddenly began to behave like pacifists in order to protect themselves. They also welcomed a fabricated story that the Emperor was pacifist and that Japan's military merely took advantage of his power. In this convenient interpretation, not only were women victims, but the Emperor was as well. Of course, feminists completely overlooked his war guilt. This also indicates that they ignored the victims of Japan's war of aggression in Asia. Additionally, far from helping poor prostitutes suffering extreme poverty, they looked down on them. On the basis of these historical facts, feminism in the post-war period can be characterised by 'the lack of interest in Asia, a poor view of sexuality, in that prostitution was not regarded as sexual violence against women, ignoring its war-guilt, and ethnocentric pacifism'¹⁴⁸ (Suzuki 2002: 114), 'a feeling of being victimised,... an essentialist view of women as pacifists, and a lack of interest in the Emperor issue'¹⁴⁹ (Suzuki 2002: 79).

That Japanese women are pacifists and victims of the war is merely 'an illusion',¹⁵⁰ but this illusion, created by women's activism during the post-war era, also had an influence on academic feminism (Suzuki 2006: 70). According to Suzuki (2006), it is no exaggeration to say that the argument about women's war guilt was taboo for a long time. Even in a research field such as women's history, women used to be described only as victims

¹⁴⁵ See Chapter 1.

¹⁴⁶ My translation.

¹⁴⁷ My translation.

¹⁴⁸ My translation.

¹⁴⁹ My translation.

¹⁵⁰ My translation.

(Suzuki 2001). After the long silence, in the *Lib* during the early 1970s, some degree of consciousness of women's war guilt arose in criticising the essentialist illusion. This criticism did not always have a broad impact on Japanese society, but it offered a new viewpoint for feminists including Suzuki, so that some feminist activists, including Kano, started to attack this issue (Suzuki 2006). During the 1980s, women's war guilt began to be taken up for discussion in academic women's history, but it still tends to be considered marginal to the field.

During the 1990s, the issue of comfort women was finally revealed, exposing criminal acts such as sexual violence against women committed by the military under the command of the Emperor, and discrimination against colonised people. In response to these accusations, several women's groups were founded in Japan in order to tackle the issue, but Suzuki (2002) argues that feminists do not always take a strong interest in it. For example, feminists hardly ever argued about the Asian Women's Fund.¹⁵¹ From Suzuki's viewpoint (2002), this fund indicates that the Japanese government has never acknowledged the issue as a national crime. It also intended to end the issue by giving some compensation to former comfort women. Suzuki (2002) argues that the fund implies Japan's official toleration of sexual violence against women.

The Emperor's war guilt is a tough issue to attack. As former *lèse-majesté*¹⁵² indicates, there still seems to be an atmosphere within which discussing this issue is taboo in Japanese society. From feminist perspective, the Emperor issue, which is related to various issues such as patriarchy and the *ie* system, is arguably tough to tackle. On this point, Suzuki's argument about imperialist feminism is suggestive. Without criticism of imperialist feminism, feminism might not be able to move forward.

3–6 Kaku Sechiyama/ 'Good wife, Wise mother'

Unlike the four above-mentioned researchers' approaches to patriarchy, Kaku Sechiyama, born in 1963, a professor at the University of Tokyo, focuses on patriarchy in East Asia. According to Sechiyama (2013), East Asian women's social norms in the pre-modern era

¹⁵¹ The Asian Women's Fund was an incorporated foundation, established in 1995 under the control of the Japanese government. The aim was to distribute compensation to former comfort women, which was managed with the national budget and donations from individuals. After it finished distributing all the compensation on its schedule, it was dissolved in 2007.

¹⁵² *Lèse-Majesté* was abolished in 1947.

encouraged ignorance and obedience to men under the impact of Confucianism, but a new definition of women, ‘Good wife, Wise mother’,¹⁵³ replaced it in the modern period. Sechiyama (2013: 80) argues that this new image of women was ‘a product of modernization’ constructed in Japan and exported to other East Asian countries around the 1900s. He also analyses how modern and current gender divisions were established, and discusses the emphasis on *bosei* and maternal love for children.

The first aspect of Sechiyama’s interest in modern patriarchy in Japan (2013) is when and how modern housewives came into existence in Japan. At the beginning of modernisation, the majority of people were engaged in the primary industries, 66.7% in 1906, 64.3% in 1910 (in Sechiyama 2013). In those days, it was quite natural for married women to engage in farm work in agricultural districts in Japan. After that, as industrial capitalism developed and clearly built the market upturn during the First World War (1914–18), the income level of the nation increased in almost all social classes during the Taisho period (1912–26). This created a new style of family depending on only a single income. This certainly laid the financial groundwork for the appearance of modern housewives, but Sechiyama (2013) argues that there was one more essential factor, which is the core of modern patriarchy, affecting the formation of the new gendered norm, and this was the slogan ‘Good wife, Wise mother’, adopted by the Meiji government. Sechiyama (2013: 61) refers to some scholars’ works such as Fukaya (1981, in Sechiyama 2013) and explains the definition of ‘Good wife, Wise mother’ – ‘Although refracted by ancient restrictions derived from Confucian norms, it was developed historically in Japan against a background of intense nationalism and as Western ideas on women’s education were absorbed.’ Thus, the purposes of the ideology of ‘Good wife, Wise mother’ were: ‘to reinforce ideas on women’s virtues that were accepted from antiquity; to broaden women’s views of the nation state; and to promote a type of education for women that would give them the knowledge needed to raise a new generation of excellent citizens’ (Sechiyama 2013: 61). This did away with the practices of the past, and exhorted women to become housewives devoting themselves to bringing up their children in the interests of the state. Sechiyama (2013) focuses on the very similar words describing the gender division of women in East Asian countries: ‘Good wife, Wise mother’ in Japanese, ‘Wise wife, Good mother’ in Chinese and ‘Wise mother, Good wife’ in Korean. Sechiyama (2013) then questions where ‘Good wife, Wise mother’ originated and how it spread across East Asia.

¹⁵³ See Chapter 1.

Before this question, it is obvious to say that social norms for women during the pre-modern period in East Asia were clearly based on Confucianism. Sechiyama (2013) takes note of the concept of virtue, *rei* (a general term or norm that maintains social order), which is regarded as an important teaching in Confucianism. *Rei* dictates that a woman should obey her father before marriage, her husband during marriage, and her sons after the death of her husband. Thus, the image of women was based on chastity and obedience to men, in which they were defined as unthinking and uninformed and not expected to contribute to their children's intellectual development.

However, women were redefined as 'Good wife, Wise mother' with modernisation. Investigating the roots of 'Good wife, Wise mother' in Japan, it is said that Masanao Nakamura,¹⁵⁴ an enlightenment thinker, was the first person to use this phrase. In his article in the magazine of Japanese enlightenment *Meiroke*¹⁵⁵ at the beginning of the Meiji period, 'Wise mother, Good wife' was used as a symbol of civilisation and enlightenment (Fukaya 1981, in Sechiyama 2013). After that, Arinori Mori,¹⁵⁶ the Minister of Education in the first cabinet, adopted the phrase 'Wise mother, Good wife', expecting that women would contribute to the state by reproducing the next generation.

According to Sechiyama (2013), 'Good wife, Wise mother' was a nationalistic ideology designed to unify the state, accepting gender equality in terms of contributions to the state on condition that gender divisions should be maintained. This national focus on women led to a high regard for *bosei*, which became the modern view of women. It is clear that this new definition went against the Confucian view that women should blindly follow their husbands and that 'an ignorant woman is virtuous' (Sechiyama 2013: 78). However, Sechiyama (2013) argues that the ideology of 'Good wife, Wise mother' was not a severe criticism of Confucian norms, but rather was a reinterpretation of Confucian views. In the modelling of the nation-state as a big family, namely *kazokukokka-kan* (the family-state ideology),¹⁵⁷ linked to Confucian ideas that a family is based on loyalty and filial piety, the concept of 'Good wife, Wise mother' was developed as a norm that women should

¹⁵⁴ Masanao Nakamura (1832–91) was a scholar who was sent to the UK by the shogunate and absorbed information on Western modernisation during the last days of the Tokugawa shogunate in the middle of the nineteenth century.

¹⁵⁵ In order to spread Enlightenment philosophy, Arinori Mori and his comrades, including Masanao Nakamura, established an academic society *Meiroke* in 1873, and started to publish the social criticism Journal *Meiroke* in 1874

¹⁵⁶ Arinori Mori was also a chairperson of *Meiroke*.

¹⁵⁷ See Chapter 1.

contribute to the family-state. In this view, women should stay in a divided role and were not allowed to surpass men.

Sechiyama (2013) also argues that the phrase and concept of ‘Good wife, Wise mother’ were exported from Japan to China and Korea. For example, in 1905, the similar phrase ‘Wise mother, Good wife’ appeared in a newspaper in China, in the context that a ‘Wise mother, Good wife’ was needed in order to bring up the next generation who would support the building of a modern state. As far as Sechiyama (2013) is aware, this was the first mention of the phrase in China. It is said that this newspaper belonged to an extra-departmental body of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, which indicates that ‘Good wife, Wise mother’ is Japanese in origin, used as a kind of propaganda in China for the policy of the Meiji government. After that, this phrase was often used when the necessity of building a modern state was discussed. Sechiyama (2013) then suggests that this new definition of women was introduced to China during the first decade of the 1900s. In the case of the Korean peninsula under the Japan-Korea Annexation Treaty of 1910,¹⁵⁸ there are few materials remaining from those days, but from Sechiyama’s (2013) investigation, the first time the phrase ‘Good wife, Wise mother’ appeared in Korea was in the reader’s column of a newspaper in 1918. After that, ‘Wise mother, Good wife’ was used in another newspaper. Sechiyama (2013) suggests that this new definition of women was introduced to China and Korea during the early twentieth century.

In Japan, the framework of this modern patriarchy against the background of the slogan ‘Good wife, Wise mother’ has been passed on to contemporary patriarchy. According to Sechiyama (2013), in terms of the gender division whereby men are productive workers and women are reproductive workers, contemporary patriarchy has the same basic structure as early modern patriarchy. One more common characteristic is that maternal love for children tends to be much stronger than conjugal love, in contrast to the family based on conjugal love in the West (Sechiyama 2013). Originally, in Japan, great importance was attached to succession down the paternal family line. In other words, women used to be able to secure their position as a member of the family only by having male children. This tendency to emphasise *bosei* and maternal love in modern patriarchy has been handed on to contemporary patriarchy. On the other hand, Sechiyama (2013) points out that the only difference between them is that contemporary housewives have been allowed to enter the labour market, as long as they continue to engage in reproductive

¹⁵⁸ Under the Japan-Korea Annexation Treaty of 1910, Korea was under the control of Japan from 1910 to 1945. This ended in 1945 due to Japan’s defeat.

labour. Interestingly, although they have been encumbered with a double burden, these patriarchal norms and conditions, with their emphasis on maternalism, have arguably been accepted by women (Sechiyama 2013). In 1992, when asked whether husbands should work outside the home and wives should take care of the housekeeping, overall, 60.1% of people aged over 20 agreed with this idea of a gender division, including 55.6% of women. In particular, 66.0% of housewives who did not have jobs were in agreement (Prime Minister's Office of Japan 1992, in Sechiyama 2013). Recently, the percentage of respondents who agree with the gender division has tended to drop, to 39.9% of all women and 46.8% of housewives (Cabinet Office of Japan 2007, in Sechiyama 2013). However, Sechiyama (2013: 111) argues that, in comparison with America, in which childcare such as baby-sitting has been partially marketised, childcare is still considered to be a 'service of love' rather than labour in Japan, where buying childcare service is generally regarded as demonstrating a lack of affection for children.

As Sechiyama addresses, people in Japan are seemingly reluctant to accept childcare as a business, in contrast to America. When I lived in America as an MA student for a year, I discovered that baby-sitting was a major part-time job for girls, where parents employ a baby-sitter and enjoy their own time. However, this is probably viewed negatively in Japan and seen as a loss of *bosei*. The attitudes of people towards gender divisions have been changing little by little over time, but the emphasis on *bosei* can still be seen in various places, which indicates that maternalism is arguably an essential idea in securing women's identity in Japan.

3–7 Conclusion

Throughout this review of five scholars' published works, I found some specific issues in Japanese feminisms, such as the *ie* system, corporate-centred patriarchy, *bosei*, the Emperor system, imperialist feminism and 'Good wife, Wise mother', similar to the wider feminist scholarship about Japan, as I showed in Chapters 1 and 2. With these key issues in mind, after I discuss my methodology in Chapter 4, I will analyse my participants' arguments based on the interviews I conducted with them.

4 Engaging Feminist Scholars in Japan

4–1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to trace the process of this research, which started with reading widely on Japanese feminisms against the background of historical events during the last one and a half centuries. I subsequently interviewed twelve prominent feminist scholars in Japan. By going through the process, I will explain why I employed qualitative research, why I decided to focus on academic feminism, how I chose participants, how I developed the interview questions, and how I arranged the interviews. In this study, the participants were powerful in terms of their seniority and professional positions, and I struggled with this issue. I will also describe how I challenged the imbalanced relations with these scholars, and how they treated me. Additionally, I will discuss the criticisms made by some participants of my research, such as cultural essentialism, Orientalism and nationalism. Finally, I will explain how I analysed the data.

At the beginning of my PhD programme in 2010/11, I read books and traced the history of feminism in Japan over the past 150 years of modernisation, in order to understand how feminism is related to key events, historical circumstance and social institutions influencing Japan's modernisation (see Chapter 1). For example, during the early period of modernisation, under Civil Law, the family-state ideology upholding the Emperor system was embedded in the *ie* system, which was imbued with patriarchal ideas. The feminist debate about whether *bosei* should be protected by the state emerged during the Taisho era and was a significant event in first-wave feminism. If the Japanese state had not introduced the concept of modern state and the slogan 'Good wife, Wise mother', such a feminist debate might not have happened. During the war, *bosei* was also used as a political ideology in order to encourage women to support the war. Thus, my reading suggested that the development of feminism was linked to history, culture and politics.

After that, I chose five prominent feminist researchers in Japan and reviewed their books (see Chapter 3). There are few non-Japanese academics who are interested in Japanese feminisms, and furthermore, they tend to focus on specific feminist issues, rather than feminism itself. Even within Japan, as I mentioned, recognised feminist theories have not yet been established and I could not find any academic work that comprehensively

analysed Japanese feminisms (see Introduction). Thus, at that time, the only way that I could have formed a picture of Japanese feminisms was by reviewing the works of five eminent Japanese scholars (see Chapter 3). Four of them, Ueno, Kano, Sechiyama and Suzuki, are authors of books that I had brought with me from Japan before I started this research, in order to read and prepare for the literature review. I wanted to bring more books to the UK, but their books and twelve books in the series *Feminism in Japan* [日本のフェミニズム] (2009–11) were all that I was able to pack into a suitcase and carry with me at that time. Fortunately, I found English translations of the work of the fifth scholar, Kanai, in the library at the University of York. However, these works only partially describe the characteristics of feminism in Japan by discussing specific issues or focusing on specific periods. For example, Kanai (1996: 8) points out that feminism in Japan has failed to loosen the grip of ‘corporate-centred patriarchy’. Sechiyama (2013) argues that a new norm of womanhood ‘Good wife, Wise mother’, proposed by the Meiji government, was constructed through the reinterpretation of the Confucian view of women. Suzuki (2001: 32, 2002: 113) views mainstream feminism during the pre-war era as ‘imperialist feminism’.¹⁵⁹ However, in terms of indicating specific characteristics of feminism in Japan, their works seemed to be helpful for my research, given that a comprehensive study of Japanese feminisms has not yet been done. Their analyses helped me understand some aspects of feminism in Japan, and were more illuminating for me than the works of other scholars in terms of discussion of the issues central to or characteristics of feminism in Japan.

After this reading and literature review, I listed various historical events, politics and issues specific to feminism in Japan. I then reconsidered my research questions, and my main question remains:

What are the particular characteristics of feminism in Japan?

Subsidiary questions are:

How has the development of feminism in Japan been influenced by Japan’s culture, politics and religion against the background of historical events?

How different is feminism in Japan from that elsewhere?

The main question and the subsidiary questions were derived from my personal experience of culture shock, the starting point of this research (see Introduction). In order to identify

¹⁵⁹ My translation.

key characteristics of feminism in Japan, I also decided to compare feminism in Japan with others with regard to some issues, but not all issues. This is because it was impossible for me to discuss all my findings from a comparative perspective. Only a few scholars had studied feminism itself internationally at the time of my research. Because of language problems, I could only rarely access feminist scholarship and information emanating from non-English language regions such as other East Asian and some Western countries. Additionally, there was not always available all the information that I would have needed in order to conduct a comparative study. Therefore, I could not attempt a systematic comparison with feminism in other countries, and in the subsidiary questions, I used the word 'elsewhere', rather than specific countries. Establishing differences without a systematic comparison of other contexts is problematic, but in this endeavour, I have tried to explore some aspects of differences between feminisms in Japan and in other parts of the world.

While feminism crosses the world, it is affected by different local conditions, history, legal and political systems in every country or region. Even within one country, there are also several feminist ideas as well as diverse cultures. Similarly, feminism in Japan is diverse and I aimed to identify throughout this research the heterogeneous characteristics of feminism in Japan.

4-2 Qualitative Research Focusing on Academia

I then considered how to approach Japanese feminisms. Until I quit my job as a newspaper reporter and entered academia, I had never considered whether I should use qualitative or quantitative methods, because a journalistic report is based on face-to-face interviews. As the need arises, the media also conducts opinion surveys, especially about politics. In journalism, there is no room for argument about methods. By thinking about methodology in academia, I clearly realised the differences between journalism and academia.

In academia, there is a vigorous qualitative/quantitative debate, and many feminists take critical attitudes towards traditional quantitative methods and argue for qualitative methods (see, for example, Letherby 2003). Quantitative methods are often seen as more scientific, but many thinkers argue that they cannot reveal 'truth' in social research, because science itself is a product of society (Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002: 44). During the 1970s, many feminists began to lodge objections to the uncritical use of quantitative methods in feminist

research, because this method originated from what men needed in male-dominated academia (Oakley 1999). In other words, it is a product of patriarchal consciousness (Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002). One of the central issues that feminists have challenged is the ability of patriarchal consciousness to identify social reality, because masculine ideology is likely to prevent scholars from exploring gender differences, gender relationships and various problems derived from gender.

That patriarchal consciousness is our conceptual prison. But if we are born into it and it is all we know, how do we comprehend it as a prison, let alone destroy it for a vision of freedom that is not inherently apparent? The fashioning of our own tools, like the finding of women lost to history, has become our feminist task. (Bleier 1984: 199)

Mies (1983) points out, too, that there is a danger that women as an oppressed group are ignored within this prison. Stanley and Wise (1993: 27) argue that social science ‘omit[s] or distort[s] the experience of women’. An ingrained patriarchal consciousness can be seen not only in academia, but also in society.

Of course, quantitative research is not necessarily useless.¹⁶⁰ In fact, Census data is often used by researchers in order to show trends in population, employment and immigration. In academic feminism, quantitative research is also usefully employed to investigate such issues as gender segregation and the gender wage gap. Here, what needs to be considered is that uncritically depending only on quantitative research might bring problems. Such a method is generally regarded as value-neutral, but Billson (1991: 202) argues that society is not neutral on various issues relating to gender, race or sexuality, so that the objectivity of quantitative methods is merely ‘myth’. The categories chosen for data collection are far from neutral. As Jayaratne and Stewart (1991) point out, quantitative analysis also separates individuals from their everyday lives, simply regarding them as a numerical value, which is ineffective in finding ways to overcome various social problems. What quantitative methods can collect is ‘surface, perhaps trivial, data about the human experience’ (Billson 1991: 202–3). Traditional social science ‘concentrates on the distortion and misinterpretation of women’s experience’ (Westkott 1979: 423). Letherby (2003: 66) notes, ‘With specific reference to women’s experience the view is that much quantitative research has at the best misunderstood and at worst misrepresented women.’

I chose to conduct semi-structured in-depth interviews with feminists in Japan. As I experienced that my feminism did not necessarily agree with that of others and realised

¹⁶⁰ In this research where pertinent, I refer to quantitative research data such as percentage of female workers by age, the total fertility rate and domestic work hours per day.

that there were different attitudes towards feminism even among women studying feminism, it might be possible to say that each woman has her own feminism, even if they have the same culture and religion. I assumed that participants might have wide-ranging views depending on the particular issues that they had tackled. In order to listen to each participant's argument carefully, I decided that semi-structured in-depth interviews would be suitable for my research.

During the process of preparation, I also considered whether I should focus on activism, academia or both. As Ehara (2009) notes, feminist theories in Japan are not yet fully developed, which indicates that it is not easy to comprehensively describe Japanese feminisms. In order to negotiate these difficulties, I considered two ways to approach feminism: activism and academia. If I followed Buckley's view (1997) that feminist theories in Japan developed outside academia, I should focus on activism. Nonetheless, activism happens in waves. It seems that women's activism has already passed its peak, which was the *Lib*. The feminist groups have broken up, and it was not easy to find feminist activists of that time. Even if I had been able to contact them, they would probably have mainly discussed the *Lib*. I judged that activism would not satisfy my aim of investigating the characteristics of Japanese feminisms.

The other choice was academia. If I chose this, it would be possible to grasp a fuller picture of feminism, including activism, by gathering together all the relevant data. Far more academic works have been published than activist writings and some feminist scholars are also activists. Considering these advantages, I decided to focus on contemporary academia and to interview prominent feminist scholars in Japan.

4-3 Participants

In qualitative research, there is no set sample size; it depends on the research questions, the research budget and the specific contexts in which the research is conducted (Patton 2002). I depended only on my savings for field work – I did not have recourse to funding from any agency. In this case, 'What is crucial is that the sampling procedures and decisions be fully described, explained, and justified...' (Patton 2002: 246). Following this suggestion, I set five conditions in order to choose participants. Firstly, they should be influential feminist academics. Secondly, they should have published much work, which was an indication of their influence and would also help me understand their research interests and

arguments before the interviews. Thirdly, participants from a variety of disciplines were needed in order to secure diverse viewpoints. Academic feminism is interdisciplinary, but it seemed that there were many sociologists who were interested in feminism, so I wanted to try to identify potential participants in other disciplines. Scholars who fulfilled the first and second conditions could be expected to be pioneers of academic feminism. In order to generate more perspectives, I added a fourth condition that younger academics were needed. The second generation has fewer scholars than the first generation, but I intended to contact only some of these researchers. It was difficult to find scholars in the third generation who met the first and second conditions, but I decided to contact at least one researcher. Fifthly, they should live in Tokyo or the neighbouring prefectures, where academic institutions are concentrated, because of my limited budget and time. In Tokyo, there is the National Diet Library, which is the biggest library in Japan in terms of its collections. I intended to search for historical literature at this library, so it was also convenient for me to stay in Tokyo during my fieldwork.

At the point in time when I made these conditions, I wondered how I should set specific criteria. As to the first and second conditions, the number of books and journal articles a scholar had published could be a criterion, but this proved difficult to establish. By entering scholars' names in Google Scholar and Amazon, I could obtain information about their books, but this did not always indicate all their published works. Even selecting the scholars for whom I would conduct searched in this way was problematic, because I needed to know who to search for. In Japan scholars do not always provide all information about their published work through their university official homepages, their personal blogs or the national website of researchers' database. More commonly, they provide information about some of their works, for example, only their key books. Information about other books, journal articles and presentation at conferences is omitted. Additionally, it was harder for female scholars of the older generation to have a full-time academic job, and some of them are still part-time lecturers. Information about their works is not generally provided on their official university homepage. Some freelance researchers also do not have their own website. Therefore, I could not count exactly how many books and journal articles they had published or the number of presentations given at conferences, and I could not set specific criteria to determine their influence based on numbers of published works. I also knew that before I selected potential participants, I should read their books in order to understand their works. However, I could not buy their books in the UK. There are few English versions of the relevant Japanese books, and my budget did not

allow me to order books from Japan. Nor did I have any rights to access online journals in Japan.

Eventually, I found potential participants in four ways. First, I found interesting the books of the five Japanese scholars that I had already reviewed for Chapter 3. I thought that I would like to ask them face-to-face how they perceived feminism in Japan and obtain the details of their views. Their work partially paints a picture of feminism in Japan, so I expected that their views would contribute to my research.

Secondly, I consulted 14 other books that I had brought from Japan, especially the series entitled *Feminism in Japan* (the new edition in twelve volumes, published in 2009–11), which contained anthologies of essays by feminist scholars and activists. This series, edited by well-known scholars, had been published as the feminist legacy of the pioneer generation of academic feminists for the next generation. So I realised that the most useful way to identify participants would be through this series. The new edition, which I had carried from Japan, was edited by eight scholars, of whom seven live in Tokyo and its environs. I had already read some of their key works and was interested in their ideas. I decided to request the seven editors¹⁶¹ for interviews. I had one more reason why I chose them as potential participants. In the preface to the old edition (1994, republished in the new edition), the four editors of that, Teruko Inoue, Chizuko Ueno, Yumiko Ehara and Masako Amano ([1994] 2009) argue that feminism in Japan is not imported from the West. This point engaged my interest. I wondered why they emphasised the autonomy of feminism in Japan, because I had not considered whether feminism in Japan was imported. I felt some distance from them and thought about whether this feeling arose from a generation gap or was it because of just differences in viewpoints. However, I could not decide on the reason. Their attitudes towards feminism in Japan seemed to be different from mine, and finally this motivated me to investigate their arguments.

Thirdly, this series gave me an opportunity to read various feminist essays selected as important works. Most authors belonged to the pioneer generation. I selected some essays that seemed to form a picture of feminism in Japan, and then I searched for information on the internet as far as I could about the authors' other works, their standpoints and academic careers. I then decided on seven potential participants from diverse disciplines and generations, of whom one was suggested by my supervisor.

¹⁶¹ Two of the seven editors are Chizuko Ueno and Mikiyo Kano, whose works I focus on in the literature review. See Chapter 3.

Finally, I tried to find information about other scholars through the internet, especially younger scholars, because the series does not include their work. These authors had published less work than the pioneer generation at the time of my searchers, so it was hard for me to collect information about them from the UK. I only found one scholar who was in her thirties and seemed to be interested in feminist theories in Japan. While searching for younger scholars, I also became interested in another scholar from the pioneer generation, who was studying feminist theories in Europe. I decided to contact these two scholars. In these four ways, I found 19 scholars in total.

From November to December 2011, I contacted the potential participants, mainly by email. I introduced myself, including details of my career, explained the aim of my research and invited them to be interviewed. In many cases, I found their email addresses on the official homepage of their universities. In other cases, I asked their universities to forward my email message to them, or asked their publishers to forward my letter. Of the 19 academics whom I contacted, three did not reply to me, one of whom I discovered had died just four days before I emailed her. Another four declined my invitation. One of them emailed me that as a feminist and also a sociologist she hesitated to tell me her own views of feminism, and that she did not like the idea that her views would be used as data for doctoral research. I was shocked by her reply, which was unexpected but I respect her decision. Another researcher replied to me that she was interested in feminist theories, but was not studying feminism. Another scholar said that she was busy taking care of her parents. Another one, who was in her thirties, commented that my explanation about my methodology for this research was not enough. She suggested that I should give more explanation to her how I had chosen participants, how I would analyse the interview data and how I would deal with participants' private information. I apologised and provided additional details of the methodology that she needed, but she was not satisfied.

The remaining twelve readily accepted, since of course they know that participation in doctoral research contributes to academia. These included all the five authors whose works I have reviewed in Chapter 3. Two of these participants are also editors of the series *Feminism in Japan* (2009–11). Four other editors of the series also agreed to be interviewed¹⁶². The last three participants were selected from authors whose work appears in the series. The list of participants¹⁶³ in order of birth year is:

¹⁶² I also invited one more editor of the series, but she did not reply to me.

¹⁶³ Their positions are as of January 2012.

Masako Amano (1938–2015¹⁶⁴, sociology, E¹⁶⁵) was the president of Tokyo Kasei Gakuin University. She was interested in women's networks in communities from wartime to the present day, such as cooperation between housewives, women's social activities and small-scale enterprises. By focusing on ordinary women's daily lives, she investigated how women had hewn new paths to liberate themselves.

Mikiyo Kano (1940, history, L¹⁶⁶ and E) works in women's and gender history. She is a survivor of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima in 1945, and is pursuing the question of the Emperor's responsibility for the war. She has also examined relations between women and the Emperor system such as the *bosei* ideology that supported imperialism during the pre-war period and wartime.

Teruko Inoue (1942, sociology, E) is a professor at Wako University. Her primary research interest is 'women and the media'. She is one of the academics who participated in the *Lib*, through which she encountered women's studies. She then began to give a series of lectures on women's studies at Wako University in 1974, which was a starting point of academic feminism in Japan.

Yoshiko Kanai (1944, philosophy, ethics, L) is a professor at Rissho University. The starting point of her research was Hegel's philosophy and early Marxist ideas, but her interest extended to feminism in the mid-1980s with her book *Feminism in the Turning Point* (1985). Currently, she locates herself in the field of ethics and philosophy, building a bridge between feminism and ethics.

Aiko Ogoshi (1946, philosophy, religious studies) is a professor at Kinki University. Her research interests are feminist theories, gender, sexuality, religion and violence against women. In cooperation with feminist activists, she has also tackled the comfort women issue, pursued the issue of the Emperor's war guilt and argued for the necessity of transnational feminism.

Junko Minamoto (1947, religious studies) is a part-time lecturer at Kansai University. Her father was a priest at a Buddhist temple, which motivated her to study Buddhism. During the 1980s, she encountered Western feminist theology, which stimulated her to attack sexism in Buddhism and Shintoism. She argues that these religions are the root of gender discrimination in Japan.

¹⁶⁴ Masako Amano died from breast cancer on 1 May 2015 (*Asahi Newspaper* May 2015a).

¹⁶⁵ E indicates that the participant was an editor of *Feminism in Japan* (2009–11).

¹⁶⁶ L indicates that I reviewed her or his work in Chapter 3.

Chizuko Ueno (1948, sociology, L and E) is an honorary professor at the University of Tokyo, working on Marxist feminism, and also a public intellectual who is influential within society. She plays an active part as the chairperson of the board of directors of a feminist group, the Women's Action Network (WAN)¹⁶⁷ and also researches care issues in connection with unpaid domestic work.

Yuko Suzuki (1949, history, L) works in women's and social movement history. She (2001, 2002) criticises mainstream feminism in Japan during the pre-war period for being imperialist; she argues that its fascism led ordinary women into patriotic activities and to an emphasis on victimisation during the post-war period. She has also participated in women's activism and tackled the comfort women issue.

Yumiko Ehara (1952, sociology, E) is a professor and also a vice president at Tokyo Metropolitan University. She is one of the academics making a study of feminist theories. In her work, *Paradox of Feminism: Establishment and Diffusion* (2000), she points out that in Japan, the more feminism spreads, the more young women tend to regard it as an old-fashioned idea.

Ruri Ito (1954, sociology, E) is a professor at Hitotsubashi University. Her research interests are gender issues in international migration, globalisation and nation-state. Currently, she focuses on citizenship and migration issues in France, globalisation in reproductive labour, and women's experience of colonial modernity in Okinawa, the southern extremity of Japan.

Yeonghae Jung (1960, sociology) is a professor at Otsuma Women's University. She is ethnically South Korean but was born and brought up in Japan. Her research interests are identity, gender and ethnicity theories. On the basis of her personal experience, she argues that women are also discriminated against in ethnic minority activism. She also criticises racism in feminism.

Kaku Sechiyama (1963, sociology, L) is a professor at the University of Tokyo. He is one of the few male researchers on feminism in Japan. In his influential research on patriarchy in East Asia, he (2013) argues that the core of early modern patriarchy was the social norm of womanhood encapsulated in the slogan 'Good Wife and Wise Mother' adopted by the Meiji government, which spread to Korea and China.

¹⁶⁷ See Chapter 3.

Grouping participants by generation, ten participants, born from the 1930s to the 1950s, belong to the pioneer generation. Two participants, Jung and Sechiyama, born in the 1960s, are in the next generation. Sechiyama is the only man in the sample. I could not find younger scholars born after the 1970s whom I could invite to participate in my research. Participants' disciplines are not only sociology, but also women's history, ethics, philosophy and religious studies. These participants thus have diverse disciplines and perspectives. Ten academics' home ground is Tokyo, whereas Ogoshi and Minamoto work in the Kansai region, whose centre is Osaka. My budget was limited, but I was motivated to meet Ogoshi and Minamoto, who tried to develop feminist theories in Japan, by reading their work, so I invited them for an interview.

4-4 Interviewing, Ethics and Power

For the interviews, I prepared ten common questions for all participants (see Appendix 1) and specific questions for each (see Appendix 2). In order to identify how participants perceived feminism in Japan, at the start of the common questions, I aimed to investigate what specific issues characterising feminism in Japan they had recognised. I developed this first question on the basis of 'Feminism in Japan in Historical Context' (see Chapter 1) and 'Key Figures' Perspectives on Academic Feminism' (see Chapter 3). This was because I assumed that some issues central to feminism in Japan, which I had noted while writing these chapters, such as patriarchy, the *ie* system and *bosei*, might be focused on by the participants. I also expected, however, that other issues I had not yet anticipated may be raised. In either case, by discussing issues in which they had taken interest, I hoped that the foundations of feminism in Japan would stand out in bold relief.

The second and third questions were about the present state of, and problems to be solved, in feminism in Japan. The reason why I asked these questions was that I wanted to understand how the participants, especially the pioneer generation who had witnessed the *Lib*, perceived current feminism in Japan. In the 40 years since the *Lib*, there had been a backlash. Younger generations, who have fewer struggles with gender inequality than older generations in terms of legal rights, seem not to be interested in feminism. By analysing the participants' views of this current situation and suggestions to develop feminism, I sought to explore not only the generational gaps but also the prospects for further development of feminism in Japan.

In questions four, five and six, I intended to examine their views about anti-nuclear politics, including the atomic bombing, *bosei* and the Emperor system. These issues are actually connected with each other; Japan is the only nation that was attacked with atomic bombs during the war, the war was conducted under the command of the Emperor, and women were encouraged to support the war by praising *bosei*. *Bosei* also tends to be used as women's identity when they campaign against nuclear power or for peace.

The reason why I took up these issues was derived from my professional experience in journalism when I worked at the Nagasaki branch office of a newspaper for a year and a half, and reported on atomic issues such as nuclear politics, survivors' narratives of their experience and peace movements. Through fact-gathering in Nagasaki, I came to view atomic bombs as a symbol of political power and possibly the most potent bargaining counter against other countries. This is because the bombing was a historic event. In fact, before the war, Japan had successfully expanded its territory in Asia (Korean peninsula, parts of China and Taiwan) under the command of the Emperor, but after the bombing, Japan surrendered and lost all its colonies. Japan's defeat has affected its foreign policy, especially relations between Japan and America, and the Constitution of Japan. By reporting on atomic issues, including diplomatic issues such as the American nuclear umbrella, my views regarding the atomic bomb as a symbol of political power in the modern era, steering the fate of the nation, were further strengthened. At the time I applied for a PhD course, I already intended to include two key issues in my research: Japan as 'the imperialist ruler' with the Emperor as the head of state and colonies; and as 'the only atomic-bombed nation', about which I wrote in my research proposal. However, at that stage, I focused on the atomic bombing and related issues such as the Emperor system, but I did not refer to nuclear energy.

During the middle of my first year of the PhD, an unexpected world-shaking event occurred. At 14:46 local time (06:46 UK time) on 11 March 2011, there was the Great East Japan Earthquake measuring 9.0 on the moment magnitude scale, which triggered a massive tsunami. On that day in York, I was awakened by the ringing of my phone. It was my colleague, who had watched the news on TV. Immediately, I jumped out of bed, turned on my computer, and watched shocking scenes of the tsunami destroying towns without leaving any trace. A great many lives were lost and towns fell into ruin. This natural disaster directly affected the nuclear power plant in Fukushima, causing a radiation accident. The only atomic-bombed nation, which is now one of the foremost countries in developing nuclear technology, had to deal with this nuclear crisis, which had a great

impact internationally. Since then, campaigns against nuclear energy have been active, in which an emphasis on *bosei* can be seen. In Japan, it is not only the current campaigns but also women's peace movements that seem to emphasise *bosei*. For example, when women argue for the abolition of nuclear weapons, they tend to say 'for our children' rather than 'for us'. I felt alienated from these peace movements because I have no children. There are of course women who do not emphasise *bosei*. However, *bosei* might be emphasised by the media. In any case, *bosei* seemed to be a key issue in feminism in Japan. This motivated me to examine the link between nuclear issues and *bosei*. In response to the unexpected disaster and active campaigns against nuclear energy, I added an investigation into feminist attitudes towards nuclear power issues and *bosei*. Throughout my reading and tracing of feminism in its historical contexts, I also confirmed that the atomic bombing, the Emperor system and *bosei* were significant issues, so I decided to focus on them, including nuclear politics, in addition to more general questions.

The last four common questions (seven to ten) aimed to examine how the participants perceived feminism in Japan in terms of differences from other countries and regions, especially feminism in the West. As I stated in the previous section, the four participants who are the editors of *Feminism in Japan* ([1994] 2009), Inoue, Ueno, Ehara and Amano argue in the preface of the book that feminism in Japan is not imported from the West. In order to investigate why they emphasise the autonomy of feminism in Japan, I decided to ask them whether they thought feminism in Japan was imported and why they thought so. They also distinguish feminism in Japan from feminism in the West, so I developed a question about differences between feminisms in Japan and elsewhere, especially in the West and East Asia. Of course, my experience of studying in the UK made me realise that we had different feminisms, which strongly motivated me to investigate differences between feminisms in Japan and in other contexts (see Introduction). By analysing differences between feminisms in different contexts, I expected that I would be able to distinguish some particular characteristics of feminism in Japan.

The specific questions were diverse. For example, a question to Inoue, a pioneer who started to give a series of lectures on women's studies to Japan, was: 'Your definition of women's studies is "The study of women, by women, for women"¹⁶⁸ (Inoue [1981] 2009: 276). Is this still your view?' To Jung, a South Korean living in Japan, I asked: 'How do

¹⁶⁸ My translation.

you think that feminism should move beyond nationalism?’ I prepared between one and three questions each, suitable for each of their research interests.

In December 2011, I emailed participants with these questions written in Japanese. I had a reason for informing them of the questions in advance, which was based on my experience as a journalist. In some specific cases when I interviewed influential people, including researchers, politicians and presidents of major enterprises, I used to send them questions before the interviews. This is an efficient way to avoid wasting time both for interviewees and interviewers, in order to successfully complete the interview within a limited time. In the case of an interview with the owner of a large company, the public relations department often asks journalists to supply questions before the interview; thus, giving questions to interviewees before the meeting is common in journalism. I did not know that sending questions to interviewees in advance was not standard practice in social research, so I applied this journalistic practice to academic research. Indeed, although I emailed in advance that I would need at least an hour and a half for the interviews, one participant replied that she would have only an hour. In my experience, an hour is not enough for an in-depth interview. Conversely, an interview of more than two hours reduces powers of concentration. In order to avoid wasting time in any case, sending questions seemed necessary to me. When I met the participants, I brought extra hard copies of the questions for them, just in case they did not have the questions with them. I took all possible measures to ensure the success of my fieldwork. Reflecting on this process, sending questions to participants in advance was irregular, but this qualitative research on scholars’ views of feminism in Japan is different from general qualitative research on anonymous people’s private narratives. Academics are responsible for their arguments, which are published under their real names, so that sending questions to them in advance might not always be wrong in terms of giving them enough time to prepare their arguments for the interviews.

At the same time, I prepared the consent form for the interviews¹⁶⁹ (see Appendix 3), which was also my first experience of using such a form. In Japan, as elsewhere, consent forms are not employed by the press. Journalists, whose mission is to report what happened exactly and quickly, may sometimes explain to interviewees about ethical considerations such as protecting privacy or anonymity, but they never consider the necessity of consent

¹⁶⁹ Before the interviews, I received ethical approval from the Ethics Committee at the University of York.

forms. I realised that journalistic practice was once again different from academic practice in terms of the use of consent forms.

The consent form explained that this PhD study would use semi-structured and in-depth interviews, and that all the interviews would be recorded and transcribed by the researcher. I also stated that all the information, including typed transcripts of the interviews, would be kept secure, participants would be free not to respond to any questions and to withdraw from the study. Furthermore, I had to obtain their agreement that their name, details of their academic career and birth year would appear in the thesis and any publication. I also explained clearly that they would be sent the transcript and would be free to edit it, because their arguments and names would appear in my thesis, which would be kept by the university library and released online. Before the interviews, I explained about the consent form in Japanese and sent the consent form in English to all participants by email. One of participants asked me to inform her about quotations from her argument that I would use both in Japanese and English, so I emailed her that I would add this condition to the consent form.

Insofar as all participants and I are in the same academic feminist sphere, I am an insider in this research. Describing my position in detail, I have identified that I am an insider, but at the edge of academic feminism, because I have been practising feminism much longer than I have been working in academia. Furthermore, the most important issue to me in building rapport with participants was the imbalanced power relation. In interviews, there are two elements symbolising power: materials such as a tape-recorder and pen, and authority such as the status of academics (Letherby 2002). Moreover, by controlling the research, asking questions and analysing participants' narratives in social context, scholars usually have power over the researched. In order to solve the problem of unbalanced power, Stanley and Wise (1993: 168) argue that feminist researchers should try to equalize the relationship with the researched and conduct 'research with' them, because 'Treating people as objects – sex objects or research objects – is morally unjustifiable.' One of the ways to reduce the power gap is to show sisterhood. 'Feminist sisterhood... is a mutual support system providing a sense of "belonging" in a male-oriented world' (Oakley 1981: 279).

Unfortunately, these feminist discussions cannot be directly applied to my case, because the power relationship with participants in this research has a completely different balance.

In Confucian culture, where people have to respect their elders, younger people should treat older people kindly, listen respectfully and speak respectful language to them. Even to put forward a counterargument to older people is generally regarded as impolite. As the

seniority-based wage system in Japan indicates, seniority is accorded great importance everywhere, including schools, the workplace and private life. Similarly, the relationship between teachers and students has a hierarchical order, in which students are expected to follow teachers. Generally, students are trained at school to keep silent in class, where passivity is a virtue. In contrast with culture in the West, there are few discussions between students in class and teachers do not actively encourage students to ask questions, so that students keep silent and are hardly ever motivated to ask questions. Even if students have a question, they hesitate to ask. In my research, all the interviewees are influential academics who are older than I am, so that they clearly have overwhelming power over me.

Additionally, they are teachers and I am a student in the same academic feminist sphere, so that they have an insight into my research. In order to negotiate this double hierarchy, the main thing that I could do was to treat them respectfully. In preparation for the interviews, I of course checked my email every day and replied to them quickly. As I described above, during the process of preparation for the interviews I also sent the questions and consent form in advance in order not to waste their time. During my fieldwork in Japan, I also did my best to be polite to them.

I planned to stay in a female student flat in Tokyo from January to March 2012, since ten participants lived in Tokyo or the neighbouring prefectures, and the National Diet Library is also in Tokyo, which is the biggest library in Japan. After I arrived in Tokyo, I started work on reading those of my participants' 90 books which were not available in the UK that I had ordered online in advance. Reading interviewees' books was extremely important preparation in order to improve the quality of the interviews. This was based on my experience as a journalist. Whenever I interviewed experts, novelists or medical doctors, I always read some of their books before meeting them, which helped me to understand their work, ask specific questions related to what they had written, and have an accurate understanding of what they said in the interview. For example, when reporting medical issues, I used to study the newest medical technology, and memorise the names of specific medicines, their effects and side effects. Even though I had read their books, it is clear that my knowledge never matched their specialist knowledge, but they noticed during the interview that I had studied the issues in advance by reading, so they kindly explained the issues and actively contributed to the interview. Thus, reading is polite behaviour, too, which can lead to a trusting relationship with interviewees. If I had done no reading, interviewees might have been displeased with a lazy interviewer. Making good use of my experience, before the interviews, I read my participants' books and took notes of various

points, which was helpful to me in understanding their stance, research interests and arguments.

For the same reasons as reading, before the interviews I also attended Kano's two public lectures, 'Why was the Peaceful Use of Nuclear Power Compatible with the Campaigns against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs?'¹⁷⁰ on 21 January in Tokyo and 'The Representation of the Atomic Bombs and Gender'¹⁷¹ on 10 February in Niigata. Both of these were closely related to my research in terms of the atomic issues. I tape-recorded the lectures with oral consent from Kano and the host organisations. In Niigata, I was asked to dinner by Kano and had a good time not only with Kano but also some feminist academics who had attended the lecture, which was a good opportunity for me to get to know them. On 4 February, I also attended Inoue's final lecture just before her retirement from Wako University at the mandatory age, in which she gave a talk about her encounter with women's studies in the early 1970s and its development. I exchanged greetings with her before the lecture and asked whether I could tape-record it. Tape-recording was not allowed, but I obtained her agreement to quote from her lecture notes, which were officially distributed to all the people present by the university. Both before and after the lecture, she was very busy talking to her current and former students who had attended, so I could not talk to her about my research in detail, but her lecture helped me to grasp how she had established women's studies.

After I arrived in Japan, I also made appointments with participants for the interviews by email. I asked them to designate the place and time for the meeting, and accepted all their demands, because I could not conduct my research without their cooperation. The meeting places appointed by them were mainly their offices. I interviewed nine participants in their offices, and three in cafes near their homes. I wanted to avoid meeting them in cafes, because of noise. In order to avoid problems, I arrived at the meeting place thirty minutes before each meeting, checked if noise would prevent me from tape-recording and confirmed that it was less noisy than I had expected. I had asked participants to give me about an hour and a half for the interview, but the actual interview times were an hour (three participants), an hour and a half (one participant), two hours (five participants), and two and a half hours (three participants). On the appointed day, I wore a skirt and a new semi-formal black jacket and black leather shoes. It is natural to be very punctual in Japan, and people who are always late for appointments are generally seen as unreliable. I

¹⁷⁰ My translation.

¹⁷¹ My translation.

knocked on their office doors ten minutes before the arranged time or arrived at the cafes thirty minutes before, because the participants were contributing to my research, and it was important not to keep them waiting for me. Furthermore, in Confucian culture, I should arrive at the meeting place earlier than older people. In order to avoid any problems with participants, I tried to maintain a 'professional manner' (McKee and O'Brien 1983: 158).

I also considered how I should express my gratitude to respondents. In journalism in Japan, the press never gives interviewees gifts or rewards. In academia in the UK, whether to give participants something depends on the case. However, my interviewees are academics. While I thought that they might not want any reward because I was doing academic research, interviewing them face-to-face was like a private tutorial. I am a very mature student, so I know that their expertise is valuable. After consideration, I prepared British tea as a small souvenir and a reward of 10,000 yen (approximately 56 pounds) for each. At the end of the every interview, I honestly said to them that I had prepared both the tea and the reward in order to avoid being rude to them. Nine participants then accepted the tea, but declined the money and told me that they did not need any reward and they hoped that I would successfully complete my thesis. The other three participants accepted both the tea and reward. One of them explained the reason to me, 'You are a mature student who had a job.' In either case, whether they accepted or declined the reward, I was able to avoid committing a breach of etiquette.

At the beginning of each interview, we exchanged business cards. I then introduced myself, including details about my career, explained the aims of my research, read the consent form aloud and obtained their agreement. Although as a journalist I have a lot of experience of interviews with various people, from ordinary children to influential people, I was nervous, which I had never experienced until then. This was the first time that I had felt that interviewees were powerful. In Japan, newspapers in particular, which have the longest history among the mass media, have power in terms of control over information by collecting, selecting and reporting. When I entered newspaper publishing, a veteran journalist in the same department used to say to me that older and younger reporters had the same position as journalists who could exercise power by reporting, but that the power belonged to the newspaper publisher, not the journalists themselves. In other words, interviewees see the power of the newspaper behind the reporters. What he wanted to teach me was not to misunderstand and believe that I had power by myself, not to take an overbearing attitude towards interviewees and that I should always be humble. I always kept this in mind, but against the background of the power of the press, I never needed to

be afraid of powerful interviewees. In some cases, such as interviewing politicians and investigative reporting, journalists often judge interviewees and ask them critical and tricky questions in order to make them confess their real intentions. As the need arises, reporters also intentionally try to coax revealing comments from interviewees. I used to control the interviews in that way. On the other hand, when I interviewed ordinary people, in order to relieve their anxiety, I tried to reduce the power gap with them by speaking dialect, talking about myself or wearing casual clothes. For example, when I interviewed farmers on a farm, I would wear jeans and rubber boots.

However, as a PhD student conducting this research, I was facing the double hierarchical power relationships between older and younger, teacher and student. Interviewees knew that their participation in my research would contribute to academic feminism, so they were co-operative and encouraged me to pursue the research successfully, but during the interviews I felt as though I was taking an examination. When I explained the consent form, I was surprised that one of the respondents said that they never used consent forms.¹⁷² I realised that, like me, my interviewees might be unaccustomed to dealing with the form, which partially relieved my tension.

After we signed the consent forms, I started to ask my questions. The role of a researcher is to listen to the researched (Hesse-Biber 2007) without any judgement, but this practice was difficult for me, too, because this academic interview technique is completely different from the journalistic technique with which I was familiar. I was under pressure from the double hierarchical relations with the participants; on the other hand, I was struggling with the academic way of interviewing. I tried to calm myself down, and said to myself that I had to follow the academic way and concentrate my energy on listening to them without saying anything unnecessary.

However, I could not relieve my anxiety, because I expected that some participants might be critical of this research. In fact, when I exchanged emails with Ueno before the interview, she had already pointed out that 'the West' as a unitary category was problematic and my research might fall into the trap of Orientalism. During the interviews, as I expected, Ito, Sechiyama, Jung and Ueno pointed out that the definition of 'Western feminism' was unclear or too wide, I was thrown into confusion. As the consent form shows (see Appendix 3), when I interviewed them, the working title of my research was 'Going beyond Western Feminism and Forming an Original Japanese Feminist Theory',

¹⁷² After that, I asked other academics whether using consent forms was standard in social research in Japan. They also said that it was not standard.

which might also give the impression to participants that I intended to identify ‘Japanese feminism’ mainly by comparing it with ‘Western feminism’. In response to the question of how they perceived differences between the two, some comments were: ‘I cannot approve this question, because there are various different traditions, histories and societies in the West’ (Ito); ‘Continental Europe is completely different from America’ (Sechiyama). Jung pointed out, too, that there was a danger that comparison with the West might lead to Orientalism while emphasis on the strong points of feminism in Japan might tend towards nationalism. This viewpoint was unexpected for me, because it was natural for me to be interested in feminism in my country but I had not intended to stress on the strong points. She also suggested that in the case of English, ‘feminism in Japan’ would be an appropriate expression rather than ‘Japanese feminism’. This is because these two terms, plus ‘Japanese feminisms’, are all expressed using the same term in Japanese, *nippon-no-feminizumu* [日本のフェミニズム], but in English these can have different meanings in terms of diversity of feminist views. ‘Feminism in Japan’ and ‘Japanese feminisms’ acknowledge diversity, while ‘Japanese feminism’ might indicate a homogeneous feminism. Linguistically, this translation issue was due to differences in expression of the singular and plural between Japanese and English. Japanese words and terms usually does not have plural forms formed by the addition of, for example, ‘s’ at the end of nouns in English. So, *feminizumu* in Japanese does not have a plural form, but this can be expressed in English both as the singular and plural form. Jung’s comment stimulated me to think about diversity and translate carefully. In fact, when I wrote the English versions of the common and specific questions for participants before the interviews, I used these two terms ‘feminism in Japan’ and ‘Japanese feminism’ at the same time without making any distinction between their meanings (see Appendices 1 and 2).

Moreover, the severest criticism came from Ueno, throwing a punch at me. She clearly said that she could not answer the questions related to the comparison with ‘Western feminism’. She (1986a) has previously compared feminisms in Japan with in America and described the differences, such as populism versus elitism, but she explained that she had changed her views.

I do not trust a person at all who uses phrases such as ‘Western feminism’. Can you tell me the reference for ‘Western feminism’?... If you have no reference, ‘Western feminism’ is just an empty symbol. Raising the empty symbol up in that way is Orientalism... The limitation of my research when I was in my thirties was that I only knew about America. After that, Europe and Asia

opened my eyes to... the specific characteristics of feminism depending on culture, state, society and system. Feminism has diversity. I came to view the characteristics of feminism in Japan as one of diverse feminisms. (Ueno)

I had been prepared for this criticism, but all I could do was to explain to Ueno that the aim of this research was to identify the specific characteristics of 'Japanese feminism' but not to compare it with 'Western feminism'. I faltered as I told her. I then felt as if I was being shoved away and belittled. Neal (1995: 526), who interviewed powerful people during her doctoral research and was asked questions challenging her research by participants, comments, 'in the context in which I was being asked them they took on different, even sinister, connotations.' I could share her feelings.

However, the participants' criticism made me realise that I had not given full consideration to the diversity of feminisms until then, so I could not defend my ideas properly during the interviews. I accepted their criticism as a suggestion that could develop my research. Two points in their criticism were cultural essentialism and Orientalism, which are closely connected with each other and also gender essentialism in feminism. Narayan (1998) points out that gender essentialist generalisation about women is hegemonic, in which 'women' often indicates privileged women, mostly the white Western middle-class heterosexual women. The problems faced by these women are then regarded as typical women's issues, in which the various issues faced by other women who are marginalised in terms of class, race, ethnicity and sexuality are not considered. In order to avoid such gender essentialist generalisations and consider the diversity of issues concerning all women, feminists often discuss cultural and national differences among women. Narayan (1998) argues that such feminist efforts sometimes fall into cultural essentialism. As a result, heterogeneous women who have different ideas, behaviours and ways of life are categorised into culturally homogenous groups such as 'Third World women'. Similarly, Mohanty (1994) argues that culturally essentialist generalisations assume that:

'women' have a coherent group identity within the different cultures discussed, prior to their entry into social relations. Thus, Omvedt can talk about 'Indian women' while referring to a particular group of women in the State of Maharashtra, Cutrufelli about 'Women of Africa' and Minces about 'Arab Women' as if these groups of women have some sort of obvious cultural coherence, distinct from men in these societies. (Mohanty 1994: 212)

Additionally, Narayan (1998) argues that such cultural essentialist generalisations can further lead to colonialist assumptions between the West and Others. 'Seemingly *universal* essentialist generalizations about "all women" are replaced by *culture-specific* essentialist generalizations that depend on totalizing categories such as "Western culture," "Non-

western cultures,” “Western women,” “Third World women,” and so forth’ (Narayan 1998: 87, original emphasis). In cultural essentialism, there is a sharp binary contrast between Western culture and non-Western cultures (Narayan 1989). This has the same structure as *Orientalism* (Said 1989), in which non-Western cultures are marginalised as ‘Others’ in the view from the West. The participants’ criticisms pointed to these problems. I realised that I had not thought about these issues and understood their critique of this research.

On the other hand, I assumed that there might be some specific characteristics of feminism in each region. These particular characteristics that I would find throughout this research cannot of course be generalised as common features in the regions, but I hoped to highlight how some aspects of feminisms are affected by local conditions, with respect for the diversity of feminisms found everywhere. In order to acknowledge heterogeneity in values, culture and behaviours, I then changed the English terms following Jung’s suggestion, for example, instead of ‘Japanese feminism’ I decided to use ‘feminism in Japan’ or ‘Japanese feminisms’. I also decided that when I refer to feminism in the West or East Asia, I would try to mention specific countries as far as I could, such as feminism in the UK rather than feminism in the West. There is criticism of a focus on national and cultural differences, but it is not possible to analyse diverse feminisms in detail without making some categorisations, because its diversity is unlimited. Therefore, I thought that I would need such categorisations.

There were also three reasons why I decided I would partially compare feminism in Japan with feminism in the West. First, I hoped that comparison with other feminisms would help me explore the characteristics of feminism in Japan. Second, the four participants who were editors of *Feminism in Japan* (1994) argue that feminism in Japan is not imported from the West. In order to examine why they argue so, I needed to investigate how they perceived the differences between these feminisms. I also hoped that comparison with feminism in East Asia would help me understand differences or similarities between East Asian countries that have relatively similar cultures. Finally, I am conducting this research in the UK, and it is easier for me to access academic work written in English than in other languages which I am not familiar with. As regards Jung’s critique such as nationalism, I believe that this research is not nationalistic. The aim of this research is not to investigate strong points of Japanese feminisms. In fact, rather than its strengths, my findings and discussion focus on the weaknesses of feminism in Japan such as ethnocentrism, which can contribute to the development of feminism. However, as

nationalism can be interpreted as opposite of Orientalism, Jung's criticism encouraged me to be cautious about reverse Orientalism.

4–5 Data Management and Analysis

I conducted all my interviews in Japanese. In order to record and understand exactly what they had said, I transcribed the data in Japanese, deleting grammatical errors of speech, and hesitation during the interviews. Sometimes I could not understand what they wanted to say, but I transcribed exactly how they talked, including the order of their arguments, because the participants would check and edit the transcripts later. I did not translate the transcribed text prior to analysis. After analysis, I only translated specific passages that I decided to quote.

In reviewing the interviews, I realised that I had spoken to the participants in a small voice, which indicates that I was nervous about facing powerful people. When Ueno asked me about the definition of 'Western feminism', I did not know what to say, I forgot even the titles of famous feminist books published in the West and finally became silent. As I listened to the tape-recorded interviews, I became depressed about my unskilled academic interview technique and broke into a cold sweat as I realised that I had not given full consideration to cultural essentialism and Orientalism. At the same time, I came to fully realise how the power balance has an oppressive impact on powerless people in interviews. I guessed that the ordinary people whom I had once interviewed as a journalist might have been nervous of facing me. After such interviews, I remember that some of the ordinary people said to me, 'I do not know whether I could say what I wanted to say,'¹⁷³ or, 'Is my story worth printing in the newspaper?'¹⁷⁴ In those days, I did my best to equalise the power balance with them as far as I could, but I have now realised that I did not always understand their oppression, and that I should have given more consideration to the power balance. Transcribing the interviews was quite an important process in my analysis in order to reflect on myself.

While processing the data, I had to treat the consent form carefully, because there were additional conditions according to the wishes of each participant. When I interviewed them, some scholars asked me to inform them which parts of the arguments I would cite,

¹⁷³ My translation.

¹⁷⁴ My translation.

because checking all the transcripts would be a waste of time. They intended to check only the quotations. I accepted this and added to the consent form, 'You will be informed which of your comments appear in the thesis.' After that, I thought that other participants might have the same request, and when I interviewed or emailed them after the interviews, I asked them whether they needed to be informed about quotations. As a result, almost all participants wanted to negotiate with me about it and in total I promised ten participants that I would do so. In addition, Inoue said to me that she would like to read the entire thesis, so I added the sentence: 'You will be sent the thesis' to her consent form. Since they are influential scholars who are intensely busy, I understand they do not want to waste time. It is also natural for scholars to care about how their arguments are treated, quoted or criticised. Considering these issues, I realised that these additional conditions were needed. On the other hand, I felt as though I had lost the initiative of the research to the participants. Press reporters in Japan neither transcribe interviews nor allow outsiders, including interviewees, to edit any articles in order to protect the freedom of the press. Academics, who probably do not understand this principle of journalism, sometimes ask journalists to show them interview articles before publishing, but their answer is always no. The press never let go of the power to edit articles. I realised that I had to accept this difference between academia and journalism.

When I had completed the transcripts in Japanese, but had not yet selected any quotes, I sent the typed transcripts to eleven participants by email, omitting only one scholar who had asked me not to send the transcript, but only quotations. I knew that most of them would edit the quotes later, but I intended to inform them about the progress of the research by sending the transcripts. Subsequently they replied and gave me encouraging messages. One sent me her newest journal articles related to nuclear power politics and said that she hoped the articles would be helpful for me in analysing the interviews.

In the next stage, I analysed the data in Japanese. I printed out all the transcripts, read them carefully and underlined the main points of their arguments that I might quote. Even if an issue was raised only by one participant, I did not exclude this in order to respect diverse viewpoints. Additionally, in qualitative research in which the number of participants is limited, excluding minority views would distort findings and analysis, so in order to avoid this problem I decided to try not to exclude any argument. After I had grasped the meaning of the essential points, I listed and divided these into thematic groups, and decided how and where I would use quotes. In this stage, I decided to focus on the points in their arguments that were made in response mainly to the common questions, rather than the

specific questions, not only because a PhD thesis has a limited word count, but also because it would enable me to compare the participants' views. I then analysed these data in detail, taking account of cultural, historical and political contexts based on my reading on Japanese feminisms. I also considered how their views were related to their personal history, disciplines and research interests. For example, generational distinctiveness due to their witnessing or participating in the *Lib* was reflected in their views. One participant's involvement with feminism changed her way of life, including her research interests. Another scholar, who is ethnically South Korean, discussed minority issues. The participants' disciplines and research interests also resulted in differences in their approach to and views of feminism. For instance, the only participant who focused on the origin of feminism in Japan is a historian, in contrast to the others, who tended to focus on current feminism after second-wave feminism. I finally decided to divide the data into three chapters.

In Chapters 5 'Characterising Feminism in Japan', which is the first chapter based on the interviews, I discuss the key factors that characterise it, because I aimed to identify some central aspects of feminism in Japan. I designed this chapter as a response to Chapter 1 'Feminism in Japan in Historical Context', Chapter 2 'Representing Feminism in Japan: A Review of the Literature' and Chapter 3 'Key Figures' Perspectives on Academic Feminism'. However, this chapter includes not only issues related to Chapters 1, 2 and 3, but also some issues such as gender discrimination in religion which arose from the interviews but were not covered in the previous chapters. As to the structure of Chapter 5, I grouped the participants' arguments into four broad themes and arranged these themes in decreasing order of the number of participants who focused on each theme, except for the last theme 'Further Problems'. Where more than one theme had been raised by the same number of participants, I discuss themes related to Chapters 1, 2 and 3 before the others. Thus, I first consider 'Power Structure'. This broad theme is further subdivided into three issues mainly in the decreasing order of the numbers of participants who focused on each issue: patriarchy under Confucianism in East Asia; the *ie* system; and gender discrimination in religion. The first two issues, Confucianism and the *ie* system were related to the issues raised in Chapters 1, 2 and 3. In contrast, the issue of religion was not directly addressed in the previous chapters and was focused on only by one participant, Minamoto. She and Ogoshi¹⁷⁵ are the only two scholars among the participants who work in religious studies, so before the interviews I assumed that their views were likely to be

¹⁷⁵ Ogoshi is a philosopher and also has a research interest in religion. In Chapters 6 and 7, she also discussed issues related to religion.

different from the others. Similarly, Kanai, an ethicist, is the only participant from that discipline. In other word, it is to be expected that their arguments are distinctive. Therefore, as I stated, I did not exclude themes arising in only one interview in order to cover a diversity of views. Following ‘Power Structure’, the second and third themes are ‘Lack of Interest in Minorities’ and ‘*Bosei* Ideology’. After that, I discuss ‘Further Problems’, which is about problems currently facing feminism in Japan.

On the basis of the discussion in Chapter 5 about specific issues characterising feminism in Japan, in Chapter 6 ‘Indigenous or Imported?: Contrasting Feminist Views’, I focus on two questions: whether feminism in Japan is imported from the West and how different it is from other feminisms. As I stated, these questions are based on my personal experience of culture shock (see Introduction) and my interests in four participants’ argument that feminism in Japan is not imported from the West (see the previous section). I divide their answers to the questions into thematic groups and discuss these in the decreasing order of the number of participants. In the question whether feminism in Japan is imported, I try to identify reasons for the gaps between their responses – no, yes or different perspectives. By analysing the differences, I also hope to understand why I feel I am at a distance from the participants who argue for the autonomy of feminism in Japan. After that, I discuss differences and similarities between feminisms in Japan and in other contexts, especially feminisms in the West and East Asia. However, I could not make a systematic comparative study, because of language issues and lack of information (see the previous section). Therefore, I have collected information about other societies and feminisms as far as I possibly could, and compared them with feminism in Japan where relevant. This discussion is also done in decreasing order of the number of participants raising a theme, except for the last theme about imperialism. This is because unlike the other themes about the differences between feminisms in Japan and in the West, this theme deals with similarities with some countries in the West in terms of imperialism.

In Chapter 7 ‘The Politics of Nuclear Power’, I explore attitudes of feminists in Japan towards nuclear power politics, including the response to the radiation accident in March 2011 in the only atomic-bombed nation. I investigate how participants perceive the atomic bombing or nuclear energy, and the issues they saw as arising from the disaster. Their arguments are divided into three themes: symbolism, the weakness of eco-feminism and responsibility for the radiation accident. In the same way as I do in the previous analysis chapters, I discuss these themes in the decreasing order of the number of participants raising each issue, except the second theme about the weakness of eco-feminism. Although

this is Kanai's argument alone, it has relevance to some discussion in the previous section in terms of maternalism.

In the process of translating the quotations after analysis, I was under pressure, because the quotations would appear with the participants' real names in my thesis, which would be published online, and subsequently might be cited by other scholars. I was conscious of a heavy responsibility while translating the quotations, so I was extremely careful to make sure I selected the most appropriate words. In particular, I had to be careful not only to translate the technical terms accurately, but also to introduce the most suitable subject and object pronouns in their arguments. This is because these pronouns are often omitted in both spoken and written Japanese, but they are required in English. In order to solve this problem, I tried to grasp the meaning of a quotation in the context of the answer by reading the transcripts carefully. Where I could not fully understand the meaning, including the absent subject and object pronouns, I asked the participants about them in the email in which I informed them about the quotations I was going to use. I also tried to acknowledge diverse ideas and values, but it was quite hard for me to judge whether I should translate nouns into English in a singular or plural form, because unlike English, Japanese has few plural forms of nouns, and singular nouns in Japanese can be translated into singular and plural forms in English (see the previous section). For example, I was often confused with some nouns such as *bunka* [文化] (culture or cultures) and *undo* [運動] (movement or movements). While translating, I also avoided using informal language, because the scholars spoke about feminism in academic language. I then repeatedly checked and revised the quotations. Through this process, I realised that there was no perfect translation. For example, the respectful parts of speech in Japanese, which are used when people talk to older people, cannot be translated, as there is no equivalent in English. Some Japanese words such as the technical Buddhist term *Nyobon-no-Mukoku* [女犯の夢告] also do not have a counterpart in English. *Bosei* is translated as 'motherhood' in English, but there is a difference in the meanings of the two words (Kano [1991] 2009, see Chapter 3). Which words are the appropriate words also depends on the translator's abilities. When I could not translate a word or term directly into English, I retained the Japanese words or terms, writing them in italics, such as *bosei*, and explained the meaning in a footnote.

After I had translated the quotations, I wrote to all the participants informing them which quotations from the interviews I would be using. I sent them the quotations in Japanese by email as I had promised. I also sent one of participants the quotations in English, as she had requested. At the same time, I asked them to check some sentences surrounding the

quotations and give supplementary explanations about some of their arguments in order to understand the arguments in context. A couple of months later, everyone had finished editing and sent them back to me by email. As Gewirtz and Ozga (1994, in Aldred 2008) argue, such a hierarchical relation between the researcher and the researched has advantages as well as disadvantages. Interviewing powerful people has fewer problems than interviewing powerless people, because powerful people have the confidence to argue (Gewirtz and Ozga 1994, in Aldred 2008). As might be expected of influential scholars, despite some supplementary explanations and quite a few edits, most hardly ever changed their words. This indicates that their arguments, based on the fruit of long years of research, are unshakable, and whenever they argue, they choose their words carefully and confidently. I have used the edited versions. Two participants asked me to give them the opportunity to edit the transcripts again if I publish this research in Japanese. I agreed and we promised to keep in touch with each other.

4–6 Conclusion

In the process of this research, I learned various issues. Particularly, my struggle with the imbalance in my relationship with my powerful participants was a valuable experience. The best kind of relationship to have with interviewees in order to share their stories is non-hierarchical (Oakley 1981). However, in my case, even though I did my best by being polite to participants, treating them respectfully or sharing my story about struggling as ‘the pioneer generation of the EEOL’, it was still hard for me to ease the double hierarchy of the power relationships. I also had to hear criticism of my research from some participants. For example, I was accused of cultural essentialism, Orientalism and nationalism, but their criticism encouraged me to recognise my lack of awareness of these problems and consider how I should deal with heterogeneous cultures. Although I became more nervous, fortunately, the fact that the participants are feminist researchers, who are expected to care about power balances, was a help to me. I noticed that they tried to reduce the hierarchical power gap by encouraging me to join their seminars, inviting me to dinner, introducing some feminist activists to me, sharing their private stories with me or giving me their books. In the process of analysis, whenever I asked participants additional questions by email about details such as their views and technical terms, they helpfully replied to me quickly, encouraging me to work hard. These examples illustrate that they voluntarily helped my work. I have also gratefully accepted that their severe criticism of

my research was their way of encouraging me to develop my ideas. I realised that they intended to pass the baton of feminism to a younger generation.

Following this chapter, there are three chapters based on the interviews. As I explained in the previous section, the aim of Chapters 5 is to identify what particularly characterises feminism in Japan. In Chapter 6, I discuss participants' views of differences between feminisms in Japan and in other contexts. Chapter 7 aims to investigate how they perceive the politics of nuclear power, including the Fukushima crisis. Finally, in the Conclusion I look back on my research, summarise my findings and then express my views of feminism in Japan. I also consider the limitations of this research, further research directions and my own contribution to understanding diversity of feminisms in Japan and elsewhere.

5 Characterising Feminism in Japan

5-1 Introduction

The twelve feminist researchers whom I interviewed during my fieldwork expressed varied views of feminism in Japan. At the beginning of each interview, central to the issues that I discussed with them were the particular characteristics of feminism and the problems that feminism is facing in Japan today. In this first analysis chapter, I will discuss how the participants perceive and evaluate feminism in Japan. First of all, their views on what is specific to feminism in Japan can be divided into three key areas: the patriarchal power structure, lack of interest in minorities, and *bosei*. I will deal with each of these in turn before addressing the problems of feminism. When the participants talked about the specific characteristics of feminism in Japan, they often referred to historical events, cultural influences and political issues such as Confucianism, the *ie* system and the *Lib*, which I described in detail in Chapters 1, 2 and 3. Thus, it may be said that feminism can hardly be discussed without reference to these historical factors, which further indicates that the history of Japan and the history of feminism in Japan are closely intertwined. Consequently, throughout this chapter I will place participants' views in the context of Japanese history, culture and politics, with reference to Chapters 1, 2 and 3, in order to explain the points they raise in more detail. I will also relate their views to their own life experiences and historical events such as the *Lib* of the early 1970s, in which some participated and others witnessed.

5-2 Power Structure

When I asked my interviewees what the particular issues for feminism in Japan were and what characterised feminism in Japan, the most widely mentioned issues related to the power structure, to which five researchers referred. I have grouped these responses into three issues. Firstly, Yumiko Ehara and Yoshiko Kanai focused on patriarchy under Confucianism in East Asia. The impact of Confucianism in Japan might not be as strong as in South Korea, but its teachings, such as familism, filial piety and the inferiority of women, continue to be perceived as social norms in Japan (see Chapters 1, 2 and 3). Secondly, Ehara discussed patriarchy under the Emperor system, and Teruko Inoue

focused on the *ie* system that upholds the Emperor (see Chapters 1, 2 and 3). In connection with patriarchy, Masako Amano highlighted gender divisions, which can be seen in various laws. Finally, Junko Minamoto, a religious studies scholar, emphasised that women are regarded as being unclean in Shintoism and Buddhism. She argued that this is at the root of gender discrimination in Japan.

5–2–1 Patriarchy under Confucianism in East Asia

Before I discuss Confucianism, in order to explore the strength of patriarchy and how it has influenced feminism in Japan, I will begin with Ehara's view of feminism in Japan. She argued that feminism in Japan is quite weak in comparison with feminism in America, due to strong patriarchy in Japan.

The primary feature of feminism in Japan¹⁷⁶ is that it is weak. In comparison with second-wave feminism in America, the scale of feminism in Japan in those days was barely one-hundredth of it... Feminist activism in developed countries is not always strong. In fact, in Japan it is weaker than in South Korea or the Philippines... I argue that we should realise that feminism in Japan is weak. There are many reasons why feminism in Japan is so. To be brief, I gradually came to think that Japan is an extremely strong patriarchal nation. (Ehara)

In making this claim, she compared the number of participants in the *Lib* in Japan with the number in America. The National Organisation for Women (NOW) in America used to draw about 1,000,000 women during the second wave, making an enormous impact internationally. By contrast, in Japan, the number of women who joined the movement was only a few thousand. Certainly, America is a major nation with a vast territory. In 1970, the population of America was 209,891,000 people, which was just over twice as large as Japan's 103,708,000 people (United Nations 2012). However, the number of participants in feminist activism in Japan was less than 1% of that of America. In those days, the *Lib* was widely reported by the media in Japan but, contrary to what people might think, this

¹⁷⁶ During the interviews, the participants said in Japanese, '*nippon-no-feminizumu*' [日本のフェミニズム], which can be translated as 'feminism in Japan', 'Japanese feminism' and 'Japanese feminisms'. Unlike English, Japanese usually does not have plural forms for words, formed by the addition of 's' at the end of nouns. Thus, the term '*feminizumu*' in Japanese does not have a plural form. However, in order to acknowledge the diversity of feminism, in this thesis I use both of the terms 'feminism in Japan' and 'Japanese feminisms'. See also Chapter 4.

event did not arouse women's sympathy in Japan as much as in America in terms of the number of participants. As Ehara argued, the fact that feminism in Japan itself has been suppressed by patriarchy should be realised.

Here, I pay attention to Ehara's words: 'I gradually came to think (だんだん思うようになってきました [dandan-omouyouni-nattekimashita])...' This indicates that her views have evolved over time. Her account suggests that her opinions have been shaped by her life experiences, especially the political changes she has witnessed. During the height of campus activism, such as the New Left movement during the second half of the 1960s (see Chapter 1), she was a teenager. In the 1970s, she studied at the University of Tokyo, which was a symbolic place of campus protest. In those days, she stepped back from radical student activism, but it seems that she was indirectly influenced by it. She looked back over her academic career from her student days until the present.

At the university, there are few people who denied the principle of gender equality... There were many people who were more radical than me... They argued for the abolition of the system of private ownership and communist revolution... I thought that it was impossible to carry out such a drastic revolution, but I have democratic and egalitarian ways of thinking, so I believed that gender equality was a matter of course... However, gender equality was not actually achieved at all even in universities... I then joined women's activism. For example, when I was a student, there was a campaign against temporary employment at the university... but the campaign tacitly excluded female temporary staff... After that, the New Left movement and radical activism faded out. As society came to lean to the right during the 1980s, I realised that I was at the front line of social activism. Although bravely radical discourse disappeared, feminist activism was unexpectedly surviving. In those days, feminism was running before the global wind, such as the global policy CEDAW, so we did not realise that our stance was strange. In the 1990s, when socialism collapsed, Japanese society leaned to the right all the more... During the first half of the 2000s, backlash emerged in Japan... Now there is no debate about advice from international organisations such as the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), even in the major media... Why is this country so?.. I have to say that patriarchy is strong. (Ehara)

Interestingly, she identified herself as being democratic and egalitarian, on the other hand, she came to realise that her standpoint was at the front line of social activism. This indicates that the stream of the time had shifted to the right, pushing her to the forefront of the social movement regarded as leftist, rather than her having put herself in that place. Thus, feminism became isolated in a society rapidly moving to the right.

People in the older generation, including Ehara, have a specific social background. In Japan, the baby-boom generation, born in 1947 to 1949, carried out campus activism, so that they tend to be strongly interested in political issues. Ehara, born in 1952, belongs to a slightly younger generation, but it is possible to say that her generation shows a similar tendency. The 1960s was a remarkable decade that saw various political upheavals concerning self-determination internationally. With waves of decolonisation after the Second World War, the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples was adopted by the United Nations Assembly in December 1960 in order to speed up the decolonisation. As a result, in the 1960s many colonies, especially in Africa, became independent of European countries. At that time, in America there were the Civil Rights movement and left-wing political activism among young people against the Vietnam War (1960–75). In Europe, the Prague Spring in Czechoslovakia and major student protests in Paris in 1968 emerged.¹⁷⁷ Many women who came into contact with political ideas through these upheavals came to realise that they were placed at the margins of movements such as the New Left, from which the new feminist generation came (Jackson and Scott 1996). Women of the baby-boomer generation in America and the UK, who saw these movements with their own eyes, tend to have a strong interest in politics. According to a survey of attitudes of 667 women riding buses to the 1992 March on Washington for Reproductive Rights (Duncan 2010), baby-boomers, born between 1943 and 1960, were more likely than the next generation, born between 1961 and 1975, to self-identify as strong feminists. Duncan (2010) attributes this tendency to the fact that the baby-boomers were brought up with traditional gender roles, but they faced major social change under the women's liberation movement in their young adulthoods. Similarly, Ehara's self-identity might have been strongly feminist, which might make her hold onto her true feminist principles even if feminism is swimming against the current of the time.

¹⁷⁷ During the 1960s, student activism emerged in several countries, including Japan. In other East Asian countries, such activism emerged in Taiwan during the 1970s, and China and South Korea during the 1980s.

Concretely, Ehara pointed out two elements of patriarchy, Confucianism and the Emperor system. Like Ehara, Kanai focused on Confucianism as an important context in order to analyse female oppression in Japan.

Currently, I am investigating how feminism in Japan and feminist activism in East Asia are identified... Feminism and female oppression in Japan have the background of the patriarchal structure of Confucianism in East Asia. (Kanai)

Confucian patriarchy has often been a key issue in feminist discussions (see Chapters 1, 2 and 3). Before modernisation, in Japan, China and Korea, social norms of womanhood were generally derived from Confucianism, based on ancestor worship and respect for older people. In particular, 'The Three Obediences', one of its teachings, embodies the ideal behaviour for women, which expects single women to obey their parents, married women to obey their husbands, and widows to obey their sons. During the early modernisation period, the 'Good wife, Wise mother', a new social norm, was politically constructed. This was a reinterpretation of Confucian norms in order to propose a modern gender division of labour while perpetuating the idea that women should not be superior to men (Sechiyama 2013, see Chapter 3).¹⁷⁸

The impact of Confucian patriarchy can be seen in various sets of data. Ehara highlighted the high rate of women who commit suicide in East Asia as evidence of the seriousness of female oppression. I investigated the actual situation of female suicides in order to confirm her argument. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) (2009), the highest number of suicides per 100,000 women was 16.8 in Sri Lanka. The next highest was 14.8 in China, 14.1 in South Korea and 13.7 in Japan. This source does not have data on Taiwan, but three countries in East Asia ranked second to fourth in the world. As Ehara pointed out, this data suggests that there is a relation between female suicides and Confucian patriarchy. In the case of men, the highest was 63.3 in the Republic of Belarus, the second highest was 53.9 in both Lithuania and Russia, the fourth was 46.2 in the Republic of Kazakhstan. All of these belong to the former Soviet Union. The rates for men in East Asian countries were Japan 35.8 (8th in the world), South Korea 29.6 (13th), China 13.0 (52nd). I found that there was an interesting issue about male suicide, although Ehara did not focus on it. The ranking of male suicide in East Asia was lower than for women, but the incidence varied from almost the same as women to more than twice as high. This data might indicate that not only women but also men, shouldering the burden as heads of

¹⁷⁸ Kaku Sechiyama, one of my interviewees, is well known as a scholar of patriarchy in East Asia, but in his interview with me he did not focus on this area of his research.

families, are oppressed by Confucian patriarchy or other aspects of Asian societies. Ehara also referred to the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM)¹⁷⁹ of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), showing the actual condition of inequality in East Asia. According to the Human Development Report 2009, published by the UNDP, Japan was 57th, South Korea 61st and China 72nd globally. In comparison with other developed countries, all three were ranked relatively low, with no big gaps between them, which suggests that Confucian patriarchy can also be seen here.

With the globalisation of feminism, the contrast between the First World and the Third World, or the North and the South, has been emphasised (Mohanty 1991, in Jackson, Liu and Woo 2008). Developing a feminist analysis of the gap between them is essential, but this also leads to the exclusion of women in East Asia, because they are neither in the West nor in the Third World. East Asia is also the ‘mysterious other’ from the point of view of Western people, in spite of its remarkable economic growth (Jackson, Liu and Woo 2008: 1). Ehara and Kanai’s attention to East Asia as the Confucian cultural bloc could be a key for feminism in Japan.

5–2–2 The *Ie* System

The other factor of patriarchy that Ehara pointed out was an issue specific to Japan. ‘Patriarchy under the Emperor system is strong’ (Ehara). In upholding the Emperor system, the *ie* system has been particularly important in order to build up the family-state ideology during the process of modernisation (see Chapters 1 and 2). As Ueno (2009a) argues, the *ie* system was not a feudal relic, but an invention of the Meiji government (see Chapter 3). While the *ie*, which was constructed in 1898, was formally abolished in 1947, Inoue pointed out that the concept of the *ie* system could still be seen in laws and social norms, which had a visible impact on everyday life.

The *ie* system is a tradition going back just a hundred years, but it is still strongly influential... The concept of the *ie* has remained in laws and is also customarily rooted in society... It appears suddenly like a ghost whenever

¹⁷⁹ The Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) is an index of gender inequality calculated on the basis of the extent of women’s participation in political positions, high-income positions in the economic world and access to professional positions. Since the Human Development Report 2010, a new index entitled the Gender Inequality Index (GII) has been employed.

people think about issues of the family grave or a funeral. This issue of the *ie* system is quite important to feminism and women's studies. (Inoue)

In Japan, the head of the family generally has the responsibility to manage the family grave. When a family member passes away, the head of the family or the first son, who is the successor to the family line, customarily represents the family at the funeral. Such a patriarchal idea, based on the *ie* system, can be seen not only in social norms but also in laws. Inoue listed two examples showing how the *ie* system was working in law and practice: discrimination against illegitimate children whose parents had not registered their marriage and the adoption of the male surname on marriage.

At the time of this interview, illegitimate children's portion of the inheritance from their father was 50% less than that of legitimate children under Civil Law Article 900. This regulation, specified in the 1898 Civil Law, was handed over to the current 1947 Civil Law in order to respect legal marriage. The United Nations had advised the Japanese government to abolish this regulation since 1993 (*Mainichi Newspaper* September 2013). Hertog (2009) argues that unwed mothers and their illegitimate children are left out in the cold throughout the legal system in Japan, and this is the converse of 'the very high regard for marriage' (Hertog 2009: 90). This oppressive social norm dictating that children should be born within legal marriage can be seen in the East much more often than in the West. I compared the proportion of children born outside marriage in East Asia with Western industrialised countries. In East Asia in 2006 to 2007, it was only 2.1% in Japan, 1.5% in Korea and 4.2% in Taiwan (*Asahi Newspaper* January 2010). In the case of the West, the high proportions in 2008 were 54.7% in Sweden, 52.6% in France, 46.2% in Denmark, 43.7% in the UK,¹⁸⁰ 41.2% in the Netherlands and 40.6% in America (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan 2013b). In the West, laws generally do not discriminate between legitimate and illegitimate children, and their societies are more accepting of diversity in family life. This strong contrast indicates that East Asian people are tightly bound by legal marriage. As Inoue argued, exclusionism with high respect for the paternal blood line is still a significant barrier against feminism.

Since I interviewed Inoue, there has been a development on this issue. On 4 September 2013, the Supreme Court of Japan decided that a gap between illegitimate and legitimate children in terms of their portion of the inheritance from their father under Civil Law Article 900 was against the Constitution. This reversed the previous judgement in 1995,

¹⁸⁰ This data for the UK was in 2006.

which declared that it was constitutional (Wada and Suzuki 2013). Wada (2013) suggests that this new judgement reflects various social changes, such as an increase in the number of marriages without registration and the diversification of family structures. In response to this judicial decision, the 1947 Civil Law was revised in December 2013 (Tamura 2013). In Western developed countries, such regulation of discrimination against illegitimate children has been abolished, for example, in Germany in 1998 and France in 2001, so that Japan was the last developed nation to maintain the regulation (Ishikawa 2013).

However, another regulation imbued with the concept of the *ie* system has remained. Hertog (2009) points out that the key system supporting the very high regard for legal marriage in Japan is *koseki*¹⁸¹ (the family registry) under the Family Register Law. *Koseki* could also be seen as part of the *ie* system. In the *koseki* system, the family as a unit, rather than the individual, is acknowledged by the state. The *koseki* defines the head of family, which is usually the husband, and identifies children born within or outside marriage,¹⁸² in order to recognise the children as successors to the father as head of the family. Thus, *koseki* has concretely revitalised the concept of the *ie* system in Japan. This *koseki* system has also been employed in other East Asian countries. China has a similar registry system,¹⁸³ managed by the public safety commission, but its main aim today is to control people's residency rather than acknowledge their citizenship (Kawamura 2008). Taiwan has a family register system,¹⁸⁴ too. National ID cards are issued on the basis of this registry system (Suzuki 2008). Only South Korea has abolished it, and adopted the individual register system since 2008, in response to a decision of the Constitutional Court that the Civil Law in South Korea, saying a wife and children enter into the husband's family register, was against the Constitution, which guarantees the principle of gender equality (Aoki 2008). As this example of South Korea indicates, the concept of *koseki* is a barrier to feminist goals.

¹⁸¹ *Koseki* consists of a maximum of two generations of family members. People form a new *koseki* when they marry. This records their names, dates of birth, relationship to each other, such as parents and children, ancestral home address, and family events such as marriages and divorces. In Japan, the Family Register Law was first established in 1871. After the war, the new Family Register Law came into force in 1948.

¹⁸² An unwed mother and her illegitimate children cannot have a joint family register with the children's father, so that illegitimate children are recorded only in the family register of their mother's side.

¹⁸³ According to Kamata (2010), the current ordinance of the family registry has been enforced since 1958, which has divided people into two groups in the registry, people living in farming villages and in cities. People who have registered with the group of farming villages are acknowledged as farmers by the Chinese government, even if they work in factories in the villages or cities. People are not allowed to change their registry from villages to cities, or cities to villages. This leads to a gap between them in social conditions, such as labour conditions.

¹⁸⁴ According to Suzuki (2008), the current Family Registry Law in Taiwan has been enacted since 1931. During the colonial period, this registry system was managed by the police in order to control people.

The second issue related to the *ie* system, which Inoue highlighted, is the adoption of the male surname on marriage. In Japan, married couples must have the same surname under Civil Law Article 750, and 96.3% of married couples chose the husband's surname in 2005 (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan 2006). Reasons for changing surname are generally positive. In 2012, 47.5% of people felt that they were happy in starting a new life by changing their surnames, and 30.3% of people felt a sense of unity with their spouses (Cabinet Office, Government of Japan 2013b). This might indicate that each family is customarily united under the power of the male head of family, even in younger generations who do not know about the *ie* system. In Japan, some people have argued that Civil Law Article 750 should be revised to accept the use of separate surnames by husband and wife as a choice, but there are also counterarguments. According to the Cabinet Office, Government of Japan (2013b), the proportion of people who agreed with an amendment to the Civil Law had not changed much over the last 15 years: from 32.5% in 1996 to 35.5% in 2012. The proportion of people who disagreed with the idea had similarly been relatively stable: 39.8% in 1996 and 36.4% in 2012. Arguments both for and against the use of separate names as a choice have conflicted with each other, and it seems to take time to reach a conclusion.

However, one conclusion will be drawn in the near future. According to *Asahi Newspaper* (February 2015b), on 18 February 2015, the Supreme Court of Japan decided to examine two suits in the Grand Bench of the Supreme Court. One of them has been filed by five people who argue that Civil Law Article 750 violates constitutional equal rights in terms of gender. The other case has been filed by a woman against Civil Law Article 733, which prohibits a divorced woman from remarrying until six months after her divorce in order to establish paternity of a baby delivered after a divorce. Both cases were dismissed by the first and second trials, but this decision to examine them indicates that the Supreme Court will judge for the first time whether Articles 750 and 733 are constitutional. Following the judgement that Civil Law Article 900 is unconstitutional, these two judgements will have an influence on norms about couples and families.¹⁸⁵

In East Asian countries excluding Japan, generally neither member of a couple changes their original surname, but children take their father's surname. According to Suzuki

¹⁸⁵ While I was revising this thesis after the viva, on 16 December 2015 the Supreme Court of Japan decided that Civil Law Article 750 was constitutional, but that Civil Law Article 733 was unconstitutional in terms of prohibiting women from remarrying for more than 100 days after divorce. On the same day, in response to this judgment, the Japanese government said that it would amend the law in order to reduce the period of prohibition of remarriage from six months, which it had been previously, to 100 days (*Jiji Press* December 2015).

(2008), in China, people customarily think that they should not change their surname, because it is a symbol of the paternal blood line. As a result, married women keep their own surname, which indicates they are not part of their husbands' family line. Under the current Marriage Law in China, a couple have three choices: the use of separate surnames, having the same surname or combining both surnames. However, a survey conducted in the 1980s found that the great majority of couples had chosen separate surnames (Kawamura 2008). In the case of Taiwan, under the current Civil Law, a couple can choose to combine both surnames. Under the revision of the Civil Law in 2007, a couple should discuss and choose their children's surname, the husband's or the wife's, before their children are born. It is also possible to change their children's surname once after their first decision. This is an epoch-making event in China, but it is actually difficult for children to have their mother's surname (Suzuki 2008). In the UK, the law does not say anything about surnames, but couples customarily choose the husband's surname. Thwaites (2012: 103) suggests that there are four reasons why women have changed their surnames: love, 'oneness', tradition and social experience. 'The power behind such taken-for-granted practice is usually strong' (Thwaites 2012: 107). This indicates that it is not easy to reform people's attitudes towards patriarchal notions, even if the laws are reformed.

In connection with these patriarchal laws and practices, Amano pointed out that gender divisions could be seen in various other national policies in Japan. In other words, the current gender division under which women should devote themselves to housework and child-rearing, and men should work outside the home, has been approved by the state.

In the world, Japan is a very rare country where gender has clearly been divided, and what is more, this gender division has been authorised by the state. For example, current tax and welfare systems are based on ideas about gender divisions, giving preferential treatment to housewives. (Amano)

The current gender division was constructed in the 1960s (Ueno 1990, see Chapter 3). This tax deduction system for a spouse, which Amano gave as an example, was established in 1961, when the tax system was reformed. In the case of a worker whose spouse has an annual income of less than 1,030,000 yen (approximately £5,700), the worker receives a tax benefit, which has actually encouraged the worker's spouse, usually a wife, to be a full-time housewife. Even if married women work outside their home, they tend to limit themselves to having a part-time job in order not to earn over 1,030,000 yen per year. These housewives can also receive an old-age pension without paying anything towards it. These systems have discouraged married women from working in the public sphere and

increased women's dependence on men (see Chapter 1). From my perspective, these unfair tax and welfare systems seem to indirectly oppress women, but in practice there are certainly married women who have enjoyed these advantages. Currently, there are arguments for the abolition of these systems that treat housewives so well because of the unfairness of the systems and Japan's financial difficulties. If the systems are reformed, women will probably be encouraged to work more than before, which might cut a new path towards breaking down gender divisions. However, the other factors that marginalise women in the labour market remain, such as the two-track employment system, in which they tend to choose the non-career track (see Chapters 1 and 3). Additionally, as the M curve indicates (see Chapters 1 and 3), women are likely to be less continuously employed. In either case, social norms of womanhood, which are imbued with patriarchal ideas, arguably have an influence on women.

5-2-3 Gender Discrimination in Religion

There was also an interesting argument about male-dominated society from the perspective of the study of religions such as Buddhism and Shintoism.¹⁸⁶ Minamoto is one of the pioneer feminist researchers in this field, tackling discrimination against women in religion. Currently she focuses on the Omine Mountain, located at a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Sacred Site and Pilgrimage Routes in the Kii Mountain Range.¹⁸⁷ It is well known as a sacred mountain on which Shugendo¹⁸⁸ monks lead an ascetic life. Minamoto highlighted that the Omine Mountain had been closed to women climbers by the Shugendo.

The Omine Mountain is the only mountain in Japan which Shugendo has never allowed women in. Since we knew in 2003 that the area, including the mountain, might become a World Heritage Site, like-minded women and I have been campaigning against the fact that women have never been allowed on the mountain. However, local people have never accepted our campaign, because of a tradition over 1,300 years old. This situation has been unchanged. *Sumo*,¹⁸⁹ has never let women in the ring, not even a female presenter of a

¹⁸⁶ Shinto is a folk religion, worshipping ancestors and nature.

¹⁸⁷ Sacred Site and Pilgrimage Routes in the Kii Mountain Range is known as a historical area displaying a fusion of Shintoism and Buddhism, which became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2004.

¹⁸⁸ Shugendo is a Buddhist sect that practises mountain worship.

¹⁸⁹ Sumo is a kind of wrestling and also the Japanese national sport.

championship cup,¹⁹⁰ because of Shinto ritual and tradition. The root of these problems is that women are regarded as being unclean in religious belief. At school, children are taught to respect tradition and culture, but as these problems show, the teachings have harmful effects. I argue that the root of gender discrimination in Japan is religions that exclude women as being unclean. (Minamoto)

Before analysing Minamoto's argument, it is important to note that Japan has mainly two religions, Buddhism and Shintoism. The overwhelming majority of people follow them at the same time. According to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan (2006), 83.6% of the population were Shintoists, 70% were Buddhists and 2.4% were Christians. Historically, the syncretism of Shintoism and Buddhism emerged during the eighth century. Although this was forbidden by regulations under the religious reform immediately after the Meiji Restoration in the middle of the nineteenth century in order to separate Shintoism from Buddhism and designate Shintoism as the state religion, the syncretism of Shintoism and Buddhism has persisted as a custom.

As Minamoto explained, in the name of tradition, the majority do not leave the door open at all for a discussion of gender discrimination in religious belief. The ideas of uncleanness in Buddhist and Shintoist beliefs are still associated with the pollution of menstrual blood. Okano (2011) argues that in Japan, these religions have contributed to the maintenance of gender inequality, encouraging people to believe that they were born with different statuses according to their gender. Minamoto's argument may have wider applications in terms of the concept of uncleanness in religions such as Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Hinduism. For example, Leviticus, one of the books of the Old Testament, clearly states that menstruation is impure.

When a woman has a discharge, and the discharge in her body is blood, she shall be in her menstrual impurity for seven days, and whoever touches her shall be unclean until the evening. And everything on which she lies during her menstrual impurity shall be unclean. Everything also on which she sits shall be unclean. And whoever touches her bed shall wash his clothes and bathe himself in water and be unclean until the evening. And whoever touches anything on which she sits shall wash his clothes and bathe himself in water and be unclean until the evening. Whether it is the bed or anything on which she sits, when he touches it he shall be unclean until the evening. (Leviticus 15: 19–30, in the Holly Bible 2001)

¹⁹⁰ In 1989, a female government minister hoped to present an award at the closing ceremony, but the sumo association in Japan did not allow her to step into the ring, because of tradition.

Another example comes from the Mae Enga, one of the tribes of the Central Highlands of New Guinea, who fear menstrual blood. In their belief, if men touch it, or touch women having their period, they will lose their vitality and finally be killed by it (Meggitt 1964, in Douglas 1966: 182). As Douglas (1966) says, these ideas about pollution mirror the power relations between women and men, which accords with Minamoto's argument.

Minamoto's interests in religion are related to her own experience; she was born as the first daughter into a Buddhist temple in the countryside. While she was a PhD student studying religion, she encountered Buddhist terms that placed women in a subordinate position, which was the starting point of her study as a feminist scholar.

My parents' idea of family is exactly the same as the *ie* system, inculcating the idea in me that I should marry into a family and my younger brother should succeed to the temple... When I was an MA student, I was taught in class that Buddhism was wonderful... [After that,] I went on to a PhD in order to study Indian Buddhism as the root of Japanese Buddhism. [While working as a PhD student,] I encountered two terms in the sutras. One is *Nyonin-Gosho* [女人五障], which means that women cannot attain Buddhahood. The other is *Henjo-Nanshi* [變成男子], which means that women can attain Buddhahood by transforming themselves into men. Until then I had believed that the teachings of Buddhism were based on egalitarianism, but I came to realise that something was wrong. At that time, I encountered feminism imported from the West.
(Minamoto)

It seems that she was greatly shocked by these two terms. In addition, feminism has had an impact on her life. After her encounter with feminism, she decided to divorce her husband, because she was struggling against gender divisions, and wanted to find herself and live for herself. Against the background of these experiences, as a feminist academic and also an activist, she has tackled gender discrimination in religious belief.

5-3 Lack of Interest in Minorities

Another issue characterising feminism in Japan according to participants was the lack of interest in minorities. Two weaknesses of feminism were discussed by five participants. Inoue, Yuko Suzuki, Ruri Ito and Yeonghae Jung discussed feminist attitudes towards ethnic minority issues or colonialism which indicate that it has fallen into ethnocentrism. In

addition, Amano, Inoue and Jung argued that feminism in Japan was heterosexist. They severely criticised feminism's shortcomings.

5–3–1 Ethnocentrism

As to ethnocentrism, Inoue's argument directly described how and why feminism, as well as people more generally, in Japan had been indifferent to ethnic minorities. In her view, feminism had hardly paid attention to ethnic issues until the middle of the 1990s.

Feminism in Japan really lacks an interest in ethnic issues. This is a shortcoming of great importance. I suggest the reason is that people strongly believe the myth that Japan is an ethnically homogeneous nation... In Japan, many feminists only finally came to consider the relation between sexism and ethnic discrimination in the second half of the 1990s. (Inoue)

As Inoue pointed out, people tend to see Japan as an ethnically homogeneous nation. It is understood that this myth reflects Japan's foreign policy before modernisation and its national policy after modernisation, both of which have not favoured immigration (see Chapter 1). In fact, the number of foreigners in Japan who had registered with the administration¹⁹¹ was 2,078,508 people in 2011, excluding illegal stayers,¹⁹² which was only 1.6% of the whole population (Ministry of Justice of Japan 2012). Therefore, it might not be easy for people in Japan to realise that the myth is merely a myth. According to Inoue, in the case of feminism, the turning point at which feminists came to be concerned with ethnic issues was the 1995 World Conference on Women in Beijing, where the comfort women issue, which is imbued with ethnic discrimination and sexism, was one of the central issues.

The illusion of an ethnically homogeneous nation has one more essential political context. Suzuki, a historian tackling the Emperor's and feminists' war guilt (see Chapter 3), pointed out that Japan's colonialism had led to ethnocentrism, which can still be seen not only in Japanese society but also in feminism. She also focused on discrimination against people

¹⁹¹ Under the Law, foreigners who are going to stay in Japan for over three months must register with the administration.

¹⁹² As of January 2014, there were an estimated 59,061 illegal stayers in Japan (Ministry of Justice of Japan 2014).

who originally came from former domestic colonies in Japan. Ethnocentrism might indicate that Japan has clung to its past glories as an imperialist nation.

With the exception of sexism, feminism in Japan lacks interest in issues of compound discrimination such as class distinctions, ethnic discrimination, discrimination against *buraku*¹⁹³ and disabled people. In particular, feminism's interest in ethnic discrimination is weak, although there are Korean, Chinese and Taiwanese living in Japan and newcomers from Southeast Asia. This is ethnocentrism. Not only feminism but also Japanese society has this problem. Originally, there are Ainus in Hokkaido¹⁹⁴ and Okinawans in Okinawa,¹⁹⁵ but they were treated coldly, because of former domestic colonies. Japan took its domestic colonial policies to overseas colonies such as the Korean peninsula and Taiwan. In Japan, feminists' awareness of Japan's colonialism is still poor. (Suzuki)

As Suzuki pointed out, foreigners living in Japan, especially people who originally came from Japan's former colonies, Ainus and Okinawans in the former domestic colonies, tend to be marginalised. Similarly, Ito, a sociologist of globalisation, focused on how feminism had been constructed in historical context, especially colonialism.¹⁹⁶

In my view, feminism in Japan has been characterised by Japan's standpoint in East Asia during the pre-war and post-war eras... Through the war, Japan colonised Mainland China and built up its Empire in East Asia. During this process, first-wave feminism came to have two faces during the pre-war era. It campaigned for female suffrage. At the same time, as Yuko Suzuki points out, it came to lean towards support for the war... One more issue is the structure of the Cold War. In East Asia, this war is not completely over... America's hegemony has cast a shadow over this area. Japan hardly ever reflected on its colonialism and war guilt..., and it pushed on towards economic development as a matter of the highest priority because, like South Korea, Japan was a key

¹⁹³ *Buraku* is an area and also refers to communities formed during the Edo period (1603–1868), where people who were discriminated against lived. This status system was abolished by the Meiji government in 1871, but discrimination against their descendants has continued.

¹⁹⁴ Ainus are indigenous people, mainly living in Hokkaido, which is at the northern end of Japan.

¹⁹⁵ Okinawans are indigenous people in Okinawa, which consists of small islands at the southern end of Japan and used to be an independent kingdom. In 1879, it was officially incorporated into Japan. During the Second World War, it was the only actual battlefield within Japan, and after the war it was administered by the American government until 1972. The American army still concentrates in Okinawa under the US-Japan Security Treaty.

¹⁹⁶ Mackie (2003: 3) states, 'Japanese modernity was... a specific form of colonial modernity. Japanese culture was imbued with the features of a colonial and imperial power...'

nation symbolising liberalism in East Asia under the structure of the Cold War.

(Ito)

Feminists in Japan supported the war, holding up colonialism in cooperation with the state, since it aimed at obtaining suffrage in exchange for cooperation (see Chapter 1).

Mainstream feminism in those days was imperialist (Suzuki 2001, 2003, see Chapter 3).

After the war, the majority of feminists ignored their war guilt, emphasised their victimisation and behaved like pacifists, as self-defence. Naturally, they turned a blind eye to the Emperor's war guilt (Suzuki 2003, see Chapter 3). Suzuki (2003) argues that feminism in the post-war era was ethnocentrically pacifist (see Chapter 3). In other words, feminism was constructed against the background of colonialism, throwing its shadow over current feminism. This could explain the lack of feminist discussions about the state, which I discussed in Chapter 2.

Unlike the other Japanese interviewees, Jung has an ethnic background as a third-generation South Korean living in Japan, who was born and brought up in Japan. 'I take a middle position between being Japanese and a woman who has a foreign nationality' (Jung). She also explained that she criticised feminism in Japan as a Japanese insider, not as an outsider. She then argued that feminism in Japan tended to focus strongly on gender inequality and leave behind minority issues.

When I consider what characterises feminism in Japan... I can see the words, gender equality, like a flickering light. Gender equality is of course essential to feminism, but I think that it is not all of feminism. As I have repeatedly written, I want to reform social structures that rank people hierarchically in terms of race, ethnicity, disability and class... If feminism does not realise that social structures define and control others, it might wander off the main path... I suggest that if feminism deals only with issues of gender inequality, it might not only be trivialised, but also mistake the means for the end. Feminism in Japan has certainly grappled with various issues and many feminists have been careful not to fall into the trap. However, I am afraid that it is an undeniable fact that the main aim of feminism in Japan is still to achieve gender equality.

(Jung)

There is an episode embodying her argument. At a symposium entitled: 'Various Feminisms and Me', held by the Women's Studies Association of Japan in 1995, Jung, a panellist, was irritated by the majority women's view of minority women as others in terms

of ethnicity and sexuality, and finally left the room along with a lesbian panellist in the middle of the discussion (Kanai 2013).

There are various women such as the disabled, Ainu and Korean women in Japan. The symposium focused on these minority women, but [the majority women] tried to tackle their own issues by displaying the minority women on the stage and thinking about minority women's issues. I thought that their way was wrong... They did not have enough consciousness of the structure through which [the majority had created the minority as others and] discriminated against women. (Jung)

According to Kanai (2013), at the symposium, Jung's criticism of the majority women was not necessarily understood by the majority at the time. Rather, the majority women seemed to be considering why Jung was offended at the discussion, which exposed that feminism in Japan lacked an understanding of an outsider inside feminism. Additionally, during the interview, Jung mentioned gender discrimination in the ethnic minority movements.

I was brought up under the Confucian idea of the domination of men over women... In a campaign against ethnic discrimination, there is a hierarchy within which a man should be the leader and women should support him, which has been thoroughly carried out... In the campaign against ethnic discrimination, I face gender discrimination. In the women's campaign against gender discrimination, I feel strongly alienated. When I considered what I could do there, I thought that there might not be a place where I should be. I do not want to disturb Japanese women tackling their own issues, but their positions are different from mine. (Jung)

After the symposium, Jung left the Women's Studies Association of Japan. Her argument recalls that of black feminism tackling double discrimination against black women – both sexism and racism, even within ethnic minority activism and feminism. Black feminists have argued that when white feminists talk about women, the definition of women is white (Bryson 2003). *All the Women Are White, All the Blacks Are Men, But Some of Us Are Brave* (Hull, Scott and Smith 1982) resonates with Jung's point. Not only black women but also other ethnic minority women have criticised Western feminists' racism and their exclusive concern with middle-class white women's issues (see, for example, Collins 2000). In the case of Jung, she has a compound identity, composed of South Korean and Japanese, so that her arguments have raised various doubts about feminism in Japan.

5-3-2 Heterosexism

A further weakness of feminism in Japan that participants discussed was heterosexism. In comparison with movements for same-sex marriage in America, Amano pointed out that such campaigns in Japan were inactive. She then focused on the relation between heterosexism, the workforce and reproduction during wartime.

Heterosexism is deeply rooted in Japanese society. There are campaigns against heterosexism and for homosexual people's rights in America, but the same kind of movements in Japan have fallen far short of that in America. I suggest that the reason why Japanese society has strongly rejected homosexuality is to ensure enough population as the workforce of the country, which might be derived from the idea about reproduction of soldiers [during wartime]... With the policy of gender equality, the Japanese government has adopted the slogan of 'Women, go to the labour market', but its aim was to not only achieve gender equality but also secure enough labourers for an ageing society. (Amano)

Japan has certainly entered a serious era of ageing population and very low birth rate (see Chapter 1). The working population was 65,900,000 people in 2010, but it is estimated that this will have fallen to 42,280,000 people by 2050, about two thirds of that in 2010 (Cabinet Office, Government of Japan 2011). As Amano pointed out, it is possible that deep-rooted heterosexism can be seen as a supportive way to secure workers. Like Amano, Inoue compared Japan with America, but the focus of her attention was the *Lib*.

Feminism in Japan had limited interest in sexuality, at least from the 1970s to the 1990s... In the *Lib* during the 1970s, there was an argument over sexuality that women should have the right to self-determination about their own bodies within heterosexual relationships. However, it seems that there were few arguments related to lesbian feminism. In America during the first half of the 1970s, feminists were often regarded as lesbians. Women who attended feminist meetings in America used to be asked, 'What is your sexuality?'... Then, straight women even used to feel guilty... In Japan in those days, it was all people could do to say a few words about sexuality. (Inoue)

Inoue's focus on second-wave feminism, especially the *Lib*, was derived from her personal experience as a participant in the *Lib*. Certainly, sexual liberation was a particular philosophy of the *Lib* in Japan (see Chapter 1). It insisted that 'the ruling power has been

accomplishing its class will through male control and oppression of the female sex' (Group *Tatakau Onna* 1971: 139, in Tanaka 1995: 346). On the other hand, this attention was limited to heterosexual relations (see Chapter 2), which is clearly different from feminist ideas in Western countries.

It is generally understood that attitudes towards sexuality are influenced by religion. For example, in Christianity, it is believed that women and men were created by God for each other, so it is understood that all the other sexualities are against God. However, comparing attitudes towards sexual minorities in the East with the West, the West has advanced further than the East. In fact, some countries have legalised same-sex marriage, such as the Netherlands from 2001, Massachusetts in America from 2004, California and Connecticut in America from 2008, France, New Zealand and Uruguay from 2013, England and Wales in the UK from 2014 (*AFP BB News* April 2013, *New Sphere* October 2013, Wing and Diehm 2014). In contrast, in the East there is as yet no country that legally acknowledges same-sex marriage. In East Asian countries, there are discussions about it today, but they still tend to have a negative view. Neither of the two researchers referred to the reasons, but I would argue that Confucianism has influenced opinion, on the premise of heterosexism, i.e. that people should preserve the patriarchal and patrilineal family lineage and show respect for present elders and their ancestors. On the other hand, it is interesting that male homosexual behaviour was tolerated as part of traditional masculinity in pre-modern East Asia. In China, men were not seriously divided into heterosexual, homosexual and bisexual, at least before the twentieth century (Hinsch 1990, in Taga 2005). In Japan, *nanshoku* (male homosexual behaviour) started to spread within Buddhist priests' communities during the ninth century, because priests must be single men in Buddhist belief.¹⁹⁷ This had spread to the *samurai* class by the twelfth century, for the reason that a homosexual relationship was seen as a certain way for male followers to show their loyalty to their lords, which was not against Confucianism as they were bisexual. Their *nanshoku* was celebrated rather than tolerated (Leupp 1995, in Taga 2005). After that, Western, Christian-influenced doctrines that the purpose of sex is procreation, introduced into East Asia by modernisation, changed homosexuality from being celebrated to being regarded as pathological or criminal (Hinsch 1990, Furukawa 1995, in Taga 2005). Hence, it is thought that both Confucianism and Christianity have put pressure on East Asian attitudes towards sexual minorities.

¹⁹⁷ Currently, some sects of Buddhism have approved bonzes to get married, and women to become bonzes.

Jung, who argued above against feminist views of minorities, referred to *bosei*, which often becomes a topic in the heated arguments among feminists in Japan, and pointed out the relation between *bosei* and heterosexism.

I view feminism in Japan as being quite heterosexist. There were some lesbian participants in the *Lib...*, but feminism is based on heterosexism. I feel strongly that something is wrong with feminist arguments about *bosei* based on heterosexism. (Jung)

Heterosexism in Japanese society can be seen in various places. For example, the feminist debate about *bosei* during the Taisho era, in which feminists exchanged arguments about whether *bosei* should be protected by the state, was undoubtedly heterosexist, ignoring sexual minorities (see Chapter 1). In politics, the Emperor system is apparently heterosexist in terms of the succession. Neither is feminism an exception. Kanai (2013) points out that homophobia is deeply rooted in feminism in Japan. I argue that it needs to be understood that feminism, which should argue for diversity, has ironically descended into heterosexism.

5–4 *Bosei* Ideology

Looking back over the course of feminist history in Japan, it can be seen that the concept of *bosei*, which Jung gave as an example of heterosexism, has operated powerfully upon feminism up to the present day (see Chapters 1, 2 and 3). Although it has been merely a century since the word *bosei* was constructed and spread through the feminist debate about *bosei* during the Taisho period (Kano [1991] 2009, see Chapter 3), it was used as a political ideology during the pre-war era and wartime in order to encourage women to have children, and it still has an impact on everyday life. At the same time, women positively embraced *bosei* as it gave them some status, although only within the confines of the existing gender divisions, as can be seen in various discussions, such as in the chain of the feminist debates around the housewife since 1955 and in the ‘housewife feminism’ of the 1980s (see Chapter 2). Two participants who focused on *bosei* were Amano and Kaku Sechiyama. In connection with this issue, Kanai stated her view of the differences between women and men. First of all, Amano clearly captured the complex meanings of *bosei*.

[One of the specific characteristics of feminism in Japan is] *bosei* ideology as a cultural concept. This concept has multiple meanings, such as female

reproduction, child-rearing, maternal psychology and *bosei* ideology... Women who do not have any children are regarded as imperfect. *Bosei* and *bosei-ai* (mother's love) are respectable and beautiful. These social norms are still deeply rooted in our society, [which discourages women from working during their child-rearing years,] namely the M curve¹⁹⁸... In the campaign against nuclear power in response to Chernobyl,¹⁹⁹ *bosei* as a symbol of protecting life motivated women to participate in the movement... If they had participated in the campaign simply as housewives, women or wives [without the emphasis on *bosei*], their arguments could not have attracted such wide attention. *Bosei* as a symbol of being a mother had a strong influence on the campaign. (Amano)

Amano's view can often be seen in feminist discussions about *bosei* in Japan. During the pre-war era and wartime, women were expected to contribute to the state in the name of *bosei*; on the other hand, they secured a social position by emphasising their *bosei*. Feminists such as Itsue Takamura linked *bosei* with the Emperor system, impelling women into fascist activities (see Chapters 1 and 3). Kano (1995) states that maternal love and self-sacrifice, which are regarded as maternal instincts, are exploited in exchange for the fact that women are worshipped as if they were the Virgin Mary. This high respect for *bosei* has remained as a social norm, which, as the M curve indicates, has become linked directly with their attitudes towards labour. On the other hand, *bosei* is actively emphasised by women. In fact, women have sensitively tended to react to nuclear power issues by relying on *bosei*. This reaction can also be seen in the current movement, launched after the accident at the Fukushima nuclear power station in the wake of the earthquakes and tsunami on 11 March 2011. Current feminism in Japan tends to criticise the political ideology of great respect towards *bosei*, but what about feminists' attitudes towards female workers' *bosei*, such as the female reproductive function and child-rearing? Sechiyama argued that feminism in Japan itself actually tended to protect *bosei*, which has resulted in creating a hindrance for women who want to work on equal terms with men in the public sphere.

Feminism in Japan strongly protects women as women. This tendency is much stronger than in the West. Menstrual leave has not been abolished. When the Equal Employment Opportunity Law for Men and Women (EEOL) came into force in 1986, the restriction on women's overtime work was not

¹⁹⁸ The M curve is the shape of an 'M' in a line graph showing the changing proportion of female workers by age. See Figure 3 in Chapter 1 and also Ochiai (2008).

¹⁹⁹ In 1986, there was a radiation accident at the nuclear power station in Chernobyl, Ukraine.

abolished²⁰⁰... although this issue is not related to *bosei*... In the case of putting restrictions only on women's overtime work, the cost of labour management of women increases. This clearly has a negative impact on women's advance into society. It was impossible for me to accept that there were feminists who unashamedly affirmed this restriction. (Sechiyama)

Historically, from the viewpoint of female workers, some labour policies protecting *bosei*, such as menstrual leave, are seen as asserting their rights in relation to management (see Chapter 1), even though menstrual leave is seen overseas 'as a symbol of Japanese women's backwardness in the effort to achieve gender equality' (Kawashima 1995: 285). In the process of introducing the EEOL, *bosei* protection was naturally a central issue, especially in occupations that were previously dominated by men (see Chapters 1 and 3). Some women argued that the protection of women should be abolished in order to achieve gender equality. However, the majority of working women argued for the necessity of this protection, because of the sociocultural norms around women (Kawashima 1995). As a result, the regulations protecting female workers under the Labour Standard Law remained when the EEOL was enforced. From Sechiyama's viewpoint, this tendency can be seen in feminism. In the interviews, as Kanai stated:

Women's menstruation every month is one of the differences from male bodies. By ignoring such differences between women and men, competing with men on equal terms and winning out over men, gender equality and the dismantling of gender divisions might be achieved. However, is this way right? This is my question. (Kanai)

Her suggestion, which can be seen as difference feminism, might be one of the views supporting *bosei* protection within feminism.

Concerning this situation, Sechiyama argued that all women were categorised into a single group called 'women', without considering their individual desires. For instance, some women want to work on equal terms with men, but they are not allowed to do so in the name of the protection of *bosei*. Sechiyama was critical of these labour regulations, which hamper women's advance into the labour market. In other words, this has preserved gender discrimination in the public sphere. An example that Sechiyama gave me was that women

²⁰⁰ With the exception of a few occupations, such as nurses and journalists, women's overtime work was restricted, and night duty and work during holidays were prohibited by the Labour Standards Law until it was amended in 1999.

began to work as drivers of the *Shinkansen*²⁰¹ after the restriction was removed in 1999. In fact, the number of female drivers has increased over the last ten years, from only four women in 2003 to about 200 in 2013 (*Tokyo Newspaper* December 2013a), which indicates that the regulations to protect women had apparently kept them from advancing into male-dominated occupations. Sechiyama's view suggests that feminism should reconsider what gender equality is.

5-5 Further Problems

Two further problems with feminism in Japan were identified by five participants. Ogoshi, Ehara and Kanai pointed out that feminism lacked a study of feminist theories. This also indicates that feminism has not been comprehensively theorised, which is one of my motivations to conduct this research (see Introduction). Additionally, Inoue, Minamoto and Ogoshi discussed academic alienation from activism. This problem can be seen not only in Japan but also in other countries, but in the case of Japan, the comfort women issue, which has clearly emerged since the 1990s, plainly indicates the necessity of forging connections between academia and activism. There has been some collaboration in this regard, for example, Jung described her own experience of participating in the campaign to establish an anti-sexual violence law.

5-5-1 Lack of Study of Feminist Ideas and Theories

It has been more than 40 years since academic feminism started to develop, but there are not many scholars studying or generating feminist ideas and theories in Japan. One of the few is Ogoshi, a philosopher. She pointed out that sociologists' contribution to feminism had made its influence felt in Japan, but had resulted in a lack of study of feminist ideas.

One of my criticisms of feminism in Japan is that sociology has led the way. In other words, other disciplines are lazy. Feminism seems to be located in sociology. As a result, feminism in Japan is very poor at the study of feminist ideas. (Ogoshi)

²⁰¹ The *Shinkansen* is a bullet train in Japan.

From the international point of view, sociology has contributed to feminist thought and theories. In my view, what Ogoshi pointed out was probably two issues in feminism in Japan. Firstly, academic feminism in Japan is mainly located in sociology. For instance, Chizuko Ueno, a feminist sociologist who is widely known even among ordinary people, is especially influential (see, for example, Ogoshi 1990), because of which feminism may be understood as a part of sociology. It can then be seen that the other issue is that feminist sociologists prefer empirical works. Ehara, a sociologist, expressed a similar view. She (2009) states that acknowledged feminist theories have not yet been established in Japan and that feminist theoretical works are in the process of being developed (see Introduction). In the interview, she explained why theoretical work was not enough.

Most feminists in Japan are interested only in practice. Feminist scholars tend to make a study of actual proof rather than theories. There are many researchers who interview or survey women in order to analyse what they are suffering from... However, there are few researchers trying to develop their own theories. I think that Japanese society itself especially tends to avoid reason as well as theoretical thinking. (Ehara)

In Ehara's view, empirical work is the mainstream of feminist research, so that theoretical works are rare. As a result, the study of feminist ideas and theories has not developed as much as empirical study. Furthermore, Kanai took a close look at the context of the situation and pointed out that there was a lack of foundation for building new theories in Japan.

What I have to say here is that feminism in Japan has not fully developed by itself. As you said, looking over the series of books in twelve volumes *Feminism in Japan* (2009–11, new edition), scholars around a core of sociologists have empirically analysed specific issues which can be seen as the background to female oppression, such as gender divisions, but it seems that there is a lack of theoretical works. On this point, I do not think that indigenous feminism to Japan has fully developed... The process of modernisation in Japan is often called 'a structure of two floors', which means putting a new something onto an old something, rather than scrapping a traditional something and building a new something through discussion. Therefore, it seems that the study of thought and the comparative study of thought have barely been developed in Japan. (Kanai)

The context of a lack of theoretical works, namely ‘a structure of two floors’, which Kanai pointed out, might be one of the reasons why feminism in Japan has depended on prior Western feminist ideas. Kanai also explained feminism’s position in the academic sphere. According to her, the study of theories in disciplines such as sociology, philosophy and economics were previously dominated by men. Feminists have tried to challenge male-dominated knowledge, but it is not easy for them to do so, and therefore they have progressed no further than dealing with gender issues in practice within their own research fields, such as family history in sociology. This is because feminist academics are in a minority and are not in a position to deconstruct male-dominated knowledge. As a result, the study of feminist ideas has hardly been touched (Kanai). It is also understood that feminist scholars tend to focus on the oppression that women face in daily life, as this is more urgent than studying ideas and theories. The lack of study of feminist ideas and theories has also affected gender studies in Japan, which tends to focus only on gender divisions without theoretically analysing the underlying power structures (Kanai).

It takes time to establish new theories. However, the study of theories can make a major contribution towards the development of feminism. The specific issues that women are coming up against in everyday life can be broadly explained with theories. Theories can also suggest new concepts such as gender, find new issues such as shadow work, or establish new women’s rights such as reproductive health and rights. In the long run, the study of feminist ideas and theories is essential to feminism, since feminism itself is an idea.

5–5–2 Academic Alienation from Activism

The first series of university lectures on women’s studies in Japan began at Wako University in Tokyo in 1974. This series of lectures was designed and opened by Inoue, who actually participated in the *Lib*. Since Inoue encountered women’s studies in 1971 through the *Lib*, she has tried to establish this new discipline in Japan. In 1996, Josai International University in Tokyo area opened an MA course in Women’s Studies, which was the first degree course in academic feminism at postgraduate level in Japan. Currently, Ochanomizu University in Tokyo also runs a postgraduate course related to gender studies. In terms of the number of such universities, the process of the spread of academic feminism in Japan might be slower than in the West, but pioneer feminist researchers have obviously cut new paths in the male-dominated academic sphere. On the other hand, three

researchers pointed out that feminist academia had been alienated from activism. One of them, Inoue, seems to have been influenced by her experience as a participant in the *Lib*.

There is little communication between activism, research and administration... In the case of activism, there are various groups such as a campaign to end discrimination against illegitimate children... but it seems that they do not have close connections or cooperative relationships with each other... Scholars tend to concentrate on academia and have no connection with activism. What is more, it seems that they have little interest in activism. Young researchers especially seem to be interested in social structures and gender issues rather than more specific issues. (Inoue)

From Inoue's viewpoint, activist groups are seldom related to each other, and academics hardly ever have any interest in activism. As a participant in the *Lib*, she might worry about such a situation. Like Inoue, Minamoto and Ogoshi are activists. They focused on the comfort women issue as an example indicating the necessity for collaborative relationships between academia and activism.

Especially during the 1990s, when the issue of comfort women came into the open, the division between researchers and activists was clear. It seemed that there were few researchers who actually joined in with activism related to the issue. Some activists expressed to me their dissatisfaction with this situation. I think that academia has alienated activism. (Minamoto)

In feminism in Japan, the severest problem is the separation of academia and activism. I hardly had any relations with activism until 1991... When I listened to Hak-Sun Kim,²⁰² a former comfort woman who was visiting Osaka, Japan at that time, I was shocked at her testimony and fully realised Japan's acts of aggression. After that, I became busy with practical work rather than theoretical work... Japanese feminists had not discussed Japan's war guilt until then, so I decided to tackle this issue. (Ogoshi)

During the 1990s, both Minamoto and Ogoshi started to grapple with the comfort women issue and were the founding members of the Association for Research on the Impact of War and Military Bases on Women's Human Rights in 1997. This academic society

²⁰² Hak-Sun Kim (1924–97) was the first woman to announce, in 1991, that she had been a comfort woman. In December 1991, war victims, including Kim, in South Korea brought a case before the court against the Japanese government.

worked in close cooperation with activists (Minamoto), but in general, the relationship between academia and activism is not always a close one. Ogoshi has also participated in a feminist activist group, Violence against Women in War (VAWW)-NET JAPAN,²⁰³ since 1998, pursuing the issue of Japan's responsibility for former comfort women. Through these experiences as activists, they realised the gap between feminist academia and activism during the 1990s. However, the gap between them already existed in the 1970s, which was the early period of academic feminism in Japan (Kanai 1988, in Ehara 1990). In those days, female scholars who published books about women's studies focused on feminist ideas in America, but in general they did not refer to anything relating to the *Lib* in Japan or they expressed negative views of the *Lib* as an extreme movement (Ehara 1990). It seems as though they intended to separate women's studies from the *Lib* (Ehara 1990). There were of course some scholars, including Inoue, who perceived that women's studies was an extension of the *Lib*, but feminist scholars generally kept away from the *Lib* (Ehara 1990). This rift between academia and activism has not been bridged; far from it, the gap may have become wider, and this clearly stood out through the comfort women issue. For example, feminist scholars expressed different attitudes towards the Women's International War Crime Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery in 2000 and 2001.²⁰⁴ Ogoshi, one of the members of the main host organisation, VAWW-NET JAPAN, recalled the days when this tribunal was held.

This tribunal criticised the state... However, few mainstream feminists took part in the tribunal. Pursuing the issue of Japan's war guilt was to make an enemy of male-dominated society, as the tribunal was a place... to sit in judgement on the Emperor system, the structure of sexual violence and patriarchy built by men... I think that most feminists were probably afraid of

²⁰³ VAWW-NET JAPAN, founded in 1998, was reorganised as the Violence against Women in War Research Action Centre in 2011.

²⁰⁴ The Women's International War Crime Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery was a people's tribunal, hosted by VAWW-NET JAPAN and various women's groups. In Tokyo in 2000, 64 victims from South and North Korea, China, Taiwan, the Philippines, Indonesia, East Timor, the Netherlands and Malaysia participated in the tribunal. The final judgement was issued in The Hague, the Netherlands in 2001, declaring the State, and Emperor Showa as the head of State, guilty of the sex-slave policy and the sex crimes. The Judges were Gabrielle Kirk McDonald (America), former president of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, Carmen Maria Argibay (Argentina), president of the International Women's Association of Judges, Christine Chinkin (UK), professor of international law at the London School of Economics and Political Science, and Willy Mutunga (Kenya), chairperson of the Kenya Human Rights Commission. Their positions are as of December 2000.

[passing judgement on the state]... Since then, this tribunal has been ignored [by them], as if Yayori Matsui²⁰⁵ and this tribunal did not exist. (Ogoshi)

Whether or not to participate in activism is a personal choice, but activists might expect academics to join them, because scholars can enter activism more easily than activists can enter academia. Jung, who is also an activist, stated that she had tried to reform the power structure by tackling sexual violence issues.

One of issues that I have fought hard for in the last three to four years is the campaign to establish an anti-sexual violence law in Japan. Sexual violence has power to construct hierarchical relations in the private sphere such as family and couples. Such a power structure, which can be seen in the comfort women issue during the war, has remained. Currently, against the background of globalisation in which a disparity in wealth has become big, this power structure seems to be stronger again. By tackling sexual violence issue... I would like to reform society. (Jung)

In the UK, there is the Sexual Offences Act 2003, but in Japan a comprehensive anti-sexual violence law has not been established. According to a survey of 1,751 women in Japan conducted in 2011 by the Cabinet Office, Government of Japan (2012), 134 women had experienced rape, of whom 67.9% had not held a consultation with anyone. Victims tend to bear the experience silently. Through scholars' participation in activism, as in Jung's case, academic knowledge can bolster campaigns. At the same time, academics have a chance to listen to the voice of people. Building collaborative relationships between academia and activism might be a key step to developing feminism.

5–6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have found some key issues characterising feminism in Japan. In terms of power structure, Confucian patriarchy, the *ie* system and gender discrimination in religions such as Buddhism and Shintoism stood out. This indicates that feminism in Japan has struggled with various East Asian cultural influences and Japan's history, politics and religion. In particular, the *ie* system was a political product in order to support the family-

²⁰⁵ Yayori Matsui (1934–2002) was a journalist, a feminist activist, and a representative of VAWW-NET JAPAN. The plan of the Women's International War Crime Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery was proposed by her. She passed away from cancer a year after the final judgement was issued in The Hague in 2001.

state ideology. The fact that it still has an impact on daily life, although it was abolished during the post-war era, indicates that it is quite difficult to tackle the issue. On the other hand, as a weakness of feminism, the lack of interest in minorities was brought into sharp relief. Ethnocentrism is derived from colonialism, and heterosexism is essential to the maintenance of the family line under the impact of Confucianism. It is ironic that feminism, which should tackle discrimination against various minorities, falls into ethnocentrism and heterosexism. *Bosei*, which was the political ideology during the pre-war era and wartime and is often the key to feminist discussions, also results in shortcomings in feminism in terms of dualism. This indicates that, as well as society, feminism is unavoidably influenced by culture and politics in historical contexts. By discussing these features, an outline of the picture of feminism in Japan becomes visible. On the basis of these particular characteristics, in the next chapter I will investigate the extent to which feminism in Japan is imported and how it differs from forms of feminism elsewhere, especially in other East Asian countries and the West.

6 Indigenous or Imported?: Contrasting Feminist Views

6-1 Introduction

After the Meiji Restoration in the late 1860s, Japan started to import advanced technology and ideas from the West in order to build a modern state (see Chapter 1). At that time, feminist consciousness also gradually developed and spread in Japan. Women activists, who often had connections with the Movement for Civic Rights and Freedom or socialism, gained prominence and are widely seen as pioneers of feminism. The existing literature also indicates that imported ideas, especially Christianity, influenced the early development of feminism (see Chapter 2). During the Taisho period (1912–26), various Western feminist books such as Ellen Key's *The Morality of Woman* (1911, Japanese edition 1913) and *Love and Marriage* (1911, Japanese edition 1919), and Emma Goldman's *The Tragedy of Woman's Emancipation* (1906, Japanese edition 1914) were translated or reviewed by feminists, mainly members of the pioneering feminist group *Seito*, stimulating them to debate women's issues, especially *bosei* (Nishikawa 1997, see also Chapter 1). These movements are generally defined as the first wave of feminism in Japan. During second-wave feminism, the women's liberation movement emerged during the late 1960s and early 1970s in developed countries, including Japan, and a lot of information about the *Lib* in the West, especially in America, was then reported by the Japanese media. Subsequently, academic feminism, namely women's studies, was also introduced from the West by researchers. The Women's Studies Society of Japan was founded in 1977 and the Women's Studies Association of Japan was organised in 1979. It started to be established as a new discipline in the late 1970s. After almost 40 years, academic feminism is still a minor field because it is a new, interdisciplinary approach that challenges male-dominated society. However, feminist words in English such as feminism and gender are currently widely used in Japan, and two Japanese universities offer postgraduate courses in women's studies or gender studies. Translated versions of famous Western feminist books such as Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (1990, Japanese edition 1999) have been published, too. Looking back on the past, Aoki (1997) states that feminists in Japan have learned various ideas from Western feminisms. With globalisation, people and various things, including knowledge,

have increasingly crossed borders. However, the relation between feminisms in the West and in Japan in the academic sphere has not been investigated in detail. This chapter will examine how scholars understand this relation by asking whether feminism has been imported into Japan from the West and exploring differences between feminisms in Japan and in the West.²⁰⁶ At the same time, I will consider how they evaluate not only feminism in Japan but also feminist scholarship in Asia more generally.

6–2 Imported Feminism?

I had a reason for asking researchers whether feminism in Japan was imported from the West. It was because I had found an extremely interesting argument in the series of anthologies entitled *Feminism in Japan* (the old edition in eight volumes 1994, new edition in twelve volumes 2009–11), into which essays by feminist scholars and activists were compiled. The editors of these books are very prominent academic feminists of the pioneer generation. In the preface to the old edition (1994), the four editors, Inoue, Ueno, Ehara and Amano argue that feminism in Japan is not imported from the West.

It has been about a quarter of a century since the *Lib* in 1970. The time has come to look back over the process of the development of second-wave feminism and have a look at the next step... Now the time has come to resolve the distortions and misunderstandings about feminism, and to identify feminism in Japan with critical thinking. Feminism in Japan has its own indigenous reason for existing in cultural and historical contexts. Feminism in Japan might be often misunderstood, but it is neither borrowed nor imported from the West. It is possible to say that like women in the world who stood up and took action transnationally all at once, women in Japan have contributed to the achievements of feminism by talking about their personal experiences in their own words. (Inoue, Ueno, Ehara and Amano [1994] 2009: vii–viii, my translation)

Interestingly, in this short preface, which is only one and a half pages long, their argument focuses only on this point: feminism in Japan is not imported from the West. Additionally, they specifically focus on the *Lib* of second-wave feminism. The sentence ‘women in the world who stood up and took action transnationally all at once,’ is referring to the *Lib*. On the other hand, it is extremely strange that they do not refer at all to first-wave feminism as

²⁰⁶ I accepted some participants’ criticism of my research that comparisons with the West might fall into the realm of Orientalism, which could also lead to cultural essentialism. However, some of them argue in their edited book series *Feminism in Japan* ([1994] 2009) that feminism in Japan is not imported. Thus, after due consideration, I decided I wanted to investigate how they perceived the differences between feminisms in Japan and in the West. See Chapter 4.

the beginning of feminism in Japan; it seems as though they are ignoring first-wave feminism. These four researchers, who witnessed the *Lib*, were influential pioneers in the mainstream of academic feminism in Japan. I intended to confirm whether they had changed this position and also investigate the other participants' opinions on this issue. As a result, the twelve researchers' views were broadly divided into three groups (see Table 5).

Is Feminism Imported from the West?

Participant	Birth year	Yes/No	Discipline
Amano*	1938	No	Sociology
Kano	1940	No	Women's History
Inoue*	1942	No	Sociology
Ogoshi	1946	No	Philosophy
Ueno*	1948	No	Sociology
Ehara*	1952	No	Sociology
Kanai	1944	Yes	Philosophy, Ethics
Suzuki	1949	Yes	Women's History
Jung	1960	Yes	Sociology
Minamoto	1947	equivocal	Religious Studies
Sechiyama	1963	equivocal	Sociology
Ito	1954	no comment	Sociology of Globalisation

Table 5 Authors* of the preface of the old edition of *Feminism in Japan* (1994). This list is in order of No/Yes and also birth year.

The four researchers who wrote this preface, Inoue, Ueno, Ehara and Amano, had not changed their stance, and two other scholars, Kano and Ogoshi, also argued that feminism in Japan was not imported. On the other hand, three researchers, Kanai, Jung and Suzuki, argued that feminism in Japan was partially imported. Two other researchers, Minamoto and Sechiyama, did not respond to the question directly, but they made some comments about the influences of feminism in the West on feminism in Japan or the *Lib* generation in academic feminism. The other researcher, Ito, did not offer any views. I will discuss their varied arguments by taking their generation, standpoints in academic feminism and disciplines into consideration.

6–2–1 Claiming Autonomy for Feminism in Japan

Of the six participants who argued that feminism was not imported, Inoue, Amano, Kano and Ueno exclusively focused on the *Lib* in Japan without referring to first-wave feminism. This might indicate that the starting point of current feminism from their point of view was the *Lib*. They then emphasised feminism's autonomy and specific characteristics in Japan. In the case of Inoue and Amano, their arguments were based on the grounds that there were some foundations for feminism in Japan before the *Lib*. In particular, Inoue, who actually participated in the *Lib*, has direct experience in that she tried to find a new discipline for women before the *Lib*.

I believe that feminism in Japan and women's studies are neither borrowed ideas nor imported. The preface of *Feminism in Japan* is not wrong. Feminism emerged simultaneously in Japan and the West. I mean that each country has its own feminism. Feminism in Japan emerged spontaneously, chanced to encounter Western feminist ideas, and then blazed. Before that, there was the groundwork for feminist activism and research in Japan, so that feminism in Japan is absolutely neither borrowed nor imported. However, if I were asked what the identity of feminism in Japan was, it would be difficult for me to answer the question. (Inoue)

Inoue did not use the word *Lib* directly, but I confirmed that she was referring to the *Lib*. The basis of her argument, which was the existence of the original groundwork of feminism leading to the *Lib*, seems to be based on her personal experience. In fact, when she was a postgraduate student at the University of Tokyo in the late 1960s, she joined a group for the study of Simone Weil's²⁰⁷ works and started to create a new discipline, 'Women's Theories',²⁰⁸ like current women's studies (Inoue 1996: 44). In those days, she also married, imitating her mother who was a self-sacrificing middle-class wife, and devoted herself to her husband, but one day she realised that her self-sacrifice was ridiculous (Inoue 1996). When she finally encountered the *Lib* in 1970, she thought, 'This is what I am looking for'²⁰⁹ (Inoue 1996: 48). Subsequently, she encountered women's studies in 1971 through the *Lib* and began to give a series of lectures at Wako University in 1974, which were the first lectures on women's studies in Japan. Her experience of searching for 'Women's Theories' before the *Lib* and the establishment of academic

²⁰⁷ Simone Weil (1909–43) was a French philosopher and political activist.

²⁰⁸ My translation.

²⁰⁹ My translation.

feminism during this early period might have given her confidence in her argument. On the other hand, she stated that it was not easy to identify feminism in Japan. However, she gave an example based on the particular characteristics of social structures in Mexico, where she had lived as a visiting scholar during 1981 to 1982, saying that class and ethnic issues were much more important than gender there. According to Inoue, Mexican women born into the upper class have financial and political power in the mainstream of society. Of course, they do not have to do domestic work at all because they employ housekeepers. Consequently, it is clear that feminism in Japan, which strongly focuses on gender divisions, is different from feminism in Mexico, which also differs from feminism in Western and other countries. In this way, she then suggested that a detailed analysis of the specific characteristics of any society could be one of the keys to identifying the particular forms of feminism within it.

Like Inoue, Amano argued that the groundwork for feminism in Japan had been laid before the *Lib*. As a researcher making a special study of women's networking during the post-war period, she focused on women's communication in their own networks.

In my work, I focus on feminism in Japan in the early 1970s, not as imported feminism, but as feminist ideas that developed through women's networking before and after the war in Japan... There is criticism that feminism in Japan before 1970 was based on the acceptance of gender divisions such as housewives, mothers and wives... However, women identified themselves by gathering spontaneously, communicating with each other and getting into action together. In these ways, women's energy had been stored up, which led to the *Lib* later. There is a view that women's activism in the 1970s did not have any relation with previous women's activism, but I think that this is a one-sided view. (Amano)

Women's activism before the *Lib*, to which Amano attached great importance, does not mean significant events and first-wave feminism, but the accumulated experience of small events in daily life such as gathering, communicating with each other and taking action together. This may be because Amano, who was born in 1938 and is the oldest of the twelve participants, actually witnessed this women's activism during the post-war period. For example, after Japan was defeated, workers started to organise labour unions to help each other. Amano (2005) argues that sex workers forming groups was symbolic of women's mutual aid to survive the poverty of those days. At that time, other women also began to organise various circles in their communities. Circles of wives in company-owned

houses not only helped each other, but also participated in the labour movement with their husbands, although wives were not union members. In these circles, women positively accepted their gender role as wives and mothers. Subsequently, this positive attitude towards gender roles was strongly criticised by the *Lib*, but Amano (2005) argues that wives' circles developed their activism in a way that fell within their gender role, such as running a cooperative day nursery and the consumer movement. Historically, activism in these women's circles was extremely small, like bubble foam (Amano 2005), but Amano (2005) points out that their activism reflected their strong will to improve their lives. This might be the reason why Amano appreciated women's networking during the post-war period as laying the groundwork for feminism in Japan.

Unlike Inoue and Amano, the basis of Kano's argument was that feminists during the early days of the *Lib* directed their attention to the structure of oppression under imperialism. When I referred to the preface in the interview, Kano opened her argument with 'I strongly agree with the preface' and also identified a precedent for the *Lib*.

I argue that the feminist activist group, *Shinryaku=Sabetsu to Tatakau Ajia Fujin Kaigi* [侵略=差別と闘うアジア婦人会議] (Conference of Asian Women Fighting against Discrimination=Invasion), cut a path to the *Lib*... The argument was derived from their own ideas... There were feminist groups in Japan translating and publishing foreign [feminist] books, so I do not think that foreign [feminism] had no impact. However, I do not think this impact led to the *Lib* in Japan. (Kano)

Shinryaku=Sabetsu to Tatakau Ajia Fujin Kaigi, which Kano defined as the first group to cut a path to the *Lib* in February 1970,²¹⁰ as the name indicates, realised that the structure of gender discrimination was linked with discrimination against people in *buraku*,²¹¹ local people in Okinawa,²¹² and ex-colonial people, such as Koreans living in Japan. This group then tackled the various oppressions that existed under invasion and imperialism. They also positioned their struggle in the wider context of Asia, because they understood that they were oppressed as women and also were oppressors as Japanese people at the same time (Mackie 2003). Although few feminist researchers define this group's manifesto in February 1970 as the starting point of the *Lib*, the reason why Kano focused especially on this group might lie in her own life history: born in 1940, she was a survivor of the atomic

²¹⁰ In February 1970, *Shinryaku=Sabetsu to Tatakau Ajia Fujin Kaigi* announced their argument (Kano).

²¹¹ See Chapter 5.

²¹² See Chapter 5.

bombing of Hiroshima in 1945. Like the women of this group, Kano might have realised that she is oppressed and an oppressor at the same time. In other words, she was both a victim and also standing on the assailant side in terms of Japan's war guilt. This principle of women's activism was similar to the concept of post-colonialism and occurred ahead of Said's (1978) theoretical work on post-colonialism, *Orientalism*, which certainly differed from the women's liberation movement in the West.

Ueno argued for the particular characteristics of the *Lib* by tracing its origins, but, unlike Kano, she defined the feminist demonstration march in Tokyo in October 1970,²¹³ organised by feminist activists such as Mitsu Tanaka,²¹⁴ as the starting point of the *Lib*. In the interview, just as I expected, Ueno's first words were about Mitsu Tanaka.

Have you read Mitsu Tanaka's book *To Women as Life*? There are her well-known words in this book, 'The *Lib* is an imp born from New Leftism ten months and ten days²¹⁵ later.' This is true... New Left activism had simultaneously executed multiple acts internationally... The *Lib* emerged from women's disappointment at New Leftism, which was like the rubble of New Leftism... I cannot understand why people say that only the *Lib* was imported, although they do not say that New Leftism was imported ... The impact of the foreign *Lib* cannot be seen at all in Tanaka's manifesto, *Benjokara-no-Kaiho* (Liberation from the Toilet). (Ueno)

As Ueno explained, it is a historical fact that New Leftism emerged in both Japan and Europe, such as student activism in 1968 Paris, and women who were disappointed at gender discrimination within new left activism gathered and participated in the *Lib*. Re-reading Tanaka's manifesto *Benjokara-no-Kaiho* (see Chapter 1), which is generally regarded as the manifesto of the *Lib* in Japan, it might seem that she felt hatred towards men. Tanaka's metaphor 'toilet' shocked Japanese society, and provided an impassioned criticism of the norms of sexual behaviour whereby women were destined to be 'mothers' feeling maternal love or 'toilets', namely, prostitutes. However, what is striking about her argument is that she tries to imagine a new world in which women and men have sex with each other as a means of communication – free of domination and subordination (Mackie

²¹³ There is a disparity of dates for the *Lib* between Kano and Ueno, but feminist scholars in Japan generally regard the demonstration on 21 October 1970 as the starting point of the *Lib*.

²¹⁴ Mitsu Tanaka, born 1943, is a feminist activist, who was a core member of the Group *Tatakau-Onna* (Fighting Women) in the *Lib*. Her book, entitled *To Women as Life: A Theory of the Women's Lib in Confusion* [いのちの女たちへ—とり乱しウーマンリブ論] ([1972] 2010), describes why she participated in the *Lib*.

²¹⁵ In Japan, it is said that the period of pregnancy is ten months and ten days, but the actual pregnancy period is generally 280 days.

2003). ‘SEX is the basic means of communication between living things whereby they transcend their limitations as isolated individuals... We also need to clarify how it is that the sexual relationship between men and women contributes to their integration into this system of domination and subordination’ (Tanaka 1970, in Mackie 2003: 145). As Ueno argued, no influence of the foreign *Lib* can be seen in Tanaka’s argument. In addition, Ueno explained the particularly strong influence of communism in post-war Japan.

The specific background of the emergence of New Leftism in Japan was that communist activism in post-war Japan was much stronger than in other countries.... What emerged in opposition to the strong impact of the Communist Party was New Leftism in Japan. Then, what emerged from women who had sympathised with New Leftism was feminism in Japan. Looking back on this process, I can only say that feminism in Japan is indigenous to Japan. This process has its own specific history. It is a little similar to Europe, but it cannot be compared with America. (Ueno)

Considering the arguments of all four academics, one of the reasons why they paid attention only to the *Lib* might be that the image of the *Lib* itself is still Western, especially American; what is more, it is negative, which still has an undesirable influence on the whole image of feminism in Japan. A feminist who witnessed the *Lib*, Aoki (1997) looks back on it and states:

Unfortunately, American feminism, or the Women’s Lib as it was called then, was introduced to Japan through the mass media. The women in the movement were presented as eccentrics. The media focused on such isolated events as bra-burning ceremonies and the violent protest at the Miss America pageant. That was Japan’s first exposure to the American movement. Japanese feminists were not anxious to be identified with all of this, given the media environment of the day. They were wary of giving the media any excuse to represent them in the same light. (Aoki 1997: 12–3)

In fact, the Japanese media reported the American women’s liberation movement with an aggressive headline: ‘Scrap Male-Dominated Society: Refusal of Femininity, Braless and Red Socks’²¹⁶ (*Asahi Newspaper* March 1970a: 10). In addition to this negative image of the *Lib* in America presented by the media, this abbreviated title in English, the ‘*Lib*’ itself, named by the media, was one of the reasons why the movement of those days was regarded as an import from the West (Ueno 2009b). For example, the *Lib* appeared in national newspapers in Japan: ‘The Women’s *Lib*, which is becoming very active in

²¹⁶ My translation.

America, has finally landed in Japan'²¹⁷ (*Asahi Newspaper* October 1970b: 24). 'The Wave of the Women's *Lib* has surged into Japan from overseas'²¹⁸ (*Yomiuri Newspaper* November 1970: 18). Not only the media, but also some researchers still see the *Lib* as an import. Arichi (1993: 173) refers to the demonstration carried out by feminists on 21 October 1970 in Tokyo and argues, 'The *Lib* landed in Japan two months after the women's *Lib* demonstration march in America... The *Lib* in Japan was the target of thundering criticism as an imitation of the American way...' ²¹⁹ Ueno (2009b) points out that the misunderstanding that the *Lib* in Japan was an imitation of the American women's liberation movement has been repeated. The four academics who witnessed the *Lib*, Inoue, Amano Kano and Ueno, seem to be trying to remove this negative image and clear up the misunderstanding. In addition, I considered why they did not make any mention at all of first-wave feminism. Only Inoue and Amano referred to the groundwork of the *Lib*, but they looked back only to the late 1960s or the post-war period. From their point of view, the starting point of feminism in Japan was apparently the *Lib*. In particular, Ueno argued that what emerged from New Leftism was feminism in Japan, although what emerged from New Leftism was actually the *Lib*, just one of elements of feminism in Japan. What I can see in their views is that their own starting points as pioneers of academic feminism might be the *Lib*.

Unlike these four researchers, Ehara and Ogoshi, who are studying feminist theories from different disciplines, focused on theoretical works in the academic sphere rather than activism. They highlighted cultural barriers or different social structures as an obstacle to the spread of Western feminist theories in Japan. In Ehara's case, Marxist feminism was cited as an example.

I argue that feminism in Japan is not imported. If anything, Japan is not good at importing. I think that Japan should import a little more, but there are cultural barriers. For example, postmodernism, imported from overseas, can hardly spread in Japan. It is said that postmodernism is in fashion, but we do not know how to connect it with activism. There are also no feminist scholars studying postmodernism in Japan, following Kazuko Takemura²²⁰... Ueno tried to

²¹⁷ My translation.

²¹⁸ My translation.

²¹⁹ My translation.

²²⁰ Kazuko Takemura (1954–2011) was a feminist scholar of literature and also a professor at Ochanonizu University in Tokyo. She is also known as a translator of *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (English edition 1990, Japanese edition 1999) written by Judith Butler. I invited her to the interviews, but unfortunately she died of malignant tumours a month before my fieldwork in Japan.

spread Marxist feminism, and her argument ‘Domestic work is unpaid work’ might be accepted by people, but Marxist feminism itself has not developed at all... I argue that the labour theory of value cannot apply to reproductive labour, because human beings are not products... Our valuing of reproductive labour is different from our valuing of productive labour. So, we do our best to take care even of people who can no longer become productive labourers... Consequently, this reproductive labour issue belongs to social norms issues in sociology. (Ehara)

As Ehara argued, it can be understood that differences in culture stand in the way of the development of imported feminist ideas, even though they are attractive. In the case of Marxist feminism, the definition of domestic work as unpaid labour brought a new feminist argument, represented by Dalla Costa (1986) in the 1970s and 1980s, that domestic labour should be paid a wage. In Japan, Ueno published a book *Patriarchy and Capitalism: The Horizon of Marxist Feminism* in 1990 (see Chapter 3). The key concept of domestic work in Marxist feminism seems to have been widely noticed. For example, at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, women’s domestic work without pay was discussed and the necessity of research into its financial value was specified in the Platform for Action. In particular, Japan is a society with an ageing population, in which the nursing of old people is an important issue (see Chapter 1). In response to this stream of the time, the Cabinet Office, Government of Japan, set up a society for the study of the financial value of unpaid work in 1996 and started to analyse it (Cabinet Office, Government of Japan 1997).

According to the Cabinet Office, Government of Japan (2006), in Japan women spent 461 minutes a day on domestic work, which was the longest among these seven countries, and men spent only 48 minutes a day, which was the shortest. The difference between women and men was 413 minutes, which was the biggest gap among all seven countries. The smallest gap between women and men was 128 minutes in Sweden: women 329 minutes, men 201 minutes (see Figure 8). This indicates that social norms of womanhood, which expect women to shoulder reproductive labour, are much stronger in Japan than in Western countries. As to the financial value of unpaid work, women spent 1,381 hours per year on domestic work in Japan in 2011, which was worth 1,928,000 yen (approximately £10,700) (Cabinet Office, Government of Japan 2013c).

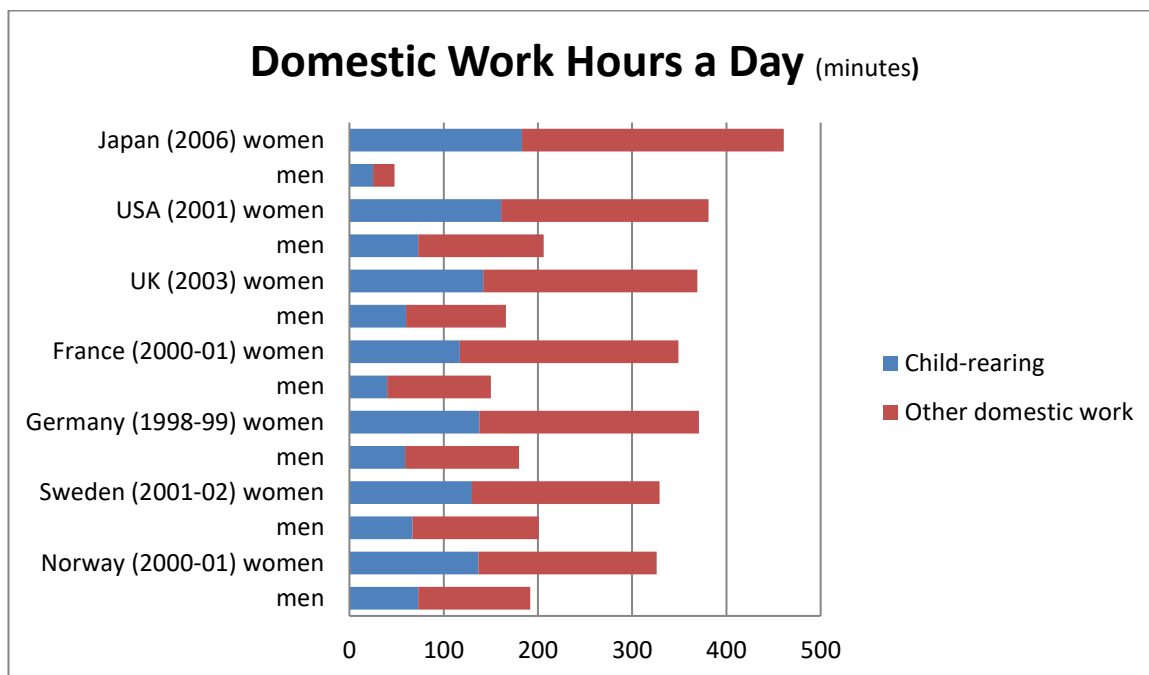


Figure 8 Source: Cabinet Office, Government of Japan (2006) *Society with Fewer Children White Paper*. This survey was conducted among couples who had a child aged under six.

This conversion of domestic work into monetary terms logically identifies that women are oppressed and exploited by patriarchy and capitalism, but this has ironically resulted in a completely opposite reaction in Japan from that in the West. Shiota ([1992] 2009) argues that appreciating domestic work has unfortunately resulted in praising full-time housewives. Basically, Japanese society tends to respect *bosei* (see Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 5). In fact, it is often said that a man's success is due, in no small measure, to his wife. Not only do men want to maintain patriarchy, but also women tend not to venture beyond the place of housewives. In connection with *bosei*, Tanasawa (1995), a scholar of French thought in Japan, argues as someone who has a child, with introductory remarks that she neither praises nor makes light of motherhood, that Western theories of domestic work strongly focus on relations between men and women under patriarchy, namely financial exploitation, so that relations between mothers and their children are hardly discussed. 'Do mothers take care of their children only in order to reproduce future workers? I do not think so... Because children need their mother's help to live, mothers take care of their children. I believe that this is a mother's fundamental work'²²¹ (Tanasawa 1995: 248). This argument, which is similar to Ehara's view in terms of the different values of reproductive and productive labour, might look anti-feminist, but I can see the presence of maternal feminism, which might indicate that women's reproduction in East Asia, especially having

²²¹ My translation.

boys as successors to the head of the family, tends to be regarded as important work under Confucianism in order to pass the family line to the next generation.

There is also an argument that looks at reproductive labour from a different angle. Shiota ([1992] 2009) points out that highly educated middle-class women in Japan, who would be expected to support feminism, tend to choose to enjoy the advantages of being full-time housewives rather than challenge the male-dominated labour market in the public sphere. Shiota ([1992] 2009) suggests that this is because housewives are treated with special favour by the law, such as tax and pension benefits (see Chapters 1, 3 and 5). ‘In comparison with the West, in which laws and governmental policies tend to be reformed in order to encourage women to be financially independent from their husbands, “the place of housewives” accepting gender division in Japan is much stronger and more stable’²²² (Shiota [1992] 2009: 125). In short, not only social norms but also national policy discourage women from being financially independent, and encourage them to choose institutional benefits as dependents (see Chapters 1, 3 and 5).

Unlike Ehara’s sociological approach to cultural barriers, focusing on actual conditions such as the different evaluation of reproductive and productive labour, Ogoshi, a philosopher who is interested in religion, approached cultural difference by discussing Japanese religious beliefs. Looking back at Ogoshi’s background, she encountered some feminists in the early 1970s and read a Western feminist theological book entitled *Womanspirit Rising*,²²³ which guided her to feminism. Since then, she has learned from Western feminist ideas such as Luce Irigaray’s works and a series of books on the reinterpretation of Hegel and Kant. Ogoshi stated that she had been impressed by Julia Kristeva’s book entitled *Power of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* (French edition 1980, Japanese edition 1984) and had once tried to employ Kristeva’s theory in order to analyse the relation between women and men in Buddhist belief.

Of course, feminism in Japan is not imported, because there are issues in Japan which cannot be analysed with Western feminist ideas... It is not easy to make Western ideas take root in Japanese society, because of different social structures... According to Kristeva, a mother is regarded as a threat locking male sexuality in. Men are excessively afraid of this threat, so that they exclude

²²² My translation.

²²³ *Womanspirit Rising: A Feminist Reading in Religion*, edited by Carol P. Christ and Judith Plaskow, is an anthology of 20 feminists’ works, published in 1979. This is known as the earliest feminist theological book.

women. If I analyse the relation between men and women in Shinran's²²⁴ *Nyobon-no-Mukoku* with Kristeva's theory, only women should take all the blame. I think that this is wrong. Probably, the paradigm such as *Nyobon-no-Mukoku* does not exist in the West. (Ogoshi)

Shinran's *Nyobon-no-Mukoku* was a divine revelation by the Bodhisattva of Mercy²²⁵ in a dream. In those days, Buddhist priests were not allowed to have sexual intercourse, and he was suffering from his sexual desire. One day, the Bodhisattva of Mercy appeared to him in a dream and said to him: 'If you want to have sex with a woman, I will transform myself into a beautiful woman and have sex with you. I will thus save you from agony and guide you to the Buddhist paradise'²²⁶ (*Shinran-Muki*, in Minamoto 1985a: 168). This indicates that the Bodhisattva of Mercy always forgives men, even sinners, by becoming a woman and satisfying their sexual desire, which only follows men's own convenience (Minamoto 1990). By trying to apply Western feminist ideas to gender issues in Japan, such as *Nyobon-no-Mukoku*, Ogoshi realised that they were not always suitable for Japanese society. She has actually tried to develop original feminist ideas in Japanese cultural context through a philosophical approach. She is still seeking them, but her argument that feminism in Japan is not imported might indicate that she feels pride in the challenge of her goal.

These interviewees' emphasis on feminism's autonomy and specificity to Japan by focusing on the *Lib* or cultural barriers seems to be persuasive. However, I have concerns about their ignoring of first-wave feminism, and from my perspective, feminism in Japan actually depends on Western feminist ideas, at least in its theoretical work. In fact, Ueno is known as a Marxist feminist and Ehara has published books about radical feminism. Other scholars also apply Western feminist theories to gender issues in Japan. In spite of this contradiction, why do they focus on feminism's autonomy in Japan? The six researchers' assertions might also reveal their self-confidence as pioneers who started from zero in order to establish academic feminism since the 1970s. If so, this situation is reminiscent of the female activists who contributed to the early development of feminism. In Sievers's view (1999), while these women were relatively well educated, and thus familiar with imported feminist ideas, they emphasised that they had created their own feminism as a

²²⁴ Shinran (1173–1262) was the founder of one of the sects in Japanese Buddhism, *Jodo-Shin* sect. After *Nyobon-no-Mukoku*, he actually married a woman.

²²⁵ In Buddhist belief, it is said that the Bodhisattva of Mercy can transform itself into any persons in response to a request asking for help, and save them.

²²⁶ My translation.

response to rapid modernisation, owing little or nothing to ideas generated overseas (see Chapter 2). In either case, their pride as pioneers might be a key to understanding them.

6–2–2 Identifying Western Influences

Of the three researchers who argued that feminism in Japan was partially imported, Kanai and Jung focused on the fact that academic feminism in Japan depended on Western feminist theories. ‘In both theoretical work and activism, the store of knowledge built up by feminism in Japan is incomparably much less than by feminism in the West... As long as feminist theories in Japan have not developed enough, I think that feminism in Japan also depends on many borrowed ideas’ (Kanai). Kanai’s argument that in her opinion feminism in Japan lacked a study of feminist theories (see Chapter 5) led to a reliance on Western feminist theories. Meanwhile, Jung, a South Korean born and brought up in Japan, argued that feminists in Japan lacked interest in ethnic and sexual minorities (see Chapter 5), and criticised them for adopting Western feminists’ racism.

There are a lot of local feminist activists everywhere in Japan, so I do not deny that feminism is native to Japan, but it is possible to say that more than half of the theories in women’s studies have been imported... For example, researchers in Japan analyse issues in their own words by using imported theories such as Drucilla Cornell’s and Gayatri Spivak’s... So, I do not think that 100% of feminism in Japan is imported...but fundamental theories are clearly imported... There is a question as to why foreign theories seem to be more valuable... It seems that foreign theories are seen as more authoritative than theories established in Japan... Japanese society might have an inferiority complex that the West is more advanced than Japan... The illusion that feminism established in America is valuable and leading the trend of the new era might be too strong... The division of feminism into periods such as second-wave feminism has itself been made by middle-class white women’s feminism. Although African American women have been putting their own feminism into practice for a long time, it has been ignored, which is the same as the era name²²⁷ under the Emperor system. However, feminism in Japan has followed only Americans and what is more, middle-class white feminists. I am

²²⁷ In Japan, the Emperor system controls the division of eras. Whenever Japan has a new Emperor, a new era, given a new name, starts.

really dissatisfied with this situation... There are also many feminists such as hooks. Gloria Anzaldua is also important. I am wondering why their works are unappreciated. Feminism in Japan has a deep-rooted racism in introducing feminist theories from overseas. I am so disappointed at the situation. (Jung)

Jung's point was that feminism in Japan had employed imported theories, especially middle-class white feminist ideas. This criticism might come from her ethnic minority background. In addition, Jung, born in 1960, is younger than the feminist pioneer generation in academia, which might give her distance from the pioneers and enable her to be critical. This deference towards feminism in the West involving racism can be seen not only in feminism, but also in various other fields in Japan, such as fashion for young people. Since the beginning of modernisation, Western culture²²⁸ has still tended to be respected in Japan, which might have led to this deference towards the West.

Similarly, in terms of the focus on racism, Suzuki's view was significant. In my interview, Suzuki, a historian, was the only participant to focus on first-wave feminism and to appreciate its achievements and influence. First-wave feminists had already tackled not only gender discrimination but also ethnic issues.

The mainstream of current feminism in Japan also seems to be borrowed ideas... In terms of the extension of women's rights and criticism of male domination, I argue that the sources of feminism in Japan are in the argument of Toshiko Kishida²²⁹ in the Movement for Civic Rights and Freedom... In her essay entitled 'To My Sisters', she pointed out that male activists in the Movement for Civic Rights and Freedom discriminated against women, and roused women to activity. This was a new idea in those days... Following Kishida, women such as Sugako Kanno,²³⁰ Kikue Yamakawa,²³¹ Fumiko

²²⁸ Western culture is not homogeneous, but I have used the singular form 'Western culture' in terms of its powerful impact on global society. For example, the influence of Western cultural products such as fashion, music and film is greater in the East than is Eastern culture's impact on the West (Jackson, Liu and Woo 2008).

²²⁹ Toshiko Kishida (1863–1901) was a pioneer female activist, who participated in the Movement for Civic Rights and Freedom during the 1880s. See Chapter 2.

²³⁰ Sugako Kanno (1881–1911, real name: Suga Kanno) was a journalist and also a socialist. In 1910, the fact that some socialists were planning to assassinate the Emperor was uncovered, so the police made a mass arrest of socialists and anarchists. In January 1911, twelve of these, including Kanno, were executed as political criminals. This is called 'the High Treason Incident'. See Chapter 2.

²³¹ See Chapters 1 and 2.

Kaneko²³² and Teru Hasegawa²³³ built the sources of feminism in Japan. Feminism already existed in those days. Ideas of the *Lib* [in future decades] can be seen in Yamakawa's and others' ideas... Yamakawa forged a sisterhood with female workers and tackled their labour issues. She was also interested in issues of colonial people working in Japan... She had global angles... In Japan scholars who are studying feminism have hardly taken any notice of these feminist ideas. Feminism should learn from the sources of feminism. (Suzuki)

These women, such as Toshiko Kishida, whom Suzuki regards as the sources of feminism in Japan, are also widely regarded among scholars as key figures of early feminism in Japan (see Chapter 2). In Suzuki's view, while the sources of feminism in Japan can be found in women's activism during the early modernisation period, which anticipated today's important issues such as the rights of ethnic minorities, current feminists today have shown hardly any interest in these sources and have instead imported feminist ideas. This argument is in striking contrast to the book preface discussed above that focuses only on the *Lib*, as though it is the origin of feminism in Japan, without referring to first-wave feminism at all. In other words, this may be a severe criticism of academics in the mainstream of current feminism.

I was inspired by Suzuki to investigate Toshiko Kishida, a female activist in the Movement for Civic Rights and Freedom. In those days, not long after modernisation began with the 1868 Meiji Restoration, a female activist making a speech in public like Kishida was very uncommon. As Suzuki argued, Kishida was a progressive woman arguing for gender equality. From 1882 to 1884, Kishida stood on the speaker's platform in the male-dominated sphere, arguing against female oppression and for the necessity of women's education. This was the first female speech with logical persuasiveness made in public, and it had an influence on many women everywhere (Nishikawa 1986). Reading Kishida's essay (1884) entitled 'To My Sisters', I found how fresh and impressive it was.

The worst custom of which people should be ashamed is the domination of men over women. This is an evil practice in Asia... Society consists of men and women. Do not let men dominate society. If women are excluded from society, humanity and the state will be destroyed... We should be equal, regardless of sex. (Kishida 1884, my translation)

²³² Fumiko Kaneko (1903–1926) was a socialist who argued against Japan's imperialism and the Emperor system. After she was sentenced to death for high treason, the death sentence was commuted to life imprisonment. She then passed away in prison.

²³³ Teru Hasegawa (1912–47) was a pacifist who severely criticised Japan's fascism. She lived in China and devoted herself to the Chinese resistance movement against Japan's imperialism during the late 1930s and 1940s.

Kishida (1884) clearly argued: ‘Do not let men dominate society’. It is easy to imagine that her argument would have angered men in those days. She also directed her attention to Asia, as if she foresaw the current globalisation and what Japan would be like in a hundred years. One more feminist pioneer, Kikue Yamakawa, to whom Suzuki also referred, is known as a socialist feminist (see Chapters 1 and 2). As Suzuki said, Yamakawa had a strong interest in women and ethnic minorities in the labour market. Yamakawa’s article about labour problems, entitled ‘Women’s Specific Demands’,²³⁴ which appeared in a newspaper in 1925, illustrated her views: ‘There should be a guarantee of equal opportunities in education for Japanese women and colonial people on the same footing with Japanese men. Equal pay should be guaranteed, regardless of ethnicity or sex...’²³⁵ (Yamakawa [1925] 1990: 128). As Suzuki argued, Yamakawa’s view anticipated a new era that included globalisation and should be passed on to current feminism, but unfortunately hardly any researchers pay attention to as a source of feminism in Japan.

Sievers (1999) argues that the focus on the impact of foreign ideas on feminism in Japan is due to an ethnocentric Western view that modernisation in Asia could not have been achieved without Western knowledge (see Chapter 2). However, against the six participants who emphasised the autonomy and specificity of feminism in Japan, the three participants’ counterargument was highly suggestive – depending on Western feminist theories, following Western feminists’ racism and ignoring the historical roots of feminism in Japan. Each of them had critical perspectives, which are able to throw problems with the mainstream of current feminism into sharp relief. I agree with the counterarguments, since they seem to be based on undeniable facts. In particular, as Jung and Suzuki suggested, the exclusion of racism from feminism and a correct evaluation of the historical sources of feminism in Japan need to be considered.

6–2–3 Accounting for Different Perspectives

In response to the question of whether feminism in Japan is imported, Minamoto and Sechiyama did not say either yes or no directly, but both of them accounted for different perspectives. Minamoto, born in 1947, argued that Western feminist ideas has had an impact on feminism in Japan, because her own starting point as a feminist researcher in religious studies was an encounter with Western feminist theology in the early 1980s.

²³⁴ My translation.

²³⁵ My translation.

However, Minamoto also argued that Western feminist ideas could not always apply to Japan.

It is not necessary to emphasise that feminism in Japan is neither a borrowed idea nor imported. An appropriate description is that feminism in Japan has been influenced by Western feminist ideas... The first feminist book I encountered was about Western feminist theology and I then studied Western feminist theories. In those days, feminism was imported. However, after that, I developed my study of Buddhism and tackled specific issues of Japanese society such as gender discrimination in Buddhism and the Emperor system. Buddhism came from India, but Indian Buddhism is different from Japanese Buddhism. The Emperor system is also a specific issue in Japan. These issues cannot be analysed with Western feminist theories. Feminism in Japan depended on Western feminist ideas in the past, but it has developed individually, at least in religious studies. I hope that my work will help to establish original feminist theories in Japan. (Minamoto)

Minamoto argued from her own experience that feminism in Japan was certainly imported in the past. In fact, Minamoto herself encountered feminism in the early 1980s by reading Western feminist theological books such as *The Church and the Second Sex* by Mary Daly (1968, Japanese edition 1981), *Mary: The Feminine Face of the Church* by Rosemary R. Ruether (1977, Japanese edition²³⁶), and *Womanspirit Rising: A Feminist Reader in Religion* edited by Carol P. Christ and Judith Plaskow (1979, Japanese edition 1982). As Minamoto's experience indicates, some Western feminist books published in the 1970s were translated into Japanese in the 1980s, which stimulated women in Japan to open their eyes to feminism. Minamoto recalled those days and said that Western feminist theologians had used the words 'discrimination against women' in their arguments. This made a strong impact on her, because she used to believe that she should not use these words in Buddhism, even though she knew the Buddhist terms *Nyonin-Gosho* and *Henjo-Nanshi* (see Chapter 5). This encounter with Western feminist theology made her aware of gender discrimination in Buddhism, but she ran into a stone wall at the same time, since Western ideas do not take account of other cultures, and this problem stimulated her to establish an original form of feminism more relevant to Japan. In order to do so, Minamoto (1990) suggests that Buddhism should be reconsidered. She (1985b) also suggests a new feminist approach in religious studies to investigate how Buddhism influenced famous

²³⁶ Date not available.

feminists in previous eras who were devout Buddhists. Her research is still in progress, but she is ambitious and can feel proud that current feminism is not imported, at least in her own works.

Unlike Minamoto, Sechiyama seemed to distance himself from the older generation. When I asked him what he thought about the preface, he referred to the pride of the *Lib* generation in feminist academia:

I think that their argument seems to be appropriate for feminists of the *Lib* generation... I think that they flatter themselves that they have built an original movement. (Sechiyama)

Sechiyama's view of the *Lib* generation might be due to the generation gap. He was born in 1963 and was the youngest participant, so he only knows the *Lib* as a historical event. On that point, it is understood that both Sechiyama and Jung belong to a younger generation and can be critical of the older generation. In the interviews, he also stated that he saw his own work as indigenous research reflecting culture in Japan, which indicates that the question of whether feminism in Japan is imported might not be so important to him. Probably, the younger generation have the same attitudes towards the question. With globalisation, the question itself may no longer be significant in the future.

By asking the simple question of whether feminism in Japan is imported, I discovered the pride of the *Lib* generation. Why did they regard the *Lib* as the starting point of feminism in Japan and emphasise the autonomy of the *Lib* without mentioning first-wave feminism? Sechiyama's point about their pride in the *Lib* generation hit the mark. I was born in 1967, four years after him, so I belong to the same generation as Sechiyama, at a distance from the *Lib* generation. Therefore, the insistence that feminism is not imported seems to me to be strange. Additionally, it was significant to note that only Suzuki appreciated the historical sources of feminism in Japan. Jung's point on the importing of Western feminists' racism indicated a serious problem with feminism in Japan. I have discussed various perspectives about the relation between feminisms in Japan and in the West, which reflected their own generation, experience and research interests, but these might change with time.

6–3 Differences from Feminism in the West

Despite their different perspectives, it seems that the majority of the participants recognised the impact of feminism in the West on feminism in Japan to varying degrees. I also asked them what they saw as the differences between feminisms in Japan and in the West, and I have gathered the arguments of the seven scholars who responded to the question into three groups. Firstly, different attitudes towards reproductive health and rights such as abortion and the pill were pointed out by Kanai, Sechiyama, Ehara and Inoue. As they maintained, this issue has not become central for feminism in Japan except temporarily during the early 1970s, in contrast with the West. By comparing not only feminism in Japan but also feminism in East Asia with that in the West, I will discuss the differences in the level of concern about women's reproduction. The second difference, individualism in the West versus collectivism in Japan, was argued by Amano. This difference might be influenced by different religions, forms of capitalism and the Emperor system. A final issue concerning attitudes towards imperialism was argued by Ogishi and Suzuki. In their points of view, feminism in the West has barely tackled imperialism, but there is some doubt as to whether their arguments are correct, so I will discuss this carefully. In connection with this issue, I will also refer to Kanai, Ehara and Kano's views.

6–3–1 Reproductive Health and Rights

Reproductive health is an extremely important issue for feminism in order to establish women's rights to self-determination over their own bodies. The World Health Organisation (WHO) states:

Within the framework of WHO's definition of health as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, reproductive health addresses the reproductive processes, functions and system at all stages of life. Reproductive health, therefore, implies that people are able to have a responsible, satisfying and safe sex life and that they have the capability to reproduce and the freedom to decide if, when and how often to do so. (WHO n.d.)

This is a global issue today, but four participants, Kanai, Sechiyama, Ehara and Inoue, argued that there were striking differences in the level of concern between feminisms in Japan and in the West. Kanai, Sechiyama and Ehara focused on the issue of abortion and described violent controversy in the West, especially America. In the case of Kanai, she cited the *Lib* in America and Japan, and compared their different characteristics.

In America, the *Lib* was radical, especially on the two issues of abortion and anti-beauty contests, because women realised that they were bound to their own internalised sense of values of femininity, such as the myth of beauty. This was also against the background that abortion was not allowed in America in the 1960s... In contrast, the *Lib* in Japan was originally born as an imp to the New Left movement... Participants in the *Lib* were women who had an awareness of the problems with the male Emperor system²³⁷ and gender divisions inside the New Left movement. Therefore, the *Lib* in Japan differed from that in America. (Kanai)

The *Lib* emerged in some developed countries during the same period, but there were different backgrounds and points of argument. Kanai emphasised the specific characteristics of the *Lib* in Japan, which was derived from New Leftism. On the other hand, as Kanai argued, abortion was one of the central issues of the women's liberation movement in America. Sechiyama, who was a visiting scholar at Harvard-Yenching Institute in America from 2000 to 2001, focused on the heated controversy about abortion during elections in America.

In the case of America, the abortion issue is in the biggest spotlight... America is the only country where abortion is a central subject of controversy whenever they have an election... In Japan, this issue is not so important [in comparison with in America]. (Sechiyama)

Sechiyama's argument was that the issue of abortion has always occupied a central position in feminism in America, which is in striking contrast to feminism in Japan. He suggested that a reason for the different attitudes towards abortion was different backgrounds. Ehara offered an interesting suggestion about the reasons for this. By comparing Western and East Asian cultures, Ehara pointed out different views of life against a background of different religious beliefs.

In my view, there are different attitudes towards issues of sexuality between Europe and East Asia. For example, in East Asia, it is easy to have an abortion and there is no criticism at all that abortion is murder. Comparing East Asian countries, in Japan there are a lot of arguments about the relation between abortion and discrimination against disabled people, but in China, Taiwan and South Korea, there is no argument like that at all. Disabled unborn babies are

²³⁷ The Imperial Household Law says that the Emperor must be a man.

eliminated, and people try to have good children by taking all possible steps such as reproductive medical technologies. Their way of getting what they want is dreadful... That is why China can calmly promote its one-child policy... In East Asia, women and children tend to be regarded as instruments... This is completely different from the European Christian view of life. (Ehara)

When considering whether abortion is regarded as a woman's right, as Ehara suggested, the different attitudes towards abortion might be derived from different religions – Christianity in the West versus Confucianism in East Asia. The Catholic Church places sexuality in a central position in its beliefs. In this doctrine, virginity is given a high value. Additionally, traditional teaching says that the primary purpose of intercourse is procreation. As a result, both abortion and birth control run into strong opposition. Briefly, artificial birth control is considered to be against the will of God (Francome 2004).

Tracing the process of the legalisation of abortion rights in the West, the turning point was the 1960s, during which global problems of overpopulation and food shortages emerged. Discussions about the necessity of birth control – abortion, contraception and sterilisation – became active internationally in various places such as the Asian Population Conference in 1972, the World Population Conference²³⁸ and the World Food Conference²³⁹ during the 1974 World Population Year. It should be highlighted that the 1974 World Population Conference endorsed the view that all individuals and couples had the right to family planning. At that time, the women's liberation movement had emerged in developed countries. As both the population problems and the women's liberation movement were widely known, a woman's right to decide whether to reproduce, namely reproductive health and rights, became accepted (Tama [1991] 2009). During the two decades of the 1960s and 1970s, during which these major social changes took place, attitudes to abortion became more liberal,²⁴⁰ so that the legalisation of abortion began in the West: 1967 in the UK, 1970 in Denmark and Finland, 1972 in former East Germany, 1974 in Austria and Sweden, 1975 in France, 1976 in former West Germany, 1978 in Italy, 1990 in Belgium,

²³⁸ The 1974 World Population Conference was held in Romania by the United Nations, and was attended by representatives of 136 member states (United Nations n.d.).

²³⁹ The 1974 World Food Conference declares, 'every man, woman and child has the inalienable right to be free from hunger and malnutrition in order to develop their physical and mental faculties' (Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations n.d.).

²⁴⁰ Abortion law reforms have not always the result of feminism, except feminism in France. In France, a feminist group, founded by feminists such as Anne Zelensky and Christine Delphy, launched a campaign for abortion. They published 'the manifesto of the 343', signed by 343 influential women, including Simone de Beauvoir, in the weekly magazine *Le Nouvel Observateur* and the newspaper *Le Monde* on 5 April 1971, which was successful in making abortion a public issue and led to lively discussion (Jackson 1996).

1993 in Poland and 1995 in Germany (Department of Legal Medicine at Kansai Medical University 2013). Francome (2004) notes that between the British Act of 1967 and 1982 over 40 countries extended their legal grounds to allow abortion and only three countries narrowed them, which indicates that two-thirds of women lived in countries in which abortion was officially allowed. In the case of America, with which Sechiyama and Kanai compared Japan, the Supreme Court decision of 1973, *Roe v. Wade*,²⁴¹ that women's right to abortion is guaranteed as a right to privacy under the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, has continued to be hotly debated. Whenever a presidential election takes place, every four years, the attitudes of the candidates towards abortion become central, because the Supreme Court decision of 1973 could be overturned if the president appointed conservative judges. In fact, conservatives have launched a counterattack against abortion rights in various places. The State of North Dakota, whose governor is a Republican, has approved an Anti-Abortion Law, prohibiting abortion without any exceptions, such as rape victims, since March 2013. This is the most relentless anti-abortion law in America (Oberman 2013). To sum up, even where abortion is allowed under the constitution, laws or various grounds, abortion rights in the West are always threatened by religious counterforces and conservatives. In other words, it can be seen that abortion is a major issue as a symbol of women's reproductive health and rights in many Western countries.

In contrast, in Japan, where women can easily access abortion under the 1948 Eugenic Protection Law, it seems that feminism has hardly tackled the issue of abortion in comparison with the West. Rather, it might be accurate to say that feminism in Japan has not had strong motivation, such as religious opposition, to struggle to gain or protect abortion rights. Before the Eugenic Protection Law, abortion was of course illegal from 1868, when the Meiji government was set up to build a modern state, since population increase was urgently needed to strengthen the nation. During this period, there were feminist campaigns for abortion. In 1922, feminists invited Margaret Sanger to Japan in order to spread birth control. In the 1930s, feminist campaigns emerged in order to gain abortion rights, but these campaigns faded away under oppression from the government as it prepared for the Second Sino-Japanese War²⁴² from 1937. However, after that, Japan's

²⁴¹ *Roe v. Wade* was a case in which a pregnant single woman, Roe, challenged the Texas criminal abortion laws forbidding an abortion except for the purpose of saving the mother's life. This decision states that the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States extends to a woman's right to have an abortion (US Supreme Court 1973).

²⁴² The Second Sino-Japanese War was a war of aggression against China, which broke out in 1937 and expanded into the Second World War.

population policy made a complete volte-face because of the country's defeat. In response to the rapid increase in population and shortage of food after the Second World War, the Eugenic Protection Law²⁴³ was approved in 1948, which allowed abortion, but only when the mother's life would be endangered. By means of a partial amendment to this law in 1949, abortion also came to be allowed on the grounds of financial problems. In the 1950s and 1960s, when Japan was the only country legally allowing women to have abortions for financial reasons, this easy access became known to the world, so that many women visited from overseas in order to have an abortion. This saddled Japan with the dishonourable reputation of being a 'Paradise for abortion'²⁴⁴ (Tama [1991] 2009: 146). From the point of view of religious ethics in the West, the whole nation of Japan was against God and committing murder (Tama [1991] 2009).

Against the background of Western criticisms of the 'paradise for abortion', at the end of the 1950s some religious groups²⁴⁵ within Japan started to campaign against abortion. Additionally, with the rapid growth of the economy a shortage of workers developed, so that in the early 1970s the Japanese government introduced a proposal for the revision of the Eugenic Protection Law,²⁴⁶ which would restrict abortion. Feminist campaigns against this proposal emerged as part of the *Lib*. As scholars often discuss, the *Lib* activists argued that autonomy in relation to reproductive sexuality was central to womanhood (see Chapter 2). Tama ([1991] 2009) points out that this debate on abortion rights was a good opportunity to develop feminism in Japan and brought a new theoretical perspective: abortion rights as women's rights should be guaranteed. This feminist argument, however, received little support within Japanese society, because of the negative image of feminism in the media and opposition to the argument for women's rights (Tama [1991] 2009). At the same time, this feminist campaign itself also faded out as soon as the proposal was abandoned in 1974. At first sight, easy access to abortion in Japan might seem to establish abortion as a woman's right, but Coleman (1983: 75) argues, 'The use of women's rights as an ideological justification for induced abortion is conspicuously absent in Japan, in contrast with Eastern European countries, where female emancipation is an official reason for laws that permit easy access to the operation.'

²⁴³ The Eugenic Protection Law was revised into the Maternal Health Protection Law in 1996.

²⁴⁴ My translation.

²⁴⁵ One of the religious groups against abortion is *Seicho-no-Ie*, a religious corporation, founded in 1930.

²⁴⁶ In order to rank with developed Western countries after the Second World War, the Japanese government had to quell criticism from Western countries and build good relationships with them, especially America (Tama [1991] 2009).

Concerning this lack of awareness of abortion rights, Tama ([1991] 2009) notes that abortion was basically one of the normal ways to survive daily life in Japan before modernisation. Such tolerant attitudes towards abortion can be seen throughout East Asia, suggesting that it might be influenced by Confucianism.

China's national policy has shifted dramatically from pronatalism to birth control. During the Maoist era (1949–76), when a pronatalist policy was promoted with the slogan 'strength in numbers' for the purpose of national economic development, doctors were encouraged to persuade women who wanted an abortion to maintain their unwanted pregnancy even if their lives were endangered. This also indicates that women were forced to give up their access to abortion and even contraception (Cao 2013). In order to encourage people to have children, the state also gave women who had more than ten children the designation of 'Glorious Mother' (Peng 1997, in Cao 2013). China's national policy, however, has moved in the opposite direction since the 1970s. In particular, the one-child policy that came into force in 1979 is well-known, not only making access to abortion easy but also forcing abortion under the law. As a result, there are about 13,000,000 abortions every year in China (Centre for Propaganda and Education of Population of China 2012, in *Record China* October 2012), which accounts for over 30% of all abortions in the world, about 42,000,000 in 2003 (WHO 2008). Like Japan in the 1960s and 1970s, modern China is a 'Paradise for abortion'²⁴⁷ (*Life Daily* 2010, in *Record China* November 2010). Taiwan has legally allowed abortion since 1985. Even before the legalisation, women could easily have abortions there (Tietze and Henshaw 1986, in Moskowitz 2001).

In South Korea, under the population control policy of the South Korean government, which started in 1961 (Lee 2004), public health centres officially provided free abortions until 1996 (*Korea JoongAng Daily* November 2009a). However, since 1996, the South Korean government has changed its policy to completely the opposite direction in order to increase the country's population, and has banned abortion except for unwanted pregnancy following rape or incest. In the case of illegal abortion, doctors and pregnant women are sentenced to up to two years' penal servitude (Um 2009). Nevertheless, 49% of married women aged 15 to 49 have experienced abortions (Wong 2002, in *Korea JoongAng Daily* April 2002). The estimated number of illegal abortions was 342,233 in 2005 (Kim 2005, in *Korea JoongAng Daily* April 2008), which was 78% of the number of new babies born in the same year (*Korea JoongAng Daily* April 2008). Illegal abortion has actually been

²⁴⁷ My translation.

connived at by the government (*Korea JoongAng Daily* November 2009b). This is ‘South Korea’s open secret’ (Lee 2008). Of course, there is also a strong pro-life lobby by Christians, who account for about 30% of the population. A pastor and also one of the leaders of the pro-life movement in South Korea, Kim (2008, in Lee 2008), critically points out that the idea that there is nothing wrong with abortion was already planted in people’s minds by the population control policy allowing abortion between 1961 and 1996.

Currently, Japan, China and Taiwan allow or force abortion, whereas only South Korea has banned it. However, there is a peculiarity common to all four countries. Cao (2013) points out that the burden of achieving the Chinese state’s population goals has been imposed on women. In other words, women’s reproductive health and rights have been marginalised and the state’s population policies have been centralised in either pronatalism or Malthusianism.²⁴⁸ Um (2009) argues that the South Korean government has attempted to achieve its population policy through women’s bodies, which indicates that the government takes no notice of women’s health or rights at all. These arguments can also apply to the other East Asian countries, in which women’s bodies are regarded as reproductive instruments, as in Ehara’s argument. It seems that this attitude towards abortion originally comes from Confucianism. Shang (2003) argues that Chinese religious traditions based on Confucianism and Taoism²⁴⁹ are mostly tolerant and compassionate towards abortion in order to maintain Confucian patriarchy. ‘The biggest tragedy of a family or couple is its sterility or lack of descendants, and this is also considered the most serious violation against traditional morality...[but] the Chinese people have long been very conscious about how to manage or “plan” to have quality children, especially sons’ (Shang 2003: 223). In fact, in 2011 in China, the proportion of boys to girls²⁵⁰ aged zero to four was 119.15 to 100 in 2011 (National Bureau of Statistics of China 2012). This tendency to give sons, as successors to the family line, priority over girls can often be seen, not only in China, but also in other Confucian cultures in East Asia. The proportion of boys to girls born in 2012 Taiwan was 107.4 to 100 (*Focus Taiwan* March 2013). In 2008 in South Korea, it was 106.4 to 100, but this rose to 115.8 to 100 in the case of third children, and 123.9 to 100 in the case of fourth children (*Yonhap News* December 2009). Exceptionally, it was normal, 105.5 to 100 in 2011 in Japan (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications of Japan 2011). As these data also indicate, I argue that women’s

²⁴⁸ While I was revising this thesis after the viva, on 29 October 2015, China announced that it would abolish the one-child policy and allow all couples to have two children, because of rising social costs and the fall in the numbers of workers (*BBC News* October 2015).

²⁴⁹ Taoism is a folk religion in China.

²⁵⁰ The natural proportion of baby boys to baby girls is 103–107 to 100 (*Focus Taiwan* January 2012).

right to abortion as an unshakable ideological principle has not been established in feminism in East Asia in contrast with feminism in the West, since reproductive rights have been displaced by Confucian patriarchy.

In connection with reproductive health and rights, the point to which Inoue directed her attention was the pill. While the pill can enable women to manage their own reproduction, Inoue argued that feminism in Japan had hardly cared about it. Rather, there might be opposition to unnatural acts such as controlling ovulation with the pill as well as concern about its side effects, because of the belief that bodies given by parents should not be hurt. This attitude is in complete contrast to feminism in the West.

From what I hear, [during the 1970s] in Europe and America, the pill was welcomed as a great boon, as if it was a symbol of the triumph of feminism. I also hear that, according to a survey, many feminists in France took it for granted that women could take the pill and argued that women were liberated by it. However, in Japan the pill did not spread at all and there was strong opposition to it... I argue that in Japan people are strongly against artificial and unnatural things. This is the morality that bodies given by parents should not be hurt, which is deeply rooted in Japanese society... In addition, in those days, environmental pollution²⁵¹ and medical damage²⁵² emerged, so that people came to think that medication with side effects was quite unsafe. However, a side effect is an inevitable aspect of all medicine. Why were only the side effects of the pill focused on? I argue that Japanese people have a very strong desire to keep their own bodies natural and feminism has the same tendency... Honestly, I did not feel like taking the pill myself. However, as long as there are some women who do want to take it, I agree with the idea that it should be approved. I also argue that women should have the right to choose whether to take it. So,... I had some sympathy for the Women's Union Opposing Anti-Abortion and Claiming the Pill,²⁵³ but such arguments did not become a mainstream part of the *Lib* in Japan and this campaign faded out. (Inoue)

²⁵¹ In the 1950s, Minamata disease, a type of poisoning caused by industrial mercury pollution, emerged in Minamata, a town in the southwestern part of Japan. Pregnant women who ate polluted fish gave birth to babies who had mercury poisoning.

²⁵² From the 1950s to the 1960s, the Thalidomide scandal emerged internationally, in which pregnant women who took Thalidomide, a kind of sleeping pill, gave birth to disabled babies.

²⁵³ The Women's Union Opposing Anti-Abortion and Claiming the Pill was one of major feminist activist groups which carried out the campaign for the pill during the early 1970s. Their trademarks were pink helmets and their activism was reported by the media.

In Inoue's view, the pill is one of the symbols of feminism's successful campaign for reproductive health and rights in the West, which is in striking contrast to feminism in Japan. Her strong focus on the pill might be derived from her own experience of having an abortion. Inoue (1996) looks back to the old days at the time of the *Lib*, and states that she believed that she should take the initiative to decide whether to have a baby. On the other hand, as a result of choosing abortion, 'I felt something of a distance from my husband'²⁵⁴ (Inoue 1996: 51). This experience might have encouraged her to take an interest in the pill.

The pill has been approved in Western countries since the 1960s or 1970s, but it was not approved in Japan until 1999, which was the latest date for approval among developed countries. The reason why the Japanese government hesitated to approve the pill for such a long time was that they were afraid of the harmful effects of medicines like Thalidomide and dramatic diseases caused by industrial pollutants such as Minamata disease (Coleman 1983). During the early 1970s, when the *Lib* activists argued for reproductive health and bodily autonomy (see Chapter 2), the feminist campaign to gain the pill emerged in Japan, but this campaign did not receive support even from many participants in the *Lib* and soon faded without a trace, because most participants in the *Lib* were afraid that the pill would damage abortion rights and harm women's reproductive health (Norgren 2008, in Nakaji 2010). This negative reaction from feminists towards the pill can also be seen in Inoue's argument. Interestingly, while Inoue argued that the pill should be approved and women should have the right to choose whether or not to take it, she confessed that she had hesitated to take it herself. This aversion to the health risks might indicate the feelings of most women in Japan, including me. In fact, the risks of the pill have been discussed, and some health problems have been found. The British Medical Journal found that women who had used the pill for more than eight years had a significantly increased risk of developing cancer, especially of the central nervous system and cervical cancer (*BBC News* September 2007). There is also data indicating that using the pill increases the risk of some illnesses, breast cancer by 24%, and cervical cancer by more than 30% (Japan Association of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists 2012). One feminist who was born and brought up in Japan, Jansson-Yanagisawa (1997), suggests that the contraceptive effectiveness and convenience of the pill should not be given priority over the unclear safety.

In spite of discussion about the risks of the pill, attitudes towards it are completely different in the West and East Asia. According to the United Nations (2009), the pill was

²⁵⁴ My translation.

the most widespread method of contraception in the West, used by: 52.6% of women in Germany, 43.8% in France, 29% in the UK, 27.4% in Sweden, 18.3% in America, and 14.2% in Italy, whereas it had hardly spread at all in East Asia, where the proportions are 2.0% in South Korea and 1.0% in Japan (no data on China).²⁵⁵ The most prevalent contraceptive method in Japan was condoms, at 40.7%, which was the highest among the nine countries (see Figure 9). This data indicates that people in Japan tend to avoid the pill and sterilisation, linking these to health problems much more consciously than in the West.

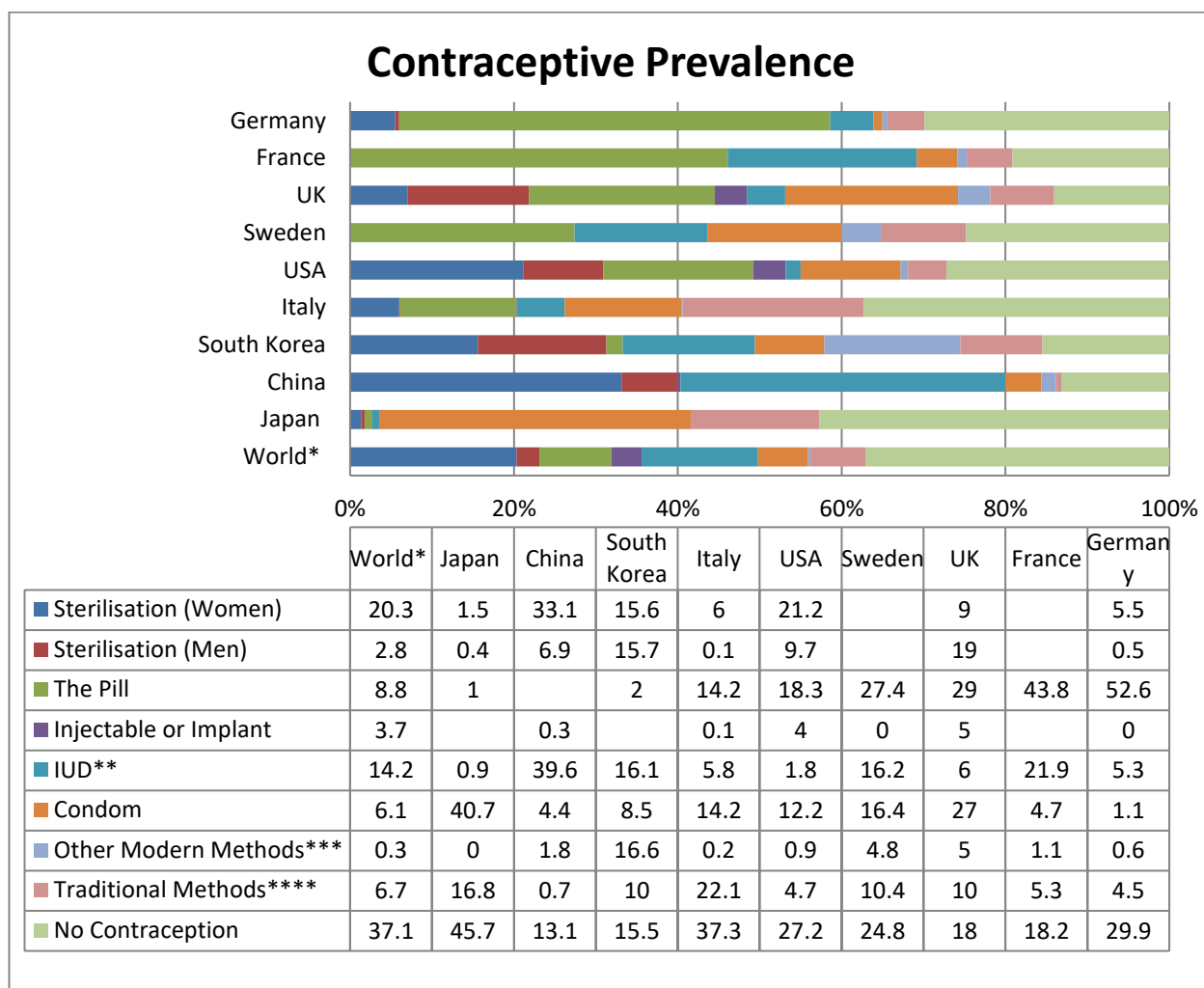


Figure 9 Source: United Nations (2009) World Contraceptive Use 2009. This survey was conducted among women aged 15–49 years old and married or in a union in 181 countries. World* is the average for the world. IUD** is the intrauterine contraceptive device. Other modern methods*** are diaphragms, cervical caps, spermicidal foams, jelly, cream and sponges. Traditional methods**** are rhythm and withdrawal. Blank spaces in the table mean no data. This date includes plural choices, so that the total is not always 100%.

²⁵⁵ In China, the most widespread method of contraception is the intrauterine contraceptive device (IUD), used by 39.6% of women (see Figure 9). In Liu’s interviews with women in workplaces in China (2007), one interviewee says that it is impossible not to wear an IUD, which indicates that pressure is exerted on women to wear it rather than them wearing it spontaneously.

This stubborn attitude of people in Japan might come from the strong belief that ‘bodies given by parents should not be hurt’ (Inoue). This is one of the teachings in Confucianism. A classic Confucian treatise, *The Classic of Filial Piety*²⁵⁶ [孝經] says;

...Now filial piety is the root of [all] virtue... Our bodies – to every hair and bit of skin – are received by us from our parents, and we must not presume to injure or wound them. This is the beginning of filial piety. (in *The Sacred Books of the East: The Texts of Confucianism* 1899, translated by James Legge)

In Japan, this teaching is often explained to children by their parents in home education, so that people generally know it as the first step towards filial piety. In addition to the aversion to health risks under the impact of Confucianism, Coleman (1983) highlights the fact that couples in Japan tend to appreciate two advantages of condoms: the convenience with which they can be bought and the ease with which the action of wearing a condom can be understood. Moreover, Coleman (1983) argues for the reliability of condoms. According to one condom maker, Durex’s official homepage, the contraceptive rate by correctly using condoms is 98%. This is only a little lower than by constantly taking the pill, at 99.7% (Trussel 2007, in Kitamura n.d.). As a result of these aspects of availability, it is understood that people in Japan tend to prefer condoms to other modern methods.

I also found data showing different attitudes towards managing contraception. According to the Cabinet Office, Government of Japan (2005), most people in the West thought that women should manage contraception: 79.1% in France,²⁵⁷ 56.5% in America, and 45.3% in Sweden, whereas most people in East Asia thought that men should manage contraception: 73.2% in Japan and 64.2% in South Korea (see Figure 10). From my perspective, this does not necessarily indicate that women trust men’s contraception in East Asia. Rather, it might stem from the oppression of Confucian patriarchy.

²⁵⁶ *The Classic of Filial Piety* was compiled from the teachings of Confucius (551 BCE–479 BCE), a founder of Confucianism in ancient China.

²⁵⁷ The successful feminist campaign for abortion during the early 1970s in France might have intensified women’s consciousness about control over their own bodies. See footnote 240.

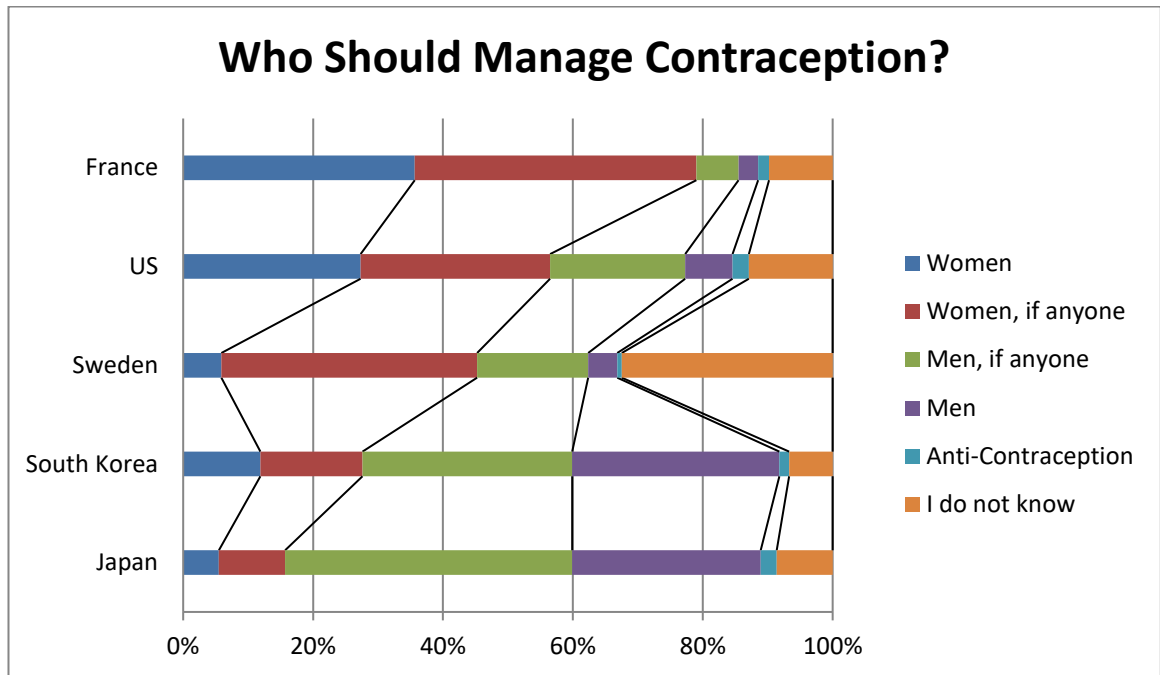


Figure 10 Source: Cabinet Office, Government of Japan (2005). This survey was conducted among approximately 1,000 women and men in each country.

The risks of the pill have been discussed around the world, but it has actually never been a particularly big issue in the West. However, there are obviously different attitudes towards the pill between feminists in the West and in Japan. Taking Inoue’s personal experience into consideration, it might seem natural to her that the pill seems to be a symbol of the success of feminism in the West. My view is similar to Inoue’s. I argue that the pill should be approved in order to enable women to manage their own reproduction. On the other hand, while I do not always trust men, I avoid taking the pill myself because of my aversion to health problems. Considering this contradiction, like Inoue, I might be acting under the influence of Confucianism.

6–3–2 Individualism versus Collectivism

Unlike a specific issue to feminism such as reproductive health and rights, I now move on to a topic that is wider-ranging, covering not only feminism but also daily life in Japanese society: individualism versus collectivism. Amano addressed differences between feminisms in the West and in Japan, and portrayed this as individuals in the West versus community in Japan.

To speak simply, Western feminist theories started from the establishment of individuals or modern self-awareness... In the case of Japan, the starting point

was not the individual, but the community... There might be potential to develop feminism in Japan in theories of community. (Amano)

Community is generally seen as Japanese society in miniature, and also involves many women's issues, including the patriarchal power structure. Amano is a sociologist studying women's activities in local communities such as the consumer movement, volunteer work and today's small businesses based on community, so that it might be natural of her to focus on community.

The focus of her argument is individualism in the West versus collectivism in Japan. This difference is rooted in various contexts, such as religious principles, Western Enlightenment and the development of capitalism. In the case of the West, Lukes (1973) highlights that individualism can be seen as a common characteristic of Roman Law,²⁵⁸ Christian morality and general European people's reactions to the French Revolution supported by the Enlightenment. Lukes (1973: 13) also refers to Tocqueville, a French political thinker who developed its most specific liberal meaning in the first half of the nineteenth century, and maintains, 'individualism was the natural product of democracy'. Lukes (1973) also focuses on economic environments, especially in America, and argues that individualism primarily emerged in order to celebrate capitalism and liberal democracy. Individualism then became a symbol of immense ideological significance, which indicates 'the philosophy of natural rights, the belief in free enterprise, and the American Dream' (Lukes: 1973: 26). Individual ownership rather than family is supported by capitalism.

In the case of Japan, collectivism can often be seen in daily life. As reported internationally by the media, in Japan people calmly waited in long lines for food for hours, helped each other and kept social order quite calmly after the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011. Overseas media appreciate their behaviour. 'Family ties, social hierarchies and a collective spirit are important to the Japanese, unlike the culture of individualism that predominates in the United States' (James and Goldman 2011). 'Why is there no looting in Japan?' (*The Week* March 2001). Gregory Pflugfelder (2011), a director of the Donald Keene Center of Japanese Culture at Columbia University, states that people in Japan have 'a sense of being first and foremost responsible to the community'.

²⁵⁸ Roman Law, established in ancient Rome, spread across Europe, and had an influence on the establishment of modern laws in Europe.

In relation to collectivism, it is often said that one of the major features of Japanese society can be condensed into *wa* [和] (harmony), which means that collectivism within groups or communities based on families as fundamental social units takes priority over individualism. In other words, harmony requires ‘the individual to defer to the collective social will’ (Jackson, Liu and Woo 2008: 16). When non-Japanese researchers such as Vogel (1979) analyse Japan’s successful post-war economic growth, *wa* is often highlighted as an extremely important key to understanding this success (Kramer and Ikeda 1997). Japanese researchers such as Umehara (1981, in Kramer and Ikeda 1997) accept this analysis and argue that *wa* is highly valued by Japanese society.

The source of the concept of collectivism or *wa* has often been attributed to Confucianism, Buddhism and the Emperor system. For example, it is considered an essential theme of Confucian discourse (Yao 2000). According to Chang and Song (2010), Confucian familism indicates individual submission to family, an age-based hierarchy and gender divisions, which does not accept individualism. Henderson (1965, in Smith 1983: 40), in a study of Japanese society during the feudal period, also argues that, ‘Japan lacked two concepts that were critically important to the Western transition ... to modern constitutionalism: Confucian ethics had nothing like the Christian [concept of] individual equality before God; nor did it have a division of church and state’. Going even further back, the synthesis of *wa* in Confucianism and Buddhism appeared in Prince Shotoku’s²⁵⁹ Seventeen Article Constitution,²⁶⁰ which was the first constitution compiled in Japan, in 604. Article 1 stated:

Harmony is to be valued, and an avoidance of wanton opposition to be honoured. All men are influenced by partisanship, and there are few who are intelligent. Hence there are some who disobey their lords and fathers, and who maintain feuds with the neighbouring villages. But when those above are harmonious and those below are friendly, and there is concord in the discussion of business, right views of things spontaneously gain acceptance. Then what is there which cannot be accomplished? (Translated by Aston 1956, in Kramer and Ikeda 1997: 79–80)

At the beginning of Article 1, the importance of harmony was clearly stated. This phrase still has more influence than any other on people in Japan (Umehara 1981, in Kramer and Ikeda 1997). In fact, this phrase is generally common knowledge in Japan. According to Umehara (1981, in Kramer and Ikeda 1997), at the time when this Constitution was

²⁵⁹ Prince Shotoku (574–622) was a son of the Emperor, and also a politician, who sent young people to China in order to import advanced culture and social systems. The Seventeen Article Constitution is well known as one of his achievements.

²⁶⁰ The Seventeen Article Constitution stated morals and virtues.

established in 604, many clans were competing with each other for power. Against this background, in order to govern the country, Prince Shotoku, who studied and protected Buddhism, appealed to the clans to observe the Buddhist principles of harmony and compassion, which matched with the Confucian notion of harmony. Not only harmony, but also other Buddhist and Confucian principles were reflected in this Constitution. The direct impact of Buddhism was embodied by Article 2 of the Seventeen Article Constitution, which indicates that ‘one must respect the Buddha, his teachings, and the ones who preach them’ (Karamer and Ikeda 1997: 79). The impact of Confucianism, especially its patriarchy, can be read in the phrase in Article 1, ‘...who disobey their lords and fathers...’, which teaches that people should obey their lords in the community and fathers in the family.

Kramer and Ikeda (1997) point out that the central aim of this harmony was to build a hierarchical order with the Emperor as the head of state. In this system of harmony, people must blindly follow those in power, such as their fathers, lords and the Emperor. In other words, the maintenance of the hierarchy requires egoless individuals. Attaching great importance to harmony within society, community or family rather than individualism can also be seen in various social systems in the modern period. Yoshizumi (1995) argues that, until the 1898 Civil Code was radically amended in 1947, Japanese society was characterised by a family system, namely the *ie* system, which authorised that the head of each family, a father in principle, should control all family members and own all property (see Chapter 1). As a result, an individual’s life was totally ruled and regulated by the *ie* system, which was based on a family registration system called *koseki* (see Chapter 5). Although the *ie* system was abolished when the current Civil Code was enforced in 1947, this family registration system is still working to manage people, in contrast to individual registration systems in the West (see Chapter 5). This family-centred social structure strongly supports the Emperor system, because the state is regarded as a big family with the Emperor as its head (see Chapter 1). The advantage of harmony in collectivism, which is loyalty to the group, community or state, was also utilised during Japan’s post-war rehabilitation. For example, during the process of the rapid growth of the Japanese economy in the 1960s and 1970s, loyalty was incorporated into the corporate culture (Jackson, Liu and Woo 2008) and became specific characteristic of Japan’s capitalism.

It might seem that this concept of *wa* has always been part of an unchanging tradition, but Ito (1998: 38), drawing on Hobsbawm’s work (1983) on the invention of tradition, argues that the spirit of *wa* is a ‘tradition’ created in modern Japan, and which has been used as a

political tool in the establishment of the modern state, especially during the pre-war period and the Second World War.

...the invention of *wa* as a process through which members of the ruling class revised and reorganized part of Japan's ancient history into new symbols at a time when they faced the challenge of integrating the nation and inculcating a national consciousness.... modernization always involves the invention of new traditions to stabilize itself. (Ito 1998: 37)

By tracing how school textbooks on Japanese history, published during the early modernisation period, described Prince Shotoku and his Seventeen Article Constitution including the spirit of *wa*, Ito (1998) points out that this Constitution was authorised as 'common morals', while Prince Shotoku came to be regarded as a symbolic figure of nationalism. In Ito's analysis (1998), this emphasis on Prince Shotoku's nationalism in school textbooks became stronger against the backdrop of the 1931 Manchurian Incident,²⁶¹ after which Japan occupied Manchuria, because of Japan's sense of superiority to China. Subsequently, *wa* was interpreted as 'the importance of national integration under the emperor' during the Second World War, but as 'a message of harmonious cooperation in re-creating Japan as a peaceful nation' during the post-war period (Ito 1998: 40). This indicates that the image of Prince Shotoku was also transformed from as fascist to pacifist. One of the reasons why respect for *wa* has survived in Japanese society even after the war, Ito (1998) suggests, is that during the post-war period Prince Shotoku appeared on bank notes as a pacifist who argued for a harmonious society with the spirit of *wa*, to give people an illusion of the spirit of *wa*. While Amano did not refer to *wa* at all, there is a risk that such views of collectivism might fall in the trap of this illusion.

Of course, Japanese society should not be discussed only in terms of collectivism. With the diversification of values and the impact of globalisation, Western individualism, which sometimes seems to be selfish from a Japanese point of view, has been introduced into other countries. This wave of individualism can be more often seen in the younger generation. However, the social structure based on collectivism in Japan cannot easily accept individualism. Yan (2009) argues that individualisation actually depends on a system of welfare, medical care and employment. In Japan, all Japanese people should be on the family register *koseki* under the Family Register Law (see Chapter 5). Family is a fundamental unit in terms of social welfare provision, such as national health insurance and pension systems. This conflict between individualism and collectivism can be seen elsewhere. In China, younger people from the one-child generation who are invested in

²⁶¹ See Chapter 1.

heavily by their parents and grandparents seem to enjoy individualism, but even they will have to face the reality that their individualism is no more than an illusion. This is especially true for women, who will face the real gender discrimination in society sooner or later and realise that gender divisions are more meaningful than one's ability, which should be respected in individualism (Jackson, Liu and Woo 2008).

It is hard to discuss which is better, individualism or collectivism, because both have advantages and disadvantages. Collectivism in Japan leads to great solidarity inside the community. On the other hand, people who disobey the communal rules or norms are regarded as outsiders. Kramer and Ikeda (1997) argue that the solidarity of insiders can be made stronger by creating outsiders, which is paradoxically an essential part of the system in order to maintain collectivism. Amano did not give specific examples to indicate how individualism or collectivism had an influence on feminism but, in comparison with feminism in Japan, individualism in the West might be reflected in feminists' strong focus on individual rights. Collectivism in Japan might be connected with feminists' deep interest in family issues, such as patriarchy under the *ie* system.

6-3-3 Attitudes towards Imperialism

There are not only differences but also a point in common between some Western countries in the North, including the UK, and Japan. This is imperialism. It is a historical fact that Japan once established an empire in order to strengthen the state, like the great powers in the West. Two researchers who focused on imperialism were Ogoshi and Suzuki. They are members of a feminist activist group tackling the issue of comfort women, Violence Against Women in War-Network Japan (VAWW-NET Japan), which hosted the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery in 2000 (see Chapter 5). Ogoshi emphasised the outstanding achievement of this tribunal and argued that feminism in Japan surpassed feminism in the West in criticising the state.

The Women's International War Crimes Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery is the only outstanding achievement of feminism in Japan, in terms of the fact that women in Japan and victims jointly passed judgement on Japan's war crimes. In addition, we judged the Emperor's war guilt, breaking the taboo against the Emperor system. The Emperor was exonerated from war guilt in the

Tokyo Trials,²⁶² but this Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery identified the Emperor's responsibility for war crimes... The UK, America and France strongly promoted colonial policies, but there is little activism tackling crimes committed by the states against their former colonies. (Ogoshi)

As Ogoshi argued, the tribunal was a noteworthy event internationally, because not only did 64 victims from nine countries and regions participate in the tribunal, testifying about how they had been treated as sex slaves, but also the judgement finally broke the long taboo against acknowledging the Emperor's war guilt. Ogoshi's emphasis on this achievement of the tribunal might stem from her own sense of achievement, which was also the practice of transnational feminism. Therefore, the interest of feminism in the West in imperialism might seem to Ogoshi to be weak.

Similarly, Suzuki argued that Western feminists seemed to lack interest in imperialism. Her argument was direct, that they had hardly tackled their countries' imperialism.

The UK, France, Italy and Germany had colonies. Many countries still uphold Queen Elizabeth the Second of the UK as their head of state... [However,] feminism in the West has hardly tackled imperialism. Arguably, there are few feminists criticising their countries' imperialism. It seems that they have not realised that their own state's imperialism. Likewise, feminists in Japan have the same problems. (Suzuki)

As Suzuki said, there are 16 Commonwealth realms²⁶³ including the UK (with the British monarchy as head of state). There is also the Commonwealth of Nations, which consists of 54 states, including the UK, as of 2013 (Commonwealth Network 2013), which indicates that the UK still has some influence on its ex-colonies. Darwin (1988) points out that the Commonwealth of Nations has replaced the colonial order in the British context under decolonisation. Considering how people in the West perceive their ex-colonies, Said's

²⁶² In order to judge the leaders of the Empire of Japan after the Second World War, the International Military Tribunal for the Far East, also known as the Tokyo Trials, was convened in Tokyo between 1946 and 1948 by the Allied Powers. As a result, seven political and military leaders, including Hideki Tojo (1884–1948), who was the Prime Minister at the outbreak of the war, were put to death. 16 other leaders were sentenced to imprisonment for life. However, the then Emperor Hirohito (1901–89) and members of the Imperial Family were not prosecuted for any crimes. In addition, the definition of Emperor changed from the head of state (1890 Constitution of Japan) to a symbol of the State and of the unity of the People (1947 Constitution of Japan).

²⁶³ The Commonwealth realms are Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Canada, Grenada, Jamaica, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, St. Christopher and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Solomon Island, Tuvalu, and the UK (British Monarchy n.d.).

definition of *Orientalism* (1978), which describes Western views of the Middle East, is suggestive.

The Orient is not only adjacent to Europe; it is also the place of Europe's greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilisation and languages, its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other. (Said 1978: 1)

Despite decolonisation, the place of the Orient from the perspective of Western people is always 'Other' and still also the ruled (Said 1978). This argument is applicable to the Third World. The images of Third and First World women, recognised by the First World, contrast with each other. According to Mohanty ([1988] 1994), the image of the average Third World woman is generally as uneducated, poor and tradition-bound, in contrast with the image of Western women as educated, modern and enjoying freedom. In other words, othering or marginalising defines the First World as the centre. In this way, the attitudes of Western feminists towards Third World women tend to be critically evaluated by Third World feminists. Mohanty's argument ([1988] 1994) is that othering Third World women is a project of self-consolidation for feminism in the West.

These points may be accurate, but Ogoshi and Suzuki's understanding that feminism in the West has hardly tackled issues of imperialism does not always have an accurate grasp of the positive fact that many Western feminists have discussed imperialism, reconstructing its history and contributing to post-colonial feminism. McClintock (1995), studying the relation between imperialism, domesticity and capitalism, maintains that the success of the European bourgeoisie was supported by imperialism and suggests that the centre of British imperial identity was the Victorian invention of the cult of domesticity, which led to the excessive separation of the public and the private. '[D]omestic space became racialized, colonial space became domesticated' (McClintock 1995: 36). As to British feminism, Burton (1994) argues that if British feminists felt a strong responsibility for Indian women, this was due to the fact that India was essential to British imperial confidence. Burton (1994) also suggests, by citing Mohanty (1987), that the global sisterhood proposed by British feminism indicates the erasure of the negative side of imperialism and also an attempt to maintain contemporary imperialism. There are also studies of imperial structures within Europe. Hall (2002) focuses on the Irish as the most visible outsiders in the middle of the nineteenth century in England and points out that the recognition of the Irish was utilised for discussion in order to clarify who were British people, who were others, and who should primarily obtain citizenship. In these ways, feminism in the West has been impacted by Third World feminist discussion and has tackled imperialism in self-criticism.

The reason why Ogoshi and Suzuki did not refer to this strand of Western feminist thought might be that there is no single issue or epoch-making practice of transnational feminism grappling with issues of imperialism like the 2000 Women's International War Crimes Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery.

However, as Suzuki's criticism of feminism in Japan indicates, although mainstream feminists officially supported imperialism during the pre-war period and wartime (see Chapter 1), which was no better than 'imperialist feminism' (Suzuki 2001: 32, 2003: 113, see Chapter 3), it seems that reflection on its past conduct is not enough, and that imperialism, including the Emperor system, has not always been a central point of discussion in feminism in Japan. For example, after the war not only did Japanese society but also feminism in Japan seemed to avoid discussing the state (Nishikawa 1997, see Chapter 2), which might be a result of the pre-war and wartime honeymoon periods between mainstream feminism and the state (see Chapter 2). In addition, academics in the mainstream of feminism in Japan have seemingly kept their distance from the tribunal (Ogoshi, see Chapter 5). This lack of interest in imperialism was evident in Kanai and Ehara's views on categorisation of feminism. In my interview, Ehara and Kanai geographically and culturally divided feminism into three areas – the West, East Asia and Islam. In the case of Kanai, this was due to religious divisions.

In my view, feminism can be divided into Islamic, East Asian and Western... Each has its own specific and strong patriarchal culture connected with religion such as Christianity in the West, Islam, and Confucianism and Buddhism in East Asia. (Kanai)

In addition to religious divisions, Ehara referred to the division of economic markets.

I think that feminism can be divided into three groups. One is feminism in the West. Another is feminism in East Asia learning from feminism in the West and tackling Confucian patriarchy. The economic market in East Asia became very active, so that I am interested in women's issues in East Asia. The other is Muslim, Islamic areas. There are also various cultures such as African, but I focus on these three areas as big economic markets. (Ehara)

It seems that their division is reasonable, because these three areas each have particular characteristics. The religious division – Christianity in the West, Confucianism and Buddhism in East Asia, and Islamic areas – is rational, too. Additionally, taking account of

current economic growth in East Asia, especially China, this is a remarkable area. However, Ehara and Kanai's categorisation of feminism is problematic. Although Ehara touched briefly on cultural diversity in other areas such as Africa, she and Kanai ignored large parts of the world such as South Asia and Latin America. Moreover, neither Ehara nor Kanai mentioned post-colonial feminism at all, which indicates that post-colonial feminism and its critique of imperialism were missing from the world view of both of them. As Suzuki argued, their lack of concern for post-colonial feminism might indicate a shortcoming of feminism in Japan.

Kanai and Ehara's categorisations of feminism have missed out post-colonial feminism, but it is interesting to note that they and Kano focused on East Asia or suggested making a study of East Asian feminisms as one of the ways of developing feminism in Japan internationally. 'There is potential for feminism in Japan to contribute to East Asian feminisms' (Kanai). Meanwhile, Ehara focused on the East Asian tendency to accept Western culture and then offered a perspective on Japan.

East Asia, especially China, relatively tends to accept Western culture. Japan has a similar tendency... In terms of a mixture of its own and Western culture, I think that Japan will be able to become a pioneer studying how non-Western countries have accepted European culture and obtained diversity. (Ehara)

In the process of modernisation, Japan imported various technologies and ideas from the West. Other Asian countries have also developed to various degrees under the influence of Western culture, which is more powerful internationally than non-Western cultures (Jackson, Liu and Woo 2008). By discussing how Western culture has been mixed with indigenous cultures, feminism in Japan, and by the same token, feminism in East Asia, could develop. In addition to this, Ehara suggested, in terms of Japan being the first non-Western developed country, that feminism in Japan might also become a precedent. In comparison with Kanai and Ehara, Kano had a more specific and urgent reason why the study of East Asian feminisms was needed.

Various wartime issues such as comfort women issues should be resolved. In order to do this..., I have considered for a long time how we can develop the study of women's history and feminism jointly with China and South Korea. (Kano)

Relations between Japan and other East Asian countries are politically strained. Unfortunately, this often casts a shadow even on unofficial diplomacy by citizens.

However, women's issues cannot be resolved without discussion among East Asian countries. For feminists, transnational feminism is indispensable for tackling these issues. A study of the women's history of East Asia, suggested by Kano, might be the first step in building such a transnational feminism.

6-4 Conclusion

With globalisation, information in various fields has been exported and imported more and more, but there has not always been a balance between imports and exports. In the case of Japan, it is obvious that feminism in Japan has imported feminism from the West much more than it has exported itself, which may be due not only to language problems but also to deference to Western culture. Under the influence of Western feminist ideas, I have aimed to identify how feminism in Japan has developed. One of my findings was the pride of academic feminist pioneers, namely the *Lib* generation, who are strongly against the view that feminism is imported. Their focus on the *Lib* as the starting point of feminism in Japan without referring to first-wave feminism might seem strange to the younger generation. Additionally, by examining its differences from feminism in the West, I found that feminism in Japan was influenced by Confucianism on issues such as reproductive rights and collectivism. In regard to the spirit of *wa* in collectivism, I also discussed invention and re-invention of tradition. On the other hand, in connection with Confucian culture, I found that there is a potential to study East Asian feminisms more widely. With these specific issues in feminism in Japan, including the Emperor system, in mind, I will develop my discussion more deeply in the next chapter about the politics of nuclear power, which I regard as an embodiment of modern power in male-dominated society, in connection with the nuclear leakage in March 2011 in Japan.

7 The Politics of Nuclear Power

7-1 Introduction

At 14: 46 local time on 11 March 2011, the Great East Japan Earthquake struck eastern Japan, especially the Tohoku region.²⁶⁴ It measured 9.0 on the moment magnitude scale (Japan Meteorological Agency 2011a and b), which is the fourth biggest internationally since 1900 (U.S. Geological Survey), and caused severe damage. Subsequently, there was a massive tsunami,²⁶⁵ which instantly destroyed towns facing the Pacific Ocean and took a heavy toll of lives.²⁶⁶ Immediately, shocking scenes of the tsunami were shown by the media internationally and broadcast repeatedly, which gave a strong impression of the threat posed by natural disasters. However, the chain of fear did not end there. The impact of the earthquake and tsunami directly hit the Fukushima²⁶⁷ Daiichi nuclear plant and caused nuclear leakage, which led people to fear for their lives. The provisional risk level was 7.0 on the International Nuclear Event Scale (Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan 2011), which is the severest level, as in the Chernobyl disaster in 1986. Needless to say, local residents, who were issued with an evacuation order by the Japanese government, were terrified. People in other areas were also afraid of invisible radioactive contamination. This was *the Collapse of the Safety Myth* (Kuroda et al. 2012) in relation to nuclear power, which immediately became a global issue and led to heated discussion within Japan and elsewhere.

What also gives impetus to this discussion, and requires special mention, is that Japan is the only country that has ever been attacked with nuclear weapons in wartime. While Japan has an unparalleled gruesome experience due to this history – with an estimated 140,000 people²⁶⁸ killed in Hiroshima and 74,000 people²⁶⁹ in Nagasaki – it has promoted the building of nuclear power plants in the name of peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Looking back on the process, under the rule of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers

²⁶⁴ The Tohoku region is in the northeast of Japan.

²⁶⁵ According to the 2011 Tohoku Earthquake Tsunami Joint Survey Group (2012), the trace of the tsunami was over 10m in height and 530km in length. In some areas, it was over 20m in height and 200km in length. The highest point of the tsunami was 40.1m.

²⁶⁶ 19,074 people were killed, 2,633 people were missing and 6,219 people were injured as of September 2014 (Fire and Disaster Management Agency of Japan 2014).

²⁶⁷ Fukushima is in the south of the Tohoku region.

²⁶⁸ Hiroshima City (n.d.).

²⁶⁹ Nagasaki Data Collection Commission of Nuclear Weapons (1950, in Nagasaki City 2009a).

during the post-war period, the Japanese government, the political and financial worlds, and the media, namely male-dominated society, emphasised the advantages of nuclear energy and campaigned for it. In spite of the ongoing Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster, the Japanese government has not changed its policy. Far from abandoning nuclear energy, the Japanese government has promoted the sale of nuclear technology overseas. This indicates that nuclear energy is a symbol of political power, national strength and wealth in the modern period. Moreover, as soon as nuclear energy is transformed into weapons, it becomes an embodiment of military strength to intimidate others. In fact, at least eight states (America, Russia, the UK, France, China, India, Pakistan and North Korea)²⁷⁰ have announced that they have nuclear weapons, which means that it is still believed that nuclear weapons act as a deterrent. Additionally, some states have been suspected of weaponisation activities. According to *BBC News* (November 2013), Iran emphasises that their nuclear programme is only for peaceful purposes, but they are suspected of developing highly enriched uranium for nuclear weapons. As Rogan (2013) points out, what Iran wants is respect and prestige. Five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, including America and the UK, which have not abandoned their own nuclear weapons, have imposed economic sanctions to restrain Iran from producing nuclear weapons (*BBC News* January 2014). Negotiation between them seems to be a scramble for power.

However, it not enough only to criticise a lust for power in male-dominated society. What must also be noted is the historical fact that movements both for nuclear energy and against nuclear weapons were consistent with each other in the only atomic bombed nation during the post-war era. Such a situation can also be seen in post-war women's activism. In response to the hydrogen bomb tests carried out on Bikini Atoll²⁷¹ by America during the second half of the 1940s and the 1950s, in Japan, feminists, and women in general, especially mothers, campaigned against nuclear weapons. They even developed links with an international mother's movement. At the same time, women supported peaceful uses of atomic energy. After the Chernobyl disaster in 1986 and the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster in 2011, their campaign shifted to opposing nuclear energy, but whether they were

²⁷⁰ America, Russia, the UK, France and China are signatory nations to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), adopted by the United Nations in 1963 and enforced in 1970 in order to promote disarmament of nuclear weapons. India, Pakistan and North Korea are not member nations of NPT but they have carried out nuclear tests.

²⁷¹ Bikini Atoll is located in the northwest of the Marshall Islands in the central part of the Pacific Ocean. America conducted nuclear and hydrogen weapons tests here from 1946 to 1958.

campaigning for nuclear energy or against nuclear weapons, they often emphasised their *bosei*.

I worked as a journalist at the Nagasaki branch office of a newspaper publishing company from 2000 to 2002, reporting survivors' narratives of their lives, their physical and mental suffering, and prayers for world peace without nuclear weapons. I was also interested in the peace monuments and statues in Nagasaki depicting mother and baby pairs, which motivated me to think about the representation of gender in connection with atomic bombs. Since then I have considered how female survivors have been described within Japanese society, how women have faced issues of nuclear power, including weapons, and why they feel the need to emphasise their *bosei* when they talk about these issues. In addition, I became interested in how feminists in Japan has tackled or viewed these issues. At the same time, I came to think that a lust for political power lurks around nuclear energy. These questions and my own views on the subject have motivated me to explore the politics of nuclear power in Japan. In approaching this issue, I asked my participating academics how they acknowledged nuclear power, including weapons, and what gender issues they recognised in the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster. After these interviews, Japan had a dramatic change of government and swung to the right. Taking account of the meaning of this political transformation, the rising tendency towards conservatism and the world situation surrounding nuclear power, I will discuss my interviewees' views of nuclear energy and weapons. I will then focus on what issues they saw in the nuclear disaster in Japanese cultural contexts such as maternalism, the Emperor system and Buddhism.

7-2 What Symbol?

Since the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster, the issue of nuclear energy has been the subject of heated discussion, both at home and abroad. Through the media, internet and journals, feminists have also passionately argued against nuclear energy and criticised the national policy of depending on it. Eight of the researchers whom I interviewed gave opinions on symbolism within the nuclear issue, which can be categorised into two types of response. Firstly, three academics: Ito, Ueno and Sechiyama, discussed Japan's self-image as a victim of the only atomic bombing in history. In connection with this pitiful representation, Kano discussed the emphasis on victimisation that is created by gendering atomic issues. I will consider these issues in the context of national and international

politics. Secondly, five scholars: Suzuki, Ehara, Jung, Inoue and Kano, viewed nuclear power as a symbol of political power in the modern period, while Sechiyama presented two counterarguments.

7-2-1 Japan and the Bomb: Self-Image as a Victim Nation

A point that the three participants who focused on Japan as the only atomic bombed nation had in common was that they regarded the bombing as a critical historical turning point for Japan. This is ‘an extremely important element establishing the victim image’ (Ito), which has made the fact of Japan’s war of aggression invisible. On this point, Ueno argued that feminism in Japan during the post-war period had taken advantage of this victim imagery, in contrast with feminism in Germany, which shouldered the historical fact of the Holocaust.

The atomic bombs are a symbol of a lost battle... In my view,... being a defeated nation has the strongest influence on feminism in Japan... The atomic bombs were the final crushing blows to Japan... The emphasis on the atomic bombing has led to the view that the attacker was America and the victim was Japan... This hides the fact of Japan’s 15-year war of aggression,²⁷² which violated International Law. Post-war politics and the women’s movement took advantage of being an atomic bombed nation in order to define themselves as victims. The atomic bombs were useful as an icon of victimhood... Considering feminism in Germany, the Holocaust has had a strong impact on feminism. Germany can never define itself as a victim with the Holocaust. This rhetoric of victims or wrongdoers has influenced Japan and Germany respectively... Feminism in Japan is pacifist, because of being a defeated nation. A connection between pacifism and maternalism is a particular characteristic of feminism in Japan... Pacifism is also seen in feminism in Germany. (Ueno)

Ueno’s comparison of Japan with Germany is clear. A common feature between these two nations is that they were defeated in the Second World War, which has caused their feminism to become pacifist. On the other hand, they see the end of the war very

²⁷² Japan’s 15-year war of aggression was a chain of wars stretching from the Manchurian Incident in 1931 to the end of the Second World War in 1945. See Chapter 1. Before that, Japan already supported imperialism, having practically made Korea a protectorate under the Japan-Korea Protectorate Treaties of 1904, 1905 and 1907, and officially annexed Korea with the Japan-Korea Annexation Treaty of 1910.

differently, so that their self-images are also completely opposite – a victim or an aggressor.

In the case of Germany, the end of its war meant the collapse of Nazism. As Canning (2006) states, it is impossible for Germany to turn its back on the history of Nazism and the Holocaust. Anderson (2011) argues that, although German cities experienced the firestorms, and millions of women and children were murdered or raped by Soviet soldiers during the war, the overwhelming majority of German people have accepted the guilt of the human evil during ‘Hitler[’s] time’ and have decided that a dictatorship like Nazism must never occur again. Actually, Germany has drawn lessons from the fascist experience. In feminism in Germany, German-Jewish women’s history, with its intersection of racism and sexism, has forced feminists to realise the salience of race in the current struggle for gender equality (Gupta 1991). The history of Nazism has definitely had an impact on feminism in Germany.

By contrast, Japan’s surrender to the Allied Forces was subsequent to the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The victim imagery can often be seen in various places, especially in the peace movements in Japan, and is cultivated even now. In fact, a peace memorial ceremony is officially held on 6 August in Hiroshima and on 9 August in Nagasaki every year; aged survivors, bereaved families and the Prime Minister attend and pray for permanent world peace without nuclear weapons. At the ceremonies, each mayor of Hiroshima and Nagasaki cities announces a peace declaration, which is sent to America and the United Nations. The two cities became symbolic places and the slogan ‘No More Hiroshima, No More Nagasaki’ is widely used in the peace movements. These movements are important to ‘victim identity’ (Zwigenberg 2014: 96). On the other hand, Japan has no official event on 7 December, which is the memorial day of the outbreak of the Pacific War, triggered by Japan’s surprise attack on the US naval base at Pearl Harbour²⁷³ in 1941. This clearly indicates that a feeling of being victimised is always put forward and that the peace movement tends to focus on opposing nuclear war, which has hidden Japan’s war of aggression from view. The image is that of a ‘noble victim’ harbouring ‘no ill will toward its former enemies’ (Zwigenberg 2014: 96). In contradistinction to Germany, Anderson (2011) argues that Japan has no acceptance of war guilt. In this way, this self-image as a victim nation has been working politically.

²⁷³ Pearl Harbour is on the south coast of Oahu island, the State of Hawaii, located in the centre of the Pacific Ocean.

Interestingly, this tragic self-image was used in the arguments both for and against the introduction of nuclear energy for peace during the post-war era, especially during the 1950s, when there were significant events related to energy issues. In 1953, the President of America, Dwight Eisenhower, made a speech entitled 'Atoms for Peace' at the United Nations General Assembly, 'Against the dark background of the atomic bomb, the United States does not wish merely to present strength, but also the desire and the hope for peace' (Eisenhower 1953). In those days, there were heated arguments about the peaceful use of nuclear energy in Japan. A representative supporter of nuclear energy and also a physicist, Mitsuo Taketani (1952: 72), argued: 'Because Japan is the only victim of atomic bombing, it has the strongest right to discuss nuclear energy. In order to console people who were killed with the atomic bombs, a study of nuclear energy should be done by Japan... Japan is qualified to conduct research into nuclear power for peace.'²⁷⁴ This is the logic of compensation: that if atomic power is used for peace, people who were killed by the atomic bombs will be consoled. By emphasising victimisation in this way, Taketani (1952) appealed to public opinion for the necessity of nuclear energy. In the end, even casualties of the bombing accepted nuclear energy. The First World Conference against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs in Hiroshima in August 1955 officially declared, 'We made a fresh resolve to abolish atomic and hydrogen bombs... Nuclear power should be used for the peace and prosperity of humankind'²⁷⁵ (in Japan Peace Committee 1969: 343). In this manner, Japan's self-image as a victim was conveniently used for political purposes, so that the two campaigns, for nuclear energy and against weapons, stood side by side even in survivors' activism. These seem to conflict with each other, but they dovetailed conveniently in Japan.

Similarly, although mainstream feminism in Japan during the pre-war period was no more than 'imperialist feminism', in order to protect itself it had identified as a victim and hardly ever tackled the issues of Japan's war aggression, including the Emperor's and feminists' war guilt, until the comfort women issue clearly emerged during the early 1990s (Suzuki 2001: 32, 2002: 113, see Chapter 3). This also seems to link in with the lack of feminist discussion about the state after the war (see Chapter 2). Furthermore, like the bombing casualties' activism, there was a harmonious relation between maternal campaigns for nuclear energy and against nuclear weaponry, especially in the post-war era. In 1954, when a Japanese fishing boat was exposed to nuclear fallout from the hydrogen bomb test on Bikini Atoll by America, housewives in Japan conducted a campaign against the bomb,

²⁷⁴ My translation.

²⁷⁵ My translation.

collecting about 32,000,000 signatures, which was over one-third of the population of Japan. In support of this movement, one of the feminist pioneers, Raicho Hiratsuka (see Chapters 1 and 2), who was the first president of the Japan Federation of Women's Organisations, appealed to the International Federation of Women's Organisations to support women's anti-nuclear campaign in Japan, by emphasising that 'Japan has been victimised with nuclear weapons three times by America'²⁷⁶ (Hiratsuka 1954, on the official homepage of the Japan Mothers' Convention). In agreeing to this appeal, the International Federation of Women's Organisations held the First World Mother's Convention²⁷⁷ in Switzerland in July 1955, adopting the maternal slogan 'Mothers, who reproduce lives, hope to rear and protect lives'²⁷⁸ (in Kimura 2006: 41). The key point here is that 'anti-nuclear weaponry', the original desire of Japan's maternal movement, with the emphasis on victimisation and pacifism, was finally made compatible with the promotion of the peaceful use of nuclear power at the First World Mother's Convention. The First Japan Mother's Convention, a preparatory meeting for the World Convention, held in June 1955 in Tokyo, declared its aim to be: 'mothers of the world to join hands to prevent nuclear war, and create a world where mothers and children can live without anxiety' (in Mackie 2003: 135). On the other hand, the president of the International Federation of Women's Organisations, Eugenie Cotton,²⁷⁹ declared internationally:

We strongly support the development of atoms-for-peace. We know that nuclear energy is much more useful than coal... 1kg of uranium is equal to 300tons of coal. Nuclear energy can promote the industrialisation of developing countries and free people from financial subordination and poverty. The global issue of shortages of commodities can also be solved. In particular, mothers' daily work can be reduced. (Eugenie Cotton, February 1955 at a preparatory meeting in Geneva for the First World Mother's Convention, in Kano 2012a: 5, my translation)

The First World Mother's Convention apparently recommended nuclear energy, which keeps home electrical appliances running, to free women from hard domestic work. In this way, against the background of Japan's self-image as a victim, maternal campaigns both for nuclear energy and against nuclear weapons were combined and harmonised with each other.

In connection with Japan's self-identity as a victim, Kano, a historian, explored the process of forming this pitiful image and argued that the representation of atomic issues was

²⁷⁶ My translation.

²⁷⁷ 1,060 mothers from 68 countries attended the First Mother's Convention (Kimura 2006).

²⁷⁸ My translation.

²⁷⁹ Eugenie Cotton (1881–1967) was a French physicist under the supervision of Marie Curie.

feminised during the post-war era, which stressed victimisation. This emphasis on being a victim, far from being against nuclear energy, spotlighted its advantages.

The campaign against atomic and hydrogen bombs got into full swing in 1955. In those days, the campaign for the peaceful use of nuclear power also emerged, while the representation of the atomic bombing became feminised. The more the horror of the bombing and victimisation were emphasised by feminising the representation of atomic issues, the more a bright future for the peaceful use of nuclear power was highlighted. (Kano)

According to Kano, there were mainly three concrete representations in the process of feminisation (see also Kano 2012c and d). In the first stage, the imagery of weapons of mass murder was replaced with Marie Curie through the impact of a biographical film describing her achievements in her struggle against gender discrimination. This was one of the first American films released in Japan in the post-war era, in 1946, by the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers. In the film, Marie Curie²⁸⁰ has a strong interest in studying radium and says: 'Science has great beauty' (*Madam Curie* 1943), which emphasises not only the triumph of science, but also positive images such as women's high ability, achievement and liberation. As Taketani ([1952] 1968: 129) argues, 'Nuclear energy symbolises peaceful *bosei* through Madam Curie, Madam Joliot-Curie²⁸¹ and Lise Meitner.^{282,283} In the next step, the presentation shifted to unmarried female victims, known as *Genbaku-Otome*²⁸⁴ (Atomic-Bombed Girls) or Hiroshima Girls, from 1952. 'Atomic-Bombed Girls of Marriageable Age... In Their Faces and Hands, the Scars Left by the Devil'²⁸⁵ (*Yomiuri Newspaper* June 1952a). The media reported that keloidal faces hindered girls from getting married, giving the impression that they were very pitiable. The media also reported the poor girls undergoing treatment in America: 'Affection for

²⁸⁰ Marie Curie (1867–1934) was a French physicist and also the first woman to receive the Nobel Prizes for Physics in 1903 and Chemistry in 1911 for her study of radioactivity.

²⁸¹ Irene Joliot-Curie (1897–1956) was the daughter of Marie Curie and Pierre Curie, and also a scientist, who received the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 1935 with her husband for their study of radioactivity.

²⁸² Lise Meitner (1878–1968) was a physicist studying nuclear fission, born in Austria.

²⁸³ My translation.

²⁸⁴ *Genbaku-Otome* were young female survivors of the atomic bombing who had their keloidal faces treated with advanced medical technology. The starting point for this event was that a fund-raising campaign to support them was carried out by prominent persons in Japan including a female writer, Shizue Masugi (1901–55), who was shocked by their scars (*Yomiuri Newspaper* June 1952b). At first, they had their faces treated in Tokyo, but participation in the campaign expanded, so that in 1955, 25 selected young single girls were sent to America in order to have operations (*Yomiuri Newspaper* February 1956). This news was widely reported by the media.

²⁸⁵ My translation.

Hiroshima Girls',²⁸⁶ 'Their Wounded Feelings Have been Healed'²⁸⁷ (*Yomiuri Newspaper* February 1956b). When they returned to Japan, their faces, which had been burned raw, were described as transformed, as 'Full of Hope'²⁸⁸ (*Yomiuri Newspaper* June 1956c), which represented a positive picture. By emphasising that their advanced medical treatment in America brought a smile back to their keloidal faces, not only was their pitifulness more and more in the spotlight, but also America's act of cruelty in dropping the atomic bombs was concealed (Kano 2012d). Finally, the moving story of a little girl, Sadako,²⁸⁹ which spread after her death from leukaemia in 1955, became symbolic of the poor victim, and this also transformed into a symbol of prayers for permanent peace and the dignity of life. In fact, there is a statue of Sadako in the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, to which 10,000,000 folded-paper cranes are given every year by people praying for peace (Sadako Legacy 2012). The image of Sadako was that of an innocent, short-lived and poor girl. Her image was like crystal, making a contrast with *Genbaku-Otome's* blackish keloidal faces. As Kano argued, it is understood that the emphasis on victimisation by gendering the atomic issues in this way gave people hope for the peaceful use of nuclear power.

Looking at how victims were gendered in Japan versus how bombs were gendered in America, I found that there had of course been completely different meanings between them. The two bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were nicknamed 'Little Boy' and 'Fat Man'. These weapons of mass murder were imbued with masculinity, 'with the ultimate power of violent domination over female Nature' (Cohn 2001: 104). After the war, the gendering of the bomb was partially transformed. At the bombing test site at Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands, in addition to male codenames such as 'Mike', some bombs were given female names such as 'Gilda' and 'Helen of Bikini'. A film critic, Wood (1975) writes about 'Gilda', which was named after the American film *Gilda* (1946) and had a picture of its heroine, the actress Rita Hayworth, printed on it:

The phallic agent of destruction underwent a sex change, and the delight and terror of our new power channelled into an old and familiar story: our fear and love of women. We got rid of guilt, too: If women are always to blame, starting with Eve perhaps, or Mother Nature, then men can't be to blame. (Wood 1975: 51)

²⁸⁶ My translation.

²⁸⁷ My translation.

²⁸⁸ My translation.

²⁸⁹ Sadako Sasaki (1943–55) was a survivor of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima who died of leukaemia. She believed that she would recover from her illness if she made a thousand folded-paper cranes, but she passed away in spite of making them. After her death, this story of Sadako describing her strong hope of living was published both at home and abroad (Sadako Legacy 2012).

By giving them female nicknames, it seems that America tried to erase the masculine image of the bombs and their sense of guilt in manufacturing such weaponry. Caputi (1991) argues, too, that the male-conceived, fathered and birthed atomic bombs ironically came to be associated with female power or sexuality. In this way, masculinised bombs were conveniently feminised in America.

By the way, how is the only atomic-bombed nation seen by other countries? One's view always depends on one's standpoint. Sechiyama considered how the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were interpreted by other countries and argued that Japan's self-image as a victim was self-centred.

I doubt whether the atomic bombing is a gender issue. In some countries in which I have lived, people think that the atomic bombs had justifiable grounds. In South Korea, people generally think that the bombs emancipated them. I think that South Korean feminists ought to have the same view... It is natural for South Korean people to think 'Serves Japan right!'... America did not want to lose many GIs... It is natural for the majority of American people to have a positive view of the atomic bombs... In America, people who are against the decision to use the atomic bombs are in a minority... So, I cannot accept that Japan only emphasises being a victim. (Sechiyama)

Korea, which was Japan's colony from 1910 to 1945 under the Japan-Korea Annexation Treaty, still has anti-Japanese feeling, resulting in completely opposing interpretations of various events. A case in point concerns Jung-Geun Ahn, a young Korean independence activist who assassinated Hirobumi Ito,²⁹⁰ the first Prime Minister of Japan, in 1909. Ahn is seen as a terrorist in Japan, but a hero in Korea. On 26 March 2010, the South Korean government held the 100th anniversary of his execution as a national memorial event in Seoul and praised the assassin for his courage (*AFP* March 2010). In addition, on 19 January 2014, the South Korean government, in partnership with the Chinese government, opened the Ahn Memorial Hall in Harbin, China, which was the scene of the assassination (Kato 2014). This exhibition about the life of Ahn is 'part of an anti-Japan campaign, reflecting an escalating feud' (Perlez 2014). Anderson (2011) points out, too, that the South Korean government has been irritated that Japan has never willingly apologised for the prostitution of tens of thousands of Korean women for Japan's Imperial Force during wartime, namely the comfort women issue. Of course, it is often seen that views on the

²⁹⁰ Hirobumi Ito (1841–1909) was also the first overseer of Korea under the Japan-Korea Protectorate Treaty of 1905.

atomic bombs contrast sharply with each other. One of the biggest South Korean daily newspapers, *Korea JoongAng Daily* (May 2013, in Demetriou 2013) says that the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were ‘divine punishment’ on Japan, and ‘God often borrows the hand of a human to punish the evil deeds of men’. Immediately, the Japanese government strongly protested against *Korea JoongAng Daily*, denouncing the article as ‘quite dishonourable’, and said, ‘Our country is the only atom-bombed nation. We will never forgive such remarks’ (in Demetriou 2013). These wide gulfs indicate that tensions between the two countries have hardly eased even now, seven decades after Japan’s occupation of Korea.

Similar divergent views of the atomic bombing are seen in relations between America and Japan. Looking at the controversy over America’s decision to use the bombs, there are three interpretations among American historians. The first is that their use was justified, even if the bombs were not important in ending the war, because this speeded up Japan’s surrender. Feis (1961) argues that the US policymakers firmly believed that the bombings would save tens of thousands of American lives. ‘The impelling reason for the decision to use [the bombs] was military – to end the war victoriously as soon as possible’ (Feis 1961: 181). The counterargument is that the bombs were not needed and that the aim of the bombing was to display America’s newest power in order to threaten the Soviet Union. Alperovits (1966) argues that American policymakers regarded the bombs as a diplomatic lever which could thwart Soviet expansionism in Eastern Europe and Asia. The third interpretation, argued by Bernstein (1995: 142), is that the bombing was primarily aimed at the speedy surrender of Japan, of which ‘a bonus’ was to frighten the Soviet Union. ‘There was no hesitation about using A-bombs to kill many Japanese in order to save the 25,000-46,000 Americans who might otherwise have died in the invasion. Put bluntly, Japanese life – including civilian life – was cheap, and some American leaders, like many rank-and-file citizens, may well have savoured the prospect of punishing the Japanese with the A-bomb’ (Bernstein 1995: 149).

On the basis of these three views, Anderson (2011) argues that consensus among historians that the atomic bombing was correct is growing, and ‘Conventional wisdom has it that the decision [to use the atomic bombs] saved many lives in the long run.’ If the bombs had not been dropped, America’s forces would have invaded the Japanese Home Islands in December 1945 as scheduled, and Japan, which had not intended to surrender, would have met the enemy with everything they had. According to a calculation based on the actual

number of casualties in the battle of Okinawa²⁹¹ during eight weeks in 1945, which was the only land battle within Japan, if a similar battle lasting 50 weeks had been conducted on the Japanese Home Islands, 80,000 to 100,000 Americans and at least 2,000,000 Japanese, including civilians, would have died (Anderson 2011), which is about ten times as many as the total number of people killed by the atomic bombs. 'It would have been immoral if they had not been used' (Anderson 2011). Concerning this debate, one Japanese historian, Asada (1998) argues that all three interpretations in America concentrate only on the motivation behind the use of the bombs and ignore the realities of their effect. On the other hand, Asada (1998) criticises Japanese historians, who have barely discussed this issue in the context of ending the Second World War, due to their strong feeling of nuclear victimisation. This indicates that Japan's self-image as a victim nation has also influenced academic research in Japan.

After the crisis in Fukushima, I was asked a question in the UK: why had Japan depended on nuclear energy? It might be natural for outsiders to see the ballooning nuclear industry within the only atomic-bombed nation as contradictory. However, as I discussed, the stress on being a victim nation has made Japan's war guilt invisible. This has also conveniently been used in various places such as the peace movement and the promotion of nuclear energy. Even feminism, both activists and academics, had emphasised victimisation and had barely approached the issues of Japan's aggression until the early 1990s (see Chapter 3). In order to face up to reality, a reconsideration of this one-sided symbolism will be needed.

7-2-2 Power

Another form of symbolism to be discussed is modern power. This issue of power was raised by five participants and was closely related to inequality. Suzuki and Ehara both directed their attention to relations between capital and labour, but with different emphasis. Suzuki highlighted the fact that manual workers at the nuclear power stations had been forced to work under poor labour conditions that threatened their safety. She argued that the wealth of the nuclear industry had been built at the expense of the exploited classes.

What I clearly see in the nuclear disaster is that capitalists, scholars whose views support the government in power, officialdom and politicians have

²⁹¹ Okinawa is a small island located at the southern extremity of Japan.

conspired with each other to make profit. Workers at the bottom of the pyramid are exploited. What is more, they are staff dispatched for temporary work. They are forced to engage in dangerous work without enough safety measures... A power structure that always sacrifices blue-collar workers characterises Japanese society. Thus, the weak are always ill-treated by the strong. This is due to nothing more than relations between the rulers and ruled. (Suzuki)

Suzuki, a historian studying socialist feminists, argued that the disaster had brought capitalist exploitation into sharp relief. Concretely, cutting down on labour costs, the dangers of the work and poor safety measures always shift onto blue-collar workers. These poor labour conditions are an old story. Japan's nuclear industry has been relying on cheap labour since the first nuclear plant started to work in 1966, mainly recruiting itinerant workers, known as 'nuclear gypsies', from poor areas around Tokyo and Osaka, in which a large number of homeless men have settled (Slodkowski and Saito 2013). Unlike regular employees of electric power companies, they are day labourers employed by subcontractors placed at the bottom of the pyramid of the nuclear industry, which is composed of seven or more layers, and they move from plant to plant frequently. Murata (2013) points out that problems with money, lack of proper health insurance and industrial accidents have been found here and there.

In fact, another severe nuclear disaster that uncovered the extremely poor labour conditions had already occurred before the Fukushima disaster. According to *BBC News* (September 1999a, October 1999b and September 2011b), in 1999 the accidental attainment of nuclear criticality occurred in a nuclear reprocessing plant in Tokai village, Japan. In investigating the cause of the accident, it was discovered that for four years the operator of the plant had allowed workers to use illegal standards for uranium processing in order to speed up production. Workers had followed the instructions of their superiors and mixed uranium in metal buckets instead of using high-technology equipment, resulting in setting off a nuclear reaction. Additionally, they had never had proper training. In this accident, two workers died, one was seriously injured, and at least 666 people, including workers, local people and a rescue squad, were exposed to radiation (Suda 2005). At the trial in 2003, six operators and the company managing the plant were found guilty of negligent homicide and so on (Suda 2005). However, poor labour conditions have not improved at all. Slodkowski and Saito (2013) interviewed day workers engaged in dismantling the Fukushima reactors and doing the clean-up of radioactive pollution in the neighbouring

area; they found that their wages have been partially skimmed by their employers or brokers. Additionally, they have not been provided with enough safety measures. Their jobs are similar to sweatshop labour as an example of exploitation characterised as ‘monotonous, dehumanising and often dangerous’ (Snyder 2008: 289). Despite these poor conditions, few workers sue their employers, because they are afraid of retaliation. Minaguchi (2013) argues that workers in nuclear power plants are exploited, but even the Japanese government has not tackled this problem properly, in order to keep cheap workers. As these facts reveal, workers, especially blue-collar workers, are sacrificed by capitalism and rationalisation. Thus, the working class are regarded as being less valuable.

In relating the nuclear industry to capitalism, Suzuki emphasised the plight of workers, while Ehara took a different approach to this issue by focusing on the other side: the capitalist class exploiting workers. Ehara discussed the expectations of people in power for the wealth surrounding nuclear power.

I think that Japan will keep clinging to nuclear power for the present. People who have promoted nuclear energy are taking a leading part in Japan, namely major leaders in the business and political worlds. I do not think that they will change their policies. They will continue supporting nuclear energy by emphasising the high cost and insufficient supply of thermal power... I argue that Japan should declare a new policy of nuclear energy phase-out... If the phase-out of nuclear reactors is carried out over 20 to 30 years, the loss in finance will be not so big... However, if so, it will not be convenient for Japan to sell nuclear technology overseas. (Ehara)

There is a background to Ehara’s argument. In July 2011, four months after the nuclear disaster happened, the Administration of the Democratic Party of Japan, which has a range of political views from centre-left to centrist and had come to power for the first time in 2009, declared a post-nuclear energy policy (Kan 2011). On the other hand, in October 2011, it came to light that this Administration intended to keep exporting nuclear technology to foreign countries such as Turkey, and also had an agreement with America that they would strengthen their cooperative relationship in developing nuclear technology (*Kyodo* October 2011). Japan has 48 nuclear reactors, which ranks them third internationally, after America (100 reactors) and France (58 reactors), as of December 2013 (International Atomic Energy Agency 2014). For Japan, which has few natural resources, nuclear technology is still a significant source of wealth even after the accident. When I interviewed Ehara in February 2012, her critical attention was directed towards this

hypocrisy of the Administration. Certainly, this national policy was contradictory. In comparison with Germany's wise decision to close all their nuclear power stations by 2022, which was announced in May 2011 (*BBC News* May 2011a), Japan seemed to have a blind lust for wealth. When I interviewed Ehara, I was inclined to agree with her view.

After that, the political situation changed dramatically. In the election in December 2012, the governing Democratic Party of Japan, whose promise was to end all nuclear power generation by the end of the 2030s, was heavily defeated. The conservative Liberal Democratic Party, which had enjoyed almost 50 years of political power as the ruling party until 2009, returned to power with a sweeping victory. The leader of this party, who became the new Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe, is seen as hawkish and right-of-centre.²⁹² Overseas media announced that Japan had swung to the right with headlines such as 'The Right Wing is Back' in *Beijing News*,²⁹³ 'Japan is Back to the Past' in *Korea JoongAng Daily*,²⁹⁴ 'Japan has taken a sharp turn to the right' in *BBC News*.²⁹⁵ Abe's attitude towards nuclear energy has also been widely noted, because he has announced that he will allow nuclear energy a bigger role. In fact, as soon as his new Administration began, he completely abandoned the policy of nuclear energy phase-out proposed by the previous Administration (*BBC News* December 2012c). The long-established policy preceding the Fukushima crisis was revived. In addition, in order to export nuclear technology, Abe visited the United Arab Emirates and Turkey, and made agreements with them in May 2013 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan 2013).

At the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, the decommissioning of reactors has started, and will take 30 to 40 years to complete (Tokyo Electric Power Company 2011). In response to this crisis, the other nuclear power plants have stopped generating energy as of February 2015 in order to make an inspection of their reactors (Japan Nuclear Technology Institute 2015), resulting in a jump in energy costs. Under these conditions, the business world wants Japan to return to using nuclear energy (*BBC News* December 2012c). The president of the Japan Federation of Economic Organisations, Hiromasa Yonekura (2011) argues that a nuclear energy phase-out will lead to a lack of energy, resulting in the decline of domestic industry, a rise in the unemployment rate and a decline in economic growth. On the other hand, many local residents have sought refuge from exposure to radiation and people are also afraid of exposure through food, water and air. Despite this severe

²⁹² *BBC News* (December 2012a and b).

²⁹³ *Beijing News* (December 2012, in *Asahi Newspaper* December 2012), my translation.

²⁹⁴ *Korea JoongAng Daily* (December 2012, in *Asahi Newspaper* December 2012), my translation.

²⁹⁵ *BBC News* (December 2012b).

situation, not only the people in power, whom Ehara criticised, but also the majority of voters have chosen and supported the Abe Administration, attaching great importance to nuclear power as both a source of energy within Japan and a technology of commercial value elsewhere. A French news agency, *AFP* (December 2012, in Mitsui 2012) explains the conservative Liberal Democratic Party's overwhelming victory, in terms of the highest priority being given to financial issues in order to overcome the recession. In other words, the will of the people facing a prolonged recession favoured a policy for stimulating economic recovery as an urgent issue, rather than a nuclear energy phase-out for the next generation which might damage current economic activities. Feeling uneasy about an unstable life might make people more conservative and averse to change. Now that things have come to this pass, it seems that the wind of public opinion, in itself, is against feminism.

Another factor linked to nuclear power is Japanese-American relations. Jung explored the process whereby Japan had followed in the footsteps of America since its defeat in 1945, and argued that securing enough energy by generating nuclear electricity, instead of importing oil, was necessary in order to sever and then reform the country's ties with America. Thus, the aim of Japan's policy of promoting nuclear power plants was to gain independence from America, which dominates the oil market.

The reason why Japan has nuclear power plants in spite of being the atomic-bombed nation is simply to form friendly relations with America, but it is only an apparent friendship... Furthermore, having nuclear power plants was preparation for independence from America in the future... America has dominated the oil market internationally, so that Japan cannot fight against it in order to buy as much oil as it wants. However, if Japan develops energy resources by generating nuclear electricity, it will cut a path to independence... While Japan is a denuclearised nation, it intended to arm itself with nuclear weapons in order to be independent from America... Security is a ringing phrase, but Japan sees nuclear power as a necessary resource in order to reinforce military power... This issue is concerned with how Japan should behave in global politics. I argue that feminism should tackle this issue. (Jung)

While the Second World War was officially over in 1945, Japan has been tied to the war in terms of the continued US influence. In Jung's argument that nuclear power is an important energy source in order to achieve self-reliance, it must be borne in mind that nuclear power is not confined to energy, because the development of a nuclear industry can

also secure the technology to produce nuclear weapons. A national secret concerning Japan's attempt to become a nuclear power was revealed by the media in 2010. According to *NHK* (November 2010), despite Article 9 of the Constitution of Japan, which proclaims the country's eternal renunciation of war, during the mid-1960s the Japanese government had schemed to have nuclear weapons, triggered by China's nuclear test in 1964, which meant that China became the first nuclear nation in Asia. In fact, the Japanese government explored with utmost secrecy how to produce nuclear weapons. This was substantiated by top-secret documents and the testimony of the parties concerned. The revelation that the Prime Minister at the time, Eisaku Sato (1901–75), who announced Japan's Three No-Nuclear Principles²⁹⁶ in 1967 and then ironically received the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1974, had intended to arm Japan with nuclear weapons gave Japanese society a great shock. In the end, Sato decided to take shelter under the American nuclear umbrella instead of nuclear armament, because it was forecast that relations between Japan and other countries, including America, would degenerate if Japan armed itself with nuclear weapons. However, this intention to nuclearise indicates how the Japanese government recognised nuclear power in those days. Muto (2011) argues that the Japanese government introduced nuclear-generated power with the intention of securing the technology to manufacture nuclear weapons, and that the Sato Administration actually tried to nuclearise Japan. This is 'covert nuclearisation'²⁹⁷ (Muto 2011: 1). The fact that Japan is a nuclear-capable nation should be realised. As Jung argued, this nuclear technology can become Japan's final bargaining chip in order to become really independent from America.

The approach of Inoue and Kano towards nuclear power was different from those of the previous three scholars. They used the same expression about their ideas of power, 'high efficiency first' in the 'modern' period, argued that it left behind 'the weak', and referred to the *Lib*. Their arguments were similar to each other, but each had her own distinctive view in relation to her own experience. Inoue focused on the nuclear disaster and highlighted the depopulated villages²⁹⁸ in which the nuclear power plants are located. Inoue also maintained that the *Lib* had already criticised the way in which male-dominated society leaves the weak behind, which reflected her participation in the *Lib*.

I believe that the atomic bombs and nuclear energy are a symbol of modern power... What I have reconfirmed since the Fukushima disaster is that the

²⁹⁶ Japan's Three Non-Nuclear Principles are that Japan shall not manufacture, possess or allow the entry into Japan of nuclear weapons.

²⁹⁷ My translation.

²⁹⁸ In depopulated villages, the population has declined, but some local residents have not moved out and are still living with the nuclear power plants, as long as there is no nuclear disaster.

nuclear power was a result of promoting the principle of high efficiency first in male-dominated society... Broadly speaking, the disaster was a result of promoting only scientific development and leaving behind others such as depopulated villages and the weak... Problems in male-dominated society, criticised by the *Lib*, have finally been embodied in the disaster. These problems with the national energy policy and social structures should be reconsidered from women's viewpoints... This can be a restarting point for feminism to develop itself, both theoretically and practically. (Inoue)

Scientific development is a central national project in many modern states, through which they can show off their technology, national prestige and wealth. This has brought about keen competition among nations today. On the other hand, as Inoue pointed out, it is true that this has left the weak behind, such as the remaining residents of depopulated villages. Since Japan first became successful in generating electricity with nuclear power in 1963 under the national policy, electric power companies have been encouraged to build nuclear power plants in the countryside. Currently, all 48 nuclear reactors, which generate about 30% of Japan's electricity, are located in the countryside, especially in depopulated villages facing the sea, servicing large cities (Japan Atomic Industrial Forum 2014). For example, despite a distance of approximately 230 km between them, Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant had supplied electricity to Tokyo and neighbouring prefectures until the disaster. In many cases, local people initially campaigned against the building of nuclear power stations, but they finally accepted them (Kainuma 2011). Kainuma (2011) suggests that the reason why the residents of depopulated villages decided to accept the plants is deeply connected with the colonial power structure within Japan – city versus countryside. Thus, by marginalising the countryside as backward, cities have colonially conquered it. On the other hand, it is interesting to note that the countryside takes pride in supplying electricity to cities. According to Kainuma (2011), during the rapid growth of the Japanese economy from 1955 to 1973, when the project of building nuclear power plants started, cities were actually developed, whereas the countryside was being left behind and becoming depopulated, which led country people to view cities negatively. Under these circumstances, supplying electricity to cities was the best way for the countryside to confront cities from a position of strength. In short, the countryside put cities in their debt. Country people could feel proud that cities could not be kept going without the countryside's support (Kainuma 2011). In compensation, the local governments of the depopulated villages in which nuclear power plants are located earn grants from the Japanese government. These grants and fixed property tax from the plants

were reduced as time went on, but the villages continued to depend on the plants financially. About one-third to one-quarter of households in the villages are employed by the plants or related companies, and thousands of workers flow into the villages in order to run maintenance checks on the plants. Restaurants, hotels and various shops are doing good business. Residents of the village in which Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant is located seemed to be perfectly happy before the disaster (Kainuma 2011). Since the nuclear disaster, people have become fearful of nuclear power, but people living with the danger of radiation in other villages still depend heavily on the plants. ‘The villages are addicted to the nuclear power plants’²⁹⁹ (Kainuma 2011: 357). While they are marginalised and controlled through a carrot-and-stick policy, they can no longer escape, which indicates that the danger of radiation has been foisted upon them.

As Inoue maintained, scientific development’s tendency to leave the weak behind was already being criticised by the *Lib*. Tanaka (1995: 346) notes that the great respect for productivity based on an ‘uncritical positive evaluation of science and technology’ was brought about by the rapid growth of the Japanese economy. With this logic of productivity, women, the disabled and the aged are regarded negatively as being less productive than men in economic terms. Like these groups, rural villages are also devalued. The *Lib* attacked this logic of productivity (Tanaka 1995). According to Inoue, this criticism can also be applied to the current disaster and might have the potential to revitalise feminism.

Nuclear energy is not necessarily viewed in terms of modern power by everyone. Sechiyama suggested that nuclear power was neither a women’s issue nor a symbol of modern power, because all people, including feminists, enjoy the benefits of nuclear energy, which has become today’s essential ecological energy, able to make a contribution towards measures against global warming.

I doubt if there is a theoretical necessity to link nuclear issues with feminism. I think that some women agree with the policy of nuclear power. In France, there might be many feminists supporting nuclear energy... People actually enjoy nuclear energy. If we did not have nuclear energy, it would be extremely hard to solve the problem of global warming... Nuclear power is a product of scientific technology, but I doubt whether this is a symbol of power... How

²⁹⁹ My translation.

about the space shuttle? Probably, the most complicated machine in the world is the space shuttle. Is this shuttle a symbol of power? (Sechiyama)

I partially agree with Sechiyama's counterargument. There are various different feminist ideas, so there might be feminist supporters of nuclear power. In fact, women in Japan, including feminists, supported nuclear power for peaceful use during the post-war period (see previous section). The idea that nuclear energy can help to combat the global warming problem is understandable, too. However, Sechiyama's view that nuclear power issues are not related to feminism seemingly leaves room for doubt. Scientific development, controlled by men, was actually criticised by the *Lib*, as Inoue witnessed. Besides, women's campaigning against nuclear power in Japan often emphasises their *bosei*, with the attendant responsibility to protect their children from danger. I view these as important issues for feminism. Sechiyama also questioned whether nuclear power and the space shuttle, both of which are advanced scientific technologies, are symbols of political power. However, I argue that both of these are embodiments of national power in scientific development. Like the arms race, the space race is an international competition, in which national prestige is at stake (Sturdevant and Orndorff 2009). In the case of the space race, this was triggered by the Soviet Union's successful launch of the world's first artificial satellite 'Sputnik 1' in 1957. As Allen (2009: xii) maintains, this Soviet success shocked Americans, 'disturbing their sense of national pride and self-identity as well as their perceived position as world leaders.' In 1958, America founded the National Aeronautics and Space Administration in rivalry with the Soviet Union, and in 1969 it was finally successful in achieving the first mission to land a man on the moon in the Apollo Project. Especially during the Cold War, there was a strong sense of rivalry in the space race in order to display national power. After the Cold War, several other countries, including Japan, entered the race. The number of rockets that were successfully launched from 1957 to August 2011 was: Russia (including the Soviet Union) 2,851, America 1,394, Europe 203, China 140, Japan 74 (Japan Science and Technology Agency 2011). The space race seems not to have ended. On the other hand, the space shuttle and nuclear power also have different elements. Rocket technology can be applied to missiles, but nuclear power kills people in cases of unforeseen accidents, even during peaceful use, and can be transformed into weapons of mass murder.

In the argument about the principle of 'high efficiency first' in scientific development, Inoue focused on the nuclear disaster and highlighted the weak, such as the remaining inhabitants of depopulated villages, whereas Kano, a survivor of the atomic bombing of

Hiroshima, focused in particular on the link between nuclear weapons and nuclear energy. She argued that rationalism in modernisation had regarded women as being less valuable.

The reason why peaceful use of nuclear power was emphasised was that the original aim of developing nuclear power was to build up the country's military strength, which was an instrument to slaughter people and destroy everything... I view a nuclear power as the ultimate in the principle of high efficiency first under modernisation. This is irreconcilable with feminism as well as with women... The weak... women are seen as being physically much less productive than men... Therefore, I argue that the essence of nuclear power is poles apart from the existence of women. Peace movements in the post-war era such as the campaign against atomic and hydrogen bombs finally accepted peaceful uses of nuclear power, because they could not overcome this modern logic of high efficiency first. This was criticised by student activists in the end of 1960s and the *Lib* in the 1970s. (Kano)

Kano began her argument by expressing her anger against the nuclear weapons created by 'high efficiency first'. As Kano argued, 'high efficiency first' is one of the essential principles of modernisation as well as industrialisation, capitalism, democracy and rationalisation. This principle is widely applied to anything, even if it is a weapon on the battlefield. By way of example, Kano also referred to an article that appeared in an American newspaper in August 1945, which made an impact on her, that reported how efficient the destructive power of the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima was. I was motivated by her to seek out this article. In the headline on the front page of *The New York Times* on 7 August 1945, which was the day following the attack on Hiroshima, Shalett (1945: 1) reports, 'First Atomic Bomb Dropped on Japan; Missile is Equal to 20,000 Tons of TNT';³⁰⁰ Truman Warns Foe of a "Rain of Ruin". In this article, the power of the atomic bomb was also described in detail as 'a destructive force equal to the load of 2,000 B-29's and more than 2,000 times the blast power of what previously was the world's most devastating bomb' (Shalett 1945: 1), which emphasises hitherto unimaginable efficiency. The atomic bombs were 'the ultimate weapon of controlling power' created by 'the excellence of rational and scientific thinking' (Hierro 1994: 179).

As Kano pointed out, viewed from this angle of efficiency, even humans tend to be categorised into superior or inferior in economic terms. This logic of productivity devalues

³⁰⁰ One ton of TNT (trinitrotoluene) is a unit of energy.

not only the disabled and old people, but also women, because of their reproduction, which keeps them away from the labour market. In a similar vein, Gearhart (1983) argues that women's reproductive function is opposed to the rationalisation of scientific development. For example, a woman's capacity to have a baby in nine months does not translate into the capacity of nine women to have a baby in one month (Gearhart 1983). Reproductive processes cannot be rationalised, made bigger and faster. Wallsgrove (1980: 229) points out, too, that science, dominated by men, is power and 'The philosophy of our age is scientific rationalism, and it is clearly masculine. It is objective, logical, independent, brave... rationality and its ultimate refinement, science, are undeniably masculine.' In such accounts, women are seen as excluded from the development of super technology (Bergom-Larsson 1982).

There are also positive views of women's reproductive capacity that contrast with weaponry. One perspective is that women are naturally peaceful. One maternalist thinker, Ruddick (1989), argues that the important ideals of making nonviolent peace – renunciation of violence and weapons, resistance to violence, reconciliation with others, and peacekeeping – are inherent in many practices of mothering. In other words, childbearing and childrearing, associated with respect for life, are potentially governed by these ideals of peacemaking. In eco-feminism, which views military technology as the product of a patriarchal culture that 'speaks violence at every level' (King 1983: 126), the identification of women with nature is celebrated. The biological capacity of women to reproduce is seen as connected to 'an innate selflessness born of their responsibility for ensuring the continuity of life... Conversely, men's inability to give birth has made them disrespectful of human and natural life, resulting in war and ecological disasters' (Wajcman 2000: 6–7). In either case, whether women's reproduction is viewed negatively or positively, it is clear that womanhood is often seen as inconsistent with weaponry.

On the other hand, this maternalistic argument that women are associated with peace implies a binary logic: woman/man, peace/war and nature/culture, which is criticised by equality feminists, who argue that women should be accepted into armies on equal terms with men. From their point of view, this dualism is the cause of gender inequality. Segal (1982) argues that women's exclusion from the armed forces means an exclusion from full citizenship, including equal rights and social responsibilities. At the same time, dualism justifies gender divisions, which reinforce women's subordination and dependency. 'Thus, it has worked to block the development of women's full humanity' (Stoper and Johnson

1977: 217). This indicates that women's association with peace is caught in a dilemma of dualism.

Additionally, it is historically clear that women are not always pacifists. Sechiyama gave an example of women's patriotism during wartime and set forward a counterargument to women's association with peace.

Basically, I don't think that women are pacifists. There were actually women's patriotic organisations such as the Society for National Defence.³⁰¹ Women have not necessarily been against wars. (Sechiyama)

It is a historical fact that all women, except single women under 20 years old, were compelled to participate in a national patriotic group, the Great Japan Women's Association, founded in 1942, under the umbrella of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association during wartime (see Chapter 1). As Sechiyama argued, this women's patriotism should not be disregarded. The basis of their patriotic activities was maternalism, which motivated them to devote themselves to domestic work and reproducing the next generation in order to contribute to the state.

After the war, as the Japanese economy developed, women's self-sacrificing domestic work under maternalism came to depend on efficient household appliances. Kano (2012a and b) also directs her attention to the relation between women and domestic technology, and argues that home electrical appliances came to symbolise atomic power for peace since the middle of the 1950s, especially after 1953, when the first television broadcasts started in Japan, and the Korean War was suspended, encouraging the expansion of domestic demand in commercialism. In the same year, Dwight Eisenhower, President of America, officially gave a speech entitled 'Atoms for Peace' at the general meeting of the United Nations. In those days, most of Japan's electricity depended on water-power generation, 78.7% in 1955 (Power Academy). Some women's groups started a drive to raise funds in order to support the construction of hydroelectric dams. One of the leaders of these women's organisations, Koto Usui (1953: 264) writes, 'What we really want is a washing machine and refrigerator. If we have them, we can save time and enjoy our own time.'³⁰² Women's dream of being liberated from domestic work by having household appliances led them to support hydroelectricity. Subsequently, their interests shifted to nuclear energy, because under the national policy, the advantages of nuclear energy were advertised by the

³⁰¹ The Society for National Defence was a women's organisation, founded in 1932, whose trademark was white aprons. In 1942, it was integrated into the Great Japan Women's Association. See Chapter 1.

³⁰² My translation.

Japanese government and media. A national newspaper, *Yomiuri Newspaper*, campaigned for nuclear energy in the mid-1950s (Igawa 2002), saying ‘Nuclear power contributes to growing vegetables, medical treatment for cancer, lights, big ships and airplanes... Peaceful use of nuclear energy gives the young generation a dream of happiness’,³⁰³ ‘Women, do not be afraid of nuclear energy’³⁰⁴ (*Yomiuri Newspaper* January 1956a). Additionally, the low cost of power generation attracted people.

However, women’s dream of liberation from housework has not been fulfilled by technology. Rothschild (1983: 86) argues that technology for the household which eases the burdens of housework is certainly considered to be useful ‘goodies’, but does not liberate women from their gendered position as housewives. Rather, technology has made ‘a patriarchal political order’ secure in order to justify the gender division, and has contributed to women’s financial dependency (Rothschild 1983: 80). Furthermore, Jackson (1992) argues that advanced technology has not materially shrunk chores. Far from it, expectations of women’s performance with the advance of technology has become higher than before. Indeed, in the UK working-class people used to wash their clothes weekly until washing machines spread, but now women habitually do the washing every day in this age of technology as people change their clothes more often (Jackson 1992). Women are encouraged to perform their tasks more often. Spare time saved by using home electrical appliances is also simply spent on other tasks such as better housewifery and childcare. While ready meals and convenience cookers have saved time from cooking, women have to spend more time on food shopping (see, for example, Jackson 1992). Thus, women’s dream of being free from housekeeping by enjoying household technology is merely an illusion.

Nuclear power has various aspects as a symbol of modern power. One of these, I found in the arguments of my participants, was as a source of wealth within capitalism and national prosperity, securing technology for manufacturing weapons. This indicates that Japan has a strong ambition to be successful and watches vigilantly for a chance to independent from America and achieve the status of a world superpower. As Muto (2011) argues, Japan is a nuclear-capable nation. In this context, it is a covert nuclear state, which has arguably been camouflaged by its self-image as a victim nation. The other aspect was the principle of modernisation, ‘high efficiency first’, which left the weak behind. This maternalist view that women and rationalism are mutually exclusive perpetuates the binary logic of

³⁰³ My translation.

³⁰⁴ My translation.

women's essential differences, but maternalism has actually been prominent in women's activism in Japan.

7-3 Maternalist Activism and the Weakness of Eco-Feminism

Since the Fukushima accident, the nuclear phase-out movement has become the overwhelming mainstream in Japan and even women who were not previously activists have stood up and taken action against nuclear power. Their self-definitions are often directly represented by their group names or campaign titles. One of these pieces of women's activism, 'The Sit-Down Strike Demonstration for Ten Months and Ten Days',³⁰⁵ in which women staged a sit-in in front of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan, which supervises the nuclear industry, consciously stressed women's reproductive capacity and the preciousness of life by using the words 'Ten Months and Ten Days'. There is also 'The One Million Mothers Project: Towards a Post-Nuclear Age, We Want to Protect Children',³⁰⁶ which has obviously identified itself as maternal, as reproducing life. The nuclear issue continues to be argued through maternalism. However, Kanai argued that unfortunately feminism in Japan no longer had a theoretical basis for approaching the anti-nuclear energy movement. She suggested that the development of eco-feminism had been blocked since the debate between a cultural eco-feminist, Yayoi Aoki (1927–2009), and a Marxist feminist, Ueno, in the mid-1980s about the feminine principle and *bosei*, which characterised eco-feminism.

The reason why Aoki's eco-feminism was defeated was... If eco-feminism had infiltrated Japanese society, in which maternalism is deeply rooted, a store of theoretical criticism of gender divisions might have gone to waste. In Japan, women tend to identify themselves with *bosei*. Thus, there was a fear that this women's maternal identity would be theoretically authorised by conceptual frameworks such as the feminine principle and eco-feminism. Since the debate, eco-feminism, which should be the basis of anti-nuclear power movements, has not been developed in Japan. The impact of green politics is extremely weak in Japan, too. That is why current anti-nuclear movements have not easily made any progress. (Kanai)

³⁰⁵ My translation. The phrase 'ten months and ten days' means the period of pregnancy. This is incorrect in medical science, but the expression is often used in Japan because it sounds pleasant. See also Chapter 6.

³⁰⁶ My translation.

This was a major event, widely known as ‘the debate between Aoki and Ueno’, in which Aoki promoted the cultural concept of the female principle, derived from Illich’s work on gender. Aoki (1983, 1994: 195) celebrates the female principle that indicates the pre-modern view of nature, such as ‘Mother Earth’,³⁰⁷ a partner for ‘Father Sky’,³⁰⁸ identifying women’s reproductive capacity with nature. Thus, her concept of gender consists of binary elements which should be kept in balance. In order to stay balanced, Aoki (1983) aims to revalorise the female principle, which she claims has been looked down on by the male principle. In opposition to Aoki, Ueno (1986b), who started the debate, criticises Illich’s concept of gender, because dualism always entails asymmetry and hierarch. Briefly, his binary logic of complementarity never goes beyond the bounds of a social structure dominated by men. Ueno (1986b) then argues that Aoki’s view of gender is dualistic. A key issue here is *bosei*, and this debate between Aoki and Ueno is reminiscent of the debates about *bosei* during the Taisho period (Nishikawa 1997), a topic that has often been discussed by feminists since the early modernisation period (see Chapters 1, 2 and 3). As a result of the debate, eco-feminism came to be regarded as a dangerous idea revitalising anti-modernism and deep-seated maternalism in Japan (Morioka 1995). Since this debate, eco-feminist arguments have hardly been seen in feminism in Japan, especially since Aoki passed away in 2009. As Kanai pointed out, this might have resulted in the weak theoretical basis of the anti-nuclear movement within feminism.

Such criticisms of eco-feminism also emerged in other countries, although its history seemed to be very promising. One foundational eco-feminist text, Susan Griffin’s *Women and Nature: The Roaring inside Her* (1984) explores how the feminised position of women, nature and animals has been regarded as inferior by the male-dominated social order for the purpose of justifying their subordination. ‘It is decided that the nature of woman is passive, that she is a vessel waiting to be filled... And it is observed that woman is less evolved than man. Men and women differ as much, it is observed, as plants and animals do’ (Griffin 1984: 5 and 26). This work predates current gender studies. At the same time, Griffin (1984: 219) identifies women with nature and celebrates the sense of unity between them such as ‘The earth is my sister; I love her daily grace... we are stunned by this beauty, and I do not forget: what she is to me, what I am to her.’ Another essential text in the early stages, Carolyn Merchant’s *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology and the Scientific Revolution* (1982), combines ecology and socialist feminism to reveal that the domination of women and nature have shared roots in the logic of capitalism and the

³⁰⁷ My translation.

³⁰⁸ My translation.

development of science. These new approaches linking to anti-militarism and energy issues were introduced into feminist activism during the 1980s, which encouraged women to participate in the peace, anti-nuclear and ecology campaigns. Many expected that eco-feminism would become the third wave of feminism (Gaard 2011).

Indeed, eco-feminism against nuclear weapons made an enormous impact on women's activism. In 1981 in the UK, the anti-nuclear weaponry campaign emerged, the beginning of which was that 36 women marched from Cardiff, Wales, to America's military base for cruise missiles at Greenham Common,³⁰⁹ Berkshire. They then set up camp outside the base and stayed there until 2000 in order to ward off the installation of missiles. During that period, their principles, such as being women-only, anti-hierarchical and respecting diversity were created, and participation in the camp expanded. In 1982, 30,000 women 'joined hands in the world's most powerful protest against nuclear war' (Liddington 1991, in Kent 1993). The theoretical basis of this remarkable development of the campaign was eco-feminism. According to Roseneil (1995), eco-feminist writers such as Mary Daly (1979) and Griffin (1984) were widely read by participants at Greenham, and this was central to the foundations of the activism. This influence can also be clearly seen in one aspect of their principles: caring for the environment. The direct experience of living outdoors at Greenham camp without regular refuse collection, running water or sewers encouraged them to realise the importance of environmental issues. In this way, the women-only camp established their political agenda by absorbing eco-feminist ideas. Enloe (2000) observes that this activism also expanded into objections to masculinised militarism in the UK. As a result, Enloe (2000) suggests that the women's political action and efforts at Greenham may have discouraged British feminists from thinking that women should become soldiers in order to become first-class citizens on equal terms with men. This is in contrast to liberal feminism in America, within which an essential political aim is gender equality within the armed forces.

On the other hand, severe criticism of eco-feminism arose. Feminists, particularly poststructuralists, criticised eco-feminism for making the extremely essentialist equation between women and nature. Sandilands (1997: 25) argues, 'One of eco-feminism's inheritances from cultural feminism was its tendency towards essentialism.' Latour (2004, in Grebowicz and Merrick 2013) points out, too, that the work of environmental academics and activists, especially deep ecologists, has merely turned the dualism of nature/culture

³⁰⁹ America's military base at Greenham Common also symbolised the militarised partnership between the UK and America, but the base was returned to public use in 1993 after the Cold War.

the other way around. Materialist feminists such as Merchant (1995, in Gaard 2011) argue, too, that relations between biological female sex, femininity and nature should be considered to be cultural and social products. These critiques weakened eco-feminism's wider appeal, so that it was essentially left behind in the 1990s (Gaard 2011). Additionally, women's peace activism, with its emphasis on motherhood or womanhood, came under intense pressure. As Simone de Beauvoir argues in her interview with Schwartz (1983, in Swerdlow 1989: 225), 'Women should desire peace as human beings, not as women. And if they are being encouraged to be pacifists in the name of motherhood, that's just a ruse by men who are trying to lead women back to the womb. Women should absolutely let go of that baggage.'

By contrast with the severe criticism of eco-feminism's essentialist ideas, the emphasis on *bosei* can still often be seen in women's activism around the Fukushima crisis. In response to this situation, in June 2012 a symposium entitled 'Reconsidering Feminism and Mothers: Heterosexuality and Division among Women' was held in Tokyo by the Women's Studies Association of Japan. At this symposium, one of the speakers, Kano (2012e), critically argued that mothers' campaigns are potentially reinforcing binary logic and heterosexism. On the other hand, another speaker, Mizushima (2012), gave an example of a mothers' group that measured radiation in Tokyo and seven neighbouring prefectures, and suggested that this activity could be seen as resistance against scientific technology dominated by patriarchal power. This suggests that maternal activism has the potential to reform male-dominated society. Mizushima (2012) also maintains that mothers' activism has diversified, so that it cannot always be seen as maternalism. In this way, it seems that academic feminism in Japan has realised the need to refocus on maternalism since the nuclear disaster, which could develop and lead feminism into a new phase.

7-4 Whose Responsibility?

Since the disaster, campaigns against nuclear power have been developed and will continue on a long-term basis. It is in the nature of things to want to identify who should take responsibility for the disaster. As a matter of course, the electricity power company and the Japanese government, which has promoted the generation of nuclear energy, should shoulder the responsibility, but Minamoto and Ogoshi argued that Japanese society had barely pursued this serious issue in order to identify who was responsible for the crisis, because of the Emperor system and forgiveness in Buddhist beliefs. These two factors,

relating to the avoidance of responsibility, are the topics of this section. Jung argued that academic feminism in Japan ironically tended to reflect the ideology of the Emperor system in creating a hierarchy of feminists in which no one criticised those at the top. Taken together, these arguments indicate that the Emperor system affects every corner of Japanese society.

7-4-1 The Emperor System

‘Who should take responsibility?’ is a very simple question and also an essential issue. Nevertheless, in both Minamoto and Ogoshi’s arguments, Japan has avoided making it clear where the responsibility lay. One of the two reasons that they pointed out was derived from the Emperor issue. In Minamoto’s opinion, exonerating the Emperor of war guilt still has an impact on Japanese society, resulting in the fact that there are few movements to identify a specific person who should be responsible for this crisis.

Japan does not have the attitude to take responsibility for its faults. For example, Japan has never apologised to former comfort women. While the person responsible for the war was the Emperor, the Japanese could not blame him for it during the post-war era. This has left behind the seeds of future grief. In fact, there are campaigns against nuclear power and movements demanding damages from the electric power company, but I cannot easily find any movements to identify who should take responsibility. It is still unclear who is in charge of the crisis. Although the person in charge should be punished, Japanese people do not identify whose responsibility it is. Japan has never uncovered who is responsible, not only for war guilt but also for all its faults.
(Minamoto)

In the 1889 Constitution of the Empire of Japan, which was effective until the 1947 Constitution of Japan came into force, the Emperor was defined as the head of the Empire who had rights of sovereignty and exercised them (Article 1) and the supreme command of the Army and Navy (Article 11). Nonetheless, the 124th Emperor was exonerated from war guilt at the International Military Tribunal for the Far East in 1946 to 1948, as Minamoto pointed out, although the then Prime Minister and six political leaders during the war were put to death, and eighteen others were found guilty (see Chapter 6). Furthermore, since the 1947 Constitution of Japan came into force, the Emperor has been redefined as the symbol of the State and of the unity of the people (Article 1, see Chapter

1). One of the central duties of the Emperor, who no longer has political power, is to console victims in their sorrow, which visibly embodies his new position. After the war, the starting point of this official duty was visiting all over the country between 1946 and 1954 in order to encourage people who were experiencing difficulties and poverty due to Japan's defeat. From that time on, the Emperor and his wife have always visited victims after serious disasters. In the case of the chain of disasters of the earthquake, tsunami and nuclear crisis on 11 March 2011, the current 125th Emperor exceptionally sent a video message to people via TV five days after the disaster occurred, in which he said that he hoped the victims would survive without losing hope and that other people would help them (in Iwai 2011). After that, the Emperor and his wife visited disaster victims in relief shelters. Some victims who talked with them were moved to tears (Tomioka 2011). Iwai (2011) maintains that these events recall the previous Emperor's announcement of Japan's defeat on the radio on 15 August 1945 and his visits to people during the post-war era. As Kitahara (2012a: 1, 2012b) argues, the representation of the Emperor and his wife is 'prayer and consolation'.³¹⁰ Thus, the fact that the Emperor was a war criminal has been completely obliterated by this merciful image. Nakajima (2011) argues that the Emperor's video message and visit to the shelters succeeded in hiding the extremely important question of who should take responsibility by calming victims' anger. Amano (2011) points out, too, that the Emperor's visit was a stage-managed affair, and argues that victims are needed in order to show the Emperor's benevolence to people. In other words, the Emperor is a symbol of exoneration and a merciful heart, due to the overlooking of his war guilt and the redefinition of his role.

In addition to Minamoto, Ogoshi focused on naturalism, which is seen in the Emperor system, the atomic bombing and the concept of *bosei*. Although they were intentionally created, their naturalism has concealed the responsible agent.

People making up the core of society, including politicians and academics, should take responsibility for socially disadvantaged people's lives but they do not realise their responsibilities... In short, a concept of responsibility is lacking... Of course, the primary cause is the Emperor system. To put it concretely, Japan has never taken responsibility for the comfort women issue and has disgraced itself in public internationally, but Japan has not realised this... A peculiarity common to the three issues – atomic bombing, *bosei* and the Emperor system – is naturalism. When I went to the Atomic Bomb

³¹⁰ My translation.

Museum, I was shocked at the description of the atomic bombing, because it does not say anything about who dropped the bomb. While Japan is a victim, it does not take America to task for the bombing. (Ogoshi)

It is a historical fact that the Emperor system was politically identified with modernisation under the Meiji Constitution. The word *bosei* did not exist in Japanese before it spread through the feminist debate on *bosei* during the Taisho era (Kano [1991] 2009, see Chapter 3), which indicates that a concept of *bosei* was consciously constructed through this argumentation. It is also clear that the atomic bombing was aimed at massacring non-combatants. All of these are obviously intentional, but they are likely to be interpreted through naturalism, resulting in the concealment of conscious intent, responsibility or guilt. Indeed, as in Ogoshi's example, the essential issue: 'Who dropped the atomic bombs on Japan?' tends not to be stated clearly in public. On the official homepage of Nagasaki City (2009b), the front page of the section entitled 'Peace & [the] Atomic Bomb' only illustrates the bombing with phrases such as 'At 11:02 am on August 9, 1945, the sky above Nagasaki was filled by a white flash, and all the clocks stopped...' Who attacked Nagasaki with the bomb is not described at all. On the official website of the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum (2009a), managed by Nagasaki City, the front page only says 'At 11:02 am on August 9, 1945, the explosion of an atomic bomb devastated Nagasaki...' Furthermore, the introduction of the permanent exhibition in the museum does not refer to America's attack. Halfway round the suggested route for visitors, there is a section about the process of the bombing with a display of a life-size model of the Nagasaki atomic bomb, called 'Fat Man', in which the description of America's attack can barely be seen. An official museum leaflet (n.d.a and b) is similar to the website in its structure. I also investigated how the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, managed by Hiroshima City, explains the bombing. According to the official webpage (2011a and b), the introduction of the permanent exhibition in the main hall describes the event in these terms: 'At 8:15 on the morning of August 6, 1945, the world's first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. Almost the entire city was devastated in that single moment at a tremendous cost of thousands of human lives...' There is no explanation of who dropped it. In an annex to the main building, there is barely any account of why America dropped the bomb on Hiroshima. The official leaflet (2011c and 2013) has the same structure; the introduction does not say anything about America and only the guide to displays in the annex refers to America's reasons for the bombing. The fact that these museums do not make any definite statement about the responsible agent might seem to Ogoshi as if they regard the bombing as a natural disaster.

In feminism, naturalism is criticised by materialism. From a materialist viewpoint, although actual social norms, including gender inequality, divisions and hierarchies are products of social practice, naturalism, biologism and essentialism justify these norms as natural without considering why, how or by whom they have been constructed. For example, femininity and masculinity, which are expected of women and men respectively in patriarchal society, are simply interpreted as naturally pre-given characteristics, resulting in the concealment of inequality (Jackson 1996).

This vague attitude towards responsibility, which Minamoto and Ogoshi criticised, can also be seen in the administration of justice. According to *Tokyo Newspaper* (September 2013b) and *Yomiuri Newspaper* (September 2013), the 42 people concerned in the nuclear disaster, including executives of the Tokyo Electric Power Company that managed the Fukushima nuclear power plant, the former Prime Minister and scientists supporting the government in power, had been accused by citizens' and victims' organisations of professional negligence resulting in injury or death. However, on 9 September 2013, after I had interviewed the scholars, the Tokyo District Public Prosecutor's Office of Japan decided not to indict any of these 42 people. In addition, even the Tokyo Electric Power Company, as a corporate organisation, was not prosecuted, because it would have been hard to make a concrete forecast of the tsunami. Thus, all of them have officially escaped criminal liability. In response to this decision, one of complainants' groups, which involves about 14,000 people, made an application to file an objection to the board of review in October 2013 (Complainants for Criminal Prosecution of the Fukushima Nuclear Disaster 2015), but it is likely to be difficult to identify the relation of cause and effect between individual responsibility and the crisis (Yanagita 2013). As Yanagita (2013) suggests, Japan should discuss and introduce corporate crime, as in the UK's Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007. Moreover, these negative reflections of the Emperor system – exonerating him from war guilt, and its naturalism – are arguably undeniable facts, which should be wiped out. Otherwise, this situation where nobody takes responsibility for disasters might continue.

During the interviews, other participants also referred to the Emperor issue in various contexts. From their viewpoints, the Emperor system is not only implicated in the issue of responsibility, but it also raises various issues for feminism such as patriarchy and gender discrimination (Suzuki and Minamoto), *koseki*³¹¹ (Ito), the family-state ideology upholding

³¹¹ Only people who have Japanese nationality are officially registered under *koseki*, but the Imperial Family is not registered. Thus, *koseki* is also a system which distinguishes between ordinary Japanese people and the Imperial Family. See Chapter 5.

the Emperor supported by *koseki* (Jung), a symbol of the *ie* system³¹² (Inoue and Minamoto) and nationalism (Ehara). The Emperor's wife is also expected to give birth to baby boys as successors (Amano), which puts a lot of pressure on her. Despite these complicated issues, it seems that the Emperor system has become more stable since the Fukushima crisis, as a result of the Imperial family's visits to victims. Similarly, it is seen that the Self-Defence Forces of Japan³¹³ have been greatly admired because of their rescue work since the disaster (Ogoshi 2013). Thus, I argue that the impression of self-sacrifice reported by the media has secured their status and reinforced nationalism.

Jung also pointed out that the Emperor system encouraged deference to authority. She argued that academic feminism had the same hierarchical logic, in which counterarguments to a famous feminist known as 'the Emperor' are taboo.

The Emperor system... has pressured people into not going against persons of power. This has been internalised by Japanese people. People who revolted against the Emperor used to be arrested under *lèse majesté*³¹⁴... As a result of the idea that people should defer to authority, they also hesitate to go against their bosses at the office or their husbands at home... Feminism has the same structure. It is actually said 'The Emperor Ueno'... Ueno's arguments tend to be unconditionally respected... I do not think that Ueno is an oppressor.

Raising her up as the Emperor is the problem... I suggest that the infiltration of such a system into feminism is a particular characteristic of feminism in Japan... As long as the Emperor system is preserved, it will be impossible for feminism to achieve its aims. However, people in Japan do not try to abolish either the Emperor system or *koseki*. On this point, feminism in Japan is wrong.
(Jung)

There is controversy about whether the Emperor system is needed, but going against the Emperor is still taboo in general. It is argued that this taboo can be used to discourage people from objecting to persons at the top of the hierarchy. However, it is ironic to note that this logic can be seen in the relations among feminists, which obviously indicates that the impact of the Emperor system has permeated the entirety of Japanese society. Such a situation seems strange to Jung, especially in comparison with her roots: South Korea no

³¹² See Chapters 1, 3 and 5.

³¹³ There is no end to the controversy concerning whether or not the Self-Defence Force is a breach of Article 9 of the Constitution proclaiming the eternal renunciation of war.

³¹⁴ *Lèse majesté* was abolished in 1947.

longer has an Emperor³¹⁵ and it abolished the family register system in favour of individual registration in 2008 (see Chapter 5). Her criticism touches a sore spot of feminism in Japan.

7-4-2 Forgiveness in Buddhist Belief

The other reason why the question of responsibility tends not to be pursued is forgiveness in Buddhist belief. Ogoshi and Minamoto focused on the teachings of Shinran (1173–1262), the founder of the *Jodo-Shin* (True Pure Land) sect in Japan, especially a typical episode in the biographies of Shinran that illustrates forgiveness, called *Nyobon-no-Mukoku* (see Chapter 6). Ogoshi argued that under his doctrine, all guilt was exonerated by Amitabha,³¹⁶ and this discouraged people from denouncing those who should take responsibility. She then demonstrated that the idea for comfort women in wartime had been based on *Nyobon-no-Mukoku*.

What Japan does not have is a responsibility structure. The lack of a system of responsibility can also be seen in the Fukushima nuclear disaster. The reason for this is derived from the Japanese way of thinking... In Shinran's teachings, such as *Akunin-Shoki*,³¹⁷ Amitabha forgives any guilt... evil people can attain Amitabha's salvation... by realising their own evils. People generally understand so... In this way of thinking, concepts of responsibility and justice cannot be seen at all, which denies an ethics that takes a responsible person to task... There is an episode *Nyobon-no-Mukoku* in Shinran's teachings. As this episode indicates, sexual violence against women and men's evil sexual desire are forgiven by Amitabha in his teachings, from which the idea about comfort women is derived. (Ogoshi)

Shinran is one of the best-known Buddhist monks in Japan. Various books and novels have been published, including a best-seller describing his life and teachings, which indicates that he is a popular man. As Ogoshi argued, it is thought that the ideas of *Akunin-Shoki* and *Nyobon-no-Mukoku* have exerted an important influence on Japanese consciousness.

³¹⁵ Under the 1910 Japan-Korea Annexation Treaty, Korea was under the rule of Japan until 1945.

³¹⁶ Amitabha is the principal icon of some Buddhist sects including the *Jodo-Shin* sect. In this belief, Amitabha presides over the land of Perfect Bliss.

³¹⁷ *Akunin-Shoki* is a significant doctrine in the *Jodo-Shin* sect, which indicates that evil people are the central object of Amitabha's salvation.

In the case of Minamoto's argument, which is based on her study of the Bodhisattva of Mercy in *Nyobon-no-Mukoku*, salvation in Buddhism is maternal forgiveness that only follows men's own convenience.

I have published books about the Bodhisattva of Mercy. In this belief, *bosei* makes all guilt invisible and forgives all, which discourages people from taking responsible agents to task. As a result, the people who benefit are the rulers.

(Minamoto)

Just as scholars see *bosei* as an issue central to feminism in Japan (see Chapters 2, 3 and 5), *bosei* is also a key issue in Minamoto's view. According to Minamoto (1990), in ancient Buddhist belief, women cannot attain salvation because female sexuality is regarded as being unclean, but there are two ways, as well as *Henjo-Nanshi*,³¹⁸ for women to give up their sexuality and obtain salvation. One of them is to become a nun. The other is to ensure that their sons become high-ranking monks. Mothers who are successful in this way are held in high regard, resulting in great respect for *bosei*. Critically, Minamoto (1990) argues that this belief forces women to become ideal mothers who devote themselves to their sons, so that these self-sacrificing mothers came to be seen as merciful mothers who give salvation. Minamoto (1990) also argues that this idea has had an influence on the cult of the Bodhisattva of Mercy,³¹⁹ namely feminisation of the image of the originally gender neutral. In *Nyobon-no-Mukoku*, despite the prohibition on sexual intercourse for Buddhist monks in those days, the Bodhisattva of Mercy transforms into a woman, satisfies Shinran's sexual desire, protects him as long as he lives, and guides him to the Land of Perfect Bliss when he dies. It should be especially noted that during this process the Bodhisattva of Mercy retransforms from a woman into a mother after the sexual intercourse, and then forgives and protects him. Thus, Minamoto (1990) argues that an ideal image of *bosei* is a merciful mother, which symbolises forgiveness. In other words, by praising *bosei* and gendering forgiveness, the expectation of women to be merciful has been justified. In fact, after *Nyobon-no-Mukoku*, Shinran actually married a woman, on the pretext of sexual intercourse with the incarnation of the Bodhisattva of Mercy (Minamoto 1990).

Gendering forgiveness can be seen not only in Buddhism, but also in other cultures.

Norlock (2009) argues that gender is essential to the practice of forgiveness in present-day

³¹⁸ See Chapter 5.

³¹⁹ It is believed that the Bodhisattva of Mercy, who does not have the distinction of sex, can transform into anybody in order to grant people's requests.

Western cultures, and that women are expected to forgive more than men are. Indeed, in a national survey among 381 mental health counsellors in America, women were more likely to value the process of forgiveness in order to build good relationships and to believe that they should forgive to heal. By contrast, it was extremely hard for men to see forgiveness as a central path to successful relationships (Konstam, Chernoff and Deveney 2001). Such a gender difference can also be seen in other behaviour. According to a survey conducted among adolescents in Finland, girls were more likely to feel guilt and shame than boys were (Silfver 2007). In another study of apology behaviour, women tended to rate offences as more severe and to apologise more frequently than men (Schumann and Ross 2010). Engel (2001, in Schumann and Ross 2010: 1649) suggests that, for men, apology means admitting wrongdoing, namely 'losing a power struggle', which damages their 'delicate egos'. As Minamoto claimed, this has followed only men's convenience. It can be argued that these gender differences are culturally and socially constructed in order to maintain male dominance.

7-5 Conclusion

I view the Fukushima disaster as the third turning point for Japan, following the Meiji Restoration in 1868 and the atomic bombing in 1945, because the nuclear crisis at Fukushima has exposed the serious risks of nuclear energy, which people had hardly been conscious about until then because of their enjoyment of the energy. This historical disaster, which was triggered by an unexpected massive earthquake and tsunami, has thus produced a remarkable change in Japanese society, causing it to become more conservative. In a word, this is the rise of nationalism. The overseas media reported that survivors helped each other, kept calm and maintained social order (see Chapter 6); collectivist ties of family and community are actually essential for them to rely on. Within Japan, the word 'ties' was also frequently used, not only by the media but also by the people, as though it was a national slogan after this disaster, but the praise of family ties seems to me to revitalise the former notion of the family-state³²⁰ as well as the *ie* system,³²¹ at the top of which was the Emperor. In addition, the fact that the Emperor and his family visited and consoled survivors in their sorrow has arguably impressed people with the necessity of the Emperor system. Likewise, the Self-Defence Forces, which rescued

³²⁰ See Chapter 1.

³²¹ See Chapters 1, 3 and 5.

victims, made a favourable impression on people. In the domestic administration, a conservative political party, the Liberal Democratic Party, which promotes nuclear power policy, was elected to office in December 2012. In diplomatic terms, it seems that the longstanding friendship with America has been emphasised afresh by Operation *Tomodachi* (Friend) by the US Forces in Japan,³²² which immediately sent 24,500 soldiers into the disaster-stricken areas in order to search for the missing and supply food after the disaster occurred (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan 2011). Akimoto (2011) argues that this quick and efficient response to the crisis with a high level of competence not only encouraged Japanese people to realise the importance of the Japan-US alliance, but also ‘clearly demonstrated to neighbouring countries the mutual confidence in the Japan-US Security Treaty agreement and the capabilities of forward deployed American Forces.’ These responses to the disaster have internalised political expectations. This trend of becoming more conservative, rising nationalism and the strengthening of Japan-US relations are arguably opposed to feminism.

Furthermore, this disastrous crisis raised essential issues for feminism. The scholars in my study viewed the atomic bomb as a symbol of Japan’s self-identity as a victim nation, which has been conveniently used in various places and has led to Japan’s failure to accept war guilt. I also found that atomic issues became feminised during the post-war era, which emphasised victimisation. This suggests a reason as to why the campaigns in favour of nuclear energy and against nuclear weapons were compatible with each other. The other symbolism was power, such as wealth in capitalism and the principle of ‘high efficiency first’, under which modernisation devalues the weak, including women. In women’s activism, the anti-nuclear campaign emphasising *bosei* has continued, but it is argued that, since eco-feminism’s defeat in the debate, feminism has not had an adequate theoretical base for supporting this movement. Additionally, movements to identify who should take responsibility for the radiation accident seem not to be so active, over which exonerating the Emperor for war guilt, naturalism and forgiveness in Buddhist belief might have cast a dark shadow. I argue that the Emperor system particularly is the core of the symbolism in terms of its impact on other issues, such as where the responsibility lies. With the Fukushima crisis so central to world history, feminism in Japan is also at a historical turning point.

³²² US Forces have been stationed in Japan since the post-war period under the Japan-US Status of Forces Agreement, concluded in 1960, which replaced the 1952 Japan-US Administrative Agreement. Under this Agreement, about 50,000 soldiers of the US Forces and their families, about 44,000 people, live in Japan, as of January 2008 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan 2008).

Conclusion

As this research progressed, I became excited at the findings, because they confirmed my view that feminism in Japan has been influenced by culture, history, politics and religion. They also begin to explain my personal experience of culture shock when I discovered that my feminism was different from that of others (see Introduction). Why did I feel that my motivation to discuss race and class seemed to be lower than that of others? Why was I shocked at the different concepts of women's rights? I have clearly realised that these personal questions, which were the starting point of this research, reflected various cultural differences from others. Thus, I have been imbued with my own culture just as much as the Muslim women; realising this enabled me to be more critical of my own culture.

Throughout this thesis, I have also realised that in the 150 years of modernisation, various events influenced Japan's path, such as the 1868 Meiji Restoration, imperialism, the atomic bombing, defeat in the Second World War and remarkable economic growth during the post-war era (see Chapter 1). In this process, Japan also became the first non-Western developed country. Against the background of these historical events, I found that the certain issues influencing feminism in Japan were repeatedly discussed as significant factors by participants: Confucianism in East Asia; the Emperor system; the *ie* system; *bosei*; Shintoism and Buddhism; being the only atomic-bombed nation. Interestingly, all these issues have a supportive connection with patriarchy and, what is more, they coil themselves around the Emperor issue. This indicates that feminism has engaged in a tough struggle against patriarchy, which is deeply ingrained in Japanese society.

Tough Struggle against Patriarchy

Looking back over my data, aspects of patriarchy can be seen in various places. As an East Asian culture, Confucian patriarchy needs to receive special attention (see Chapters 1, 3 and 5). Within the teachings and norms dictating that people should respect their ancestors and give precedence to elders, women are expected to be subordinate to men and have a son as a successor to the family line (see Chapter 3). Controlling women's reproductive capacity in order to preserve this patriarchal familism is a gross infringement of women's rights, but my data suggest that East Asian societies tend to think little of this issue.

Ironically, this negative impact also seems to be reflected in the lack of interest of most feminists in Japan in reproductive health and rights, in comparison with Western feminists (see Chapter 6). In terms of this weakness, feminism in Japan has arguably been drawn into Confucian views of women.

During the early period of modernisation, loyalty and filial piety in Confucianism were conveniently fused together and applied to the family-state ideology upholding the Emperor as the head of state, which was legally embodied as the *ie* system under the old Civil Law. Thus, there was an artificial unity between nationalism and familism (see Chapter 1). Even though the *ie* system was formally abolished in the post-war era, this patriarchal familism still works by maintaining the family register system, *koseki* (see Chapter 5). In terms of supporting gender divisions, *bosei* can also be considered one of the essential elements of patriarchy. The *bosei* ideology was used politically during the pre-war period and wartime in order to encourage women to contribute to the state through child-rearing, supporting imperialism under the command of the Emperor. On the other hand, women secured their positions in the private and public spheres by emphasising *bosei*, which can still be seen in various places, including the women's peace movement (see Chapters 1, 3, 5 and 7). That feminist debates on *bosei*, including the discussion about housewives after the war, have intermittently continued since the Taisho period also indicates that *bosei* is one of the greatest concerns for feminists in Japan (see Chapter 2). Patriarchy in religion has an impact on society, too. In both Shintoism and Buddhism, women are regarded as being unclean, which clearly indicates the patriarchal idea that men have spiritual superiority over women (see Chapter 5). These religions also maintain close ties with the Emperor system. In Shintoism, it is said that the Emperor is a direct descendant of the major goddess of the sun, *Amaterasu-Omikami*, who is worshipped at the Ise Grand Shrine in Mie, Japan. Additionally, the principle of harmony, namely *wa*, in both Buddhism and Confucianism has been seen as a foundation of collectivism in Japan, the original aim of which, in the early seventh century, was to build a hierarchical order with the Emperor as the head of state (see Chapter 6). Yet, this principle has also been identified as a recently invented tradition in connection with nationalism, in which the spirit of *wa* was interpreted as 'the importance of national integration under the emperor' during the Second World War (Ito 1998: 40, see Chapter 6). Furthermore, Japan is the only atomic-bombed nation, and I discussed its self-identity as a victim, in which the emphasis on victimisation makes the country's war guilt invisible. Feminists who had led fascist women's activities during the pre-war era and wartime also emphasised that they were victims, with the result that they did not pursue the issue of the Emperor's war guilt. In this

way, mainstream feminism during the post-war era took advantage of Japan's status as the only atomic-bombed nation in order to protect itself (see Chapters 3 and 7). In the interviews, there were also arguments that nuclear power, including atomic weapons, was a symbol of modern power in a male-dominated society, leaving behind the weak, including women. On the other hand, there was a counterargument about women's association with peace, given their patriotic activities during the pre-war era and wartime (see Chapter 7). The focus on *bosei* as a key issue has always led to arguments about essentialism among feminists in Japan. In these ways, patriarchy persists unabated in society, although feminism has struggled furiously against it.

At the same time, I found that the impact of patriarchy had cast a shadow over feminism in Japan, against which the weaknesses of feminism in relation to minority issues stood out (see Chapter 5). One of these was ethnocentrism tied to colonialism under the command of the Emperor, which indicates that, even 70 years after the war, Japan has hardly let go of colonialism. Japan has fewer ethnic minorities than other countries which are more accepting of immigrants, and Jung challenged this ethnocentric feminism in Japan, which is similar to the relation between black feminism and white Western feminism (see Chapters 5 and 6). According to Jackson (1998), essential issues in feminism, such as female oppression, were predominantly analysed during the 1970s by white feminists from their own perspectives. Black and minority ethnic women, as well as Third World women, who were excluded from this analysis, lodged objections against white feminisms. My awareness of ethnocentrism, including Jung's challenge to Japanese feminists, especially stimulated me to examine myself, because this could help to explain why my interest in racism had been lower than that of others. I then realised that I might have been unconsciously ethnocentric. Another weak point, heterosexism, is an essential element supporting patriarchal familism, too, and in my view a national symbol of this is the Imperial Family. In Japan, mainstream feminism during the pre-war period was 'imperialist feminism' (Suzuki 2001: 32, 2002: 113, see Chapter 3) and current feminism's attack on imperialism seems to be insufficient. In terms of these shortcomings, it might be possible to say that feminism, which should primarily tackle patriarchy, has been partially dragged into patriarchal ideas connected to the Emperor system. While this seems to conflict with what feminism should be, I think that it is not always a contradiction. On the assumption that feminism is a social product, it is to be expected that feminists as well as other members of society will be influenced by the dominant culture. In other words, as long as feminism is a social product, it is probably difficult for it to avoid the negative impact of the culture of which it is part.

I considered what culture is. Reflecting on myself, I now have a critical attitude towards these key factors that participants discussed, but I had accepted them unconsciously until I became a journalist and encountered feminism. Like the majority of people in Japan, I used to customarily visit a Shinto shrine every New Year's Day. When I was a student at Gakushuin³²³ Women's College, in the home education class, our professor took us to the Meiji Shrine³²⁴ in order to learn how to pray formally at a shrine. While I was a student at Gakushuin University, on campus I often saw the current Emperor's second son, his wife and younger sister, who were students in those days, but I was not interested in the Emperor issue. When the previous Emperor passed away in January 1989 and the whole nation was in mourning, I thought that I was a witness only to the turning point of the Imperial succession. As to Buddhism, whenever my family members and relatives passed away, their funeral services were held with Buddhist rites. Even now, if I were asked whether I have abandoned religion, I would probably hesitate to answer, which indicates that I have not completely shaken off religious belief. I wondered why this is so in spite of being critical of cultural norms, but I could not find any rational reasons. I have realised that this is culture, which has been passed down from generation to generation in daily life, and still affects us today. By reflecting on myself, I have learned that I should be more critical of feminism in Japan.

However, some key features of patriarchy, such as the modern Emperor system, *ie* and *bosei*, which tend to be regarded as traditions in Japan, have a much shorter history than religion. It has been less than a century and a half since they were constructed during the early period of modernisation. The Emperor system was first specified in the 1890 Constitution, in which the Emperor was identified as the head of state. The *ie* under the 1889 Civil Law was intentionally invented by the Meiji government in order to support the family-state ideology (Ueno 2009a, see also Chapters 1 and 3). The word *bosei* was created and spread through society via the feminist debate about the protection of *bosei* during the Taisho era (Kano [1991] 2009, see Chapter 3) and was then used as an ideology supporting the war. Thus, these are neither indigenous culture nor longstanding tradition, but political creations, whose history is relatively short. In my view, these products have taken root in Japanese society through being entwined with the Emperor system, which I see as the core

³²³ Gakushuin is an educational foundation in Tokyo, which manages a kindergarten, an elementary school, middle schools, high schools, a women's university (formerly a women's college) and a university. These are known as schools where almost all the members of the Imperial Family study. It originated as a school for nobility, founded in 1847.

³²⁴ The Meiji Shrine, established in 1920, worships the Meiji Emperor (1852–1912) and his wife (1850–1914).

of modern patriarchy. The Emperor system is protected by the Constitution, so it is not easy to attack. As long as the Emperor system continues to exist, feminism's struggle against patriarchy is unlikely to come to an end. However, I suggest that there is a potential to do away with some patriarchal practices. Indeed, in September 2013 the Supreme Court judged that discrimination against illegitimate children under the Civil Law was unconstitutional, so that the Civil Law was revised in December 2013 (see Chapter 5). In this way, society has been changing with the times, little by little, which indicates political products can be politically reformed, abolished or transformed. Feminism should play a key part in this process.

In connection with patriarchy, one of the current global issues is violence against women in daily life, which is 'both a consequence and a cause of gender inequality', and 'for many women, home is a place of pain and humiliation' (WHO 2005: viii). Domestic violence used to be regarded as a matter of the private sphere, so it has remained invisible, but such violence can no longer be ignored. In Japan, the Anti-Domestic Violence Law came into force in 2001, so a notion that violence against women is a political issue has started to spread. In this research, participants often referred to violence against women in terms of the comfort women issue and men's sexual desire in Buddhism (see Chapters 5 and 6) and mentioned other violence such as sexual harassment in some contexts. However, most did not directly discuss violence against women during peacetime, such as domestic violence, as a central issue of feminism, apart from Jung, who talked about had participation in the campaign to establish an anti-sexual violence law (see Chapter 5). I suggest that feminism in Japan, which has engaged in a tough struggle against patriarchy, should give more attention to this issue, because violence against women is a source of hierarchical and also patriarchal power structure.

Hegemony of Western Theories

Another issue that I considered in this research was how feminism in Japan has been influenced by Western feminist ideas. In order to examine the relations between them, I asked participants whether feminism was imported into Japan, and half of them emphasised the autonomy of feminism in Japan in their accounts of the originality of the *Lib* or cultural barriers (see Chapter 6). If this was so, I was left with a question: why has feminism in Japan so far produced little theory? Academic feminism is a newer discipline, so that it may need more time to develop, but various feminist theories have already been

built, especially in the West. Other participants, who identified Western influences, pointed out that feminism in Japan depended on Western feminist theories (see Chapter 6). I do not deny the utility of various ideas from Western theories in developing feminism in Japan. What I am cautious about is the hegemony of Western theories, in which theories established only within Western contexts have been employed in other countries as though they were universal. This hegemony of Western theories can arguably be seen in various other disciplines as well as feminism.

During the interviews, some participants made criticisms suggesting that my research might fall into cultural essentialism, Orientalism and nationalism (see Chapter 4). With regard to cultural essentialism and Orientalism, as they pointed out, ‘the West’ as a unitary category does not take its diverse societies, cultures and history into account. I realised that my awareness of diversity had been limited, and I also understood that grouping these diverse cultures together was problematic. Indeed, when I analysed differences between feminisms in Japan and in the West, I needed to refer to specific feminisms, such as feminism in the UK, America or France, rather than in the West. However, I think that the category ‘the West’ is not always problematic. In terms of its global influence, ‘the West’ can be seen as having considerable cultural influence (Jackson, Liu and Woo 2008). In fact, Ehara and Kanai divided feminism into three groups based on geography, culture and religion – Western, Islamic and East Asian. Although large parts of regions such as South Asia, Africa and Latin America were excluded, and one of the major feminist theories, post-colonial feminism, was missing in their views (see Chapter 6), it is arguably possible to categorise feminisms into such groups. ‘The West’ is a useful shorthand, which makes comparisons with others possible, so that this category is not necessarily worthless in my research. Rather, in my view it made the specific characteristics of Japanese feminisms stand out in sharper relief.

In connection with the power of ‘the West’ in terms of powerful values, Jung made an insightful comment that foreign theories tend to be seen as more authoritative than theories established in Japan (see Chapter 6). This might reflect Japan’s sense of inferiority. After the 1868 Meiji Restoration, Japan built its modern state by importing various things, such as technology, from the West. Like Japan, other non-Western countries needed or need to modernise by learning from and comparing themselves with the West, which has led to the tendency to imagine the West as modernity. This has also brought an ethnocentric Western view that Western knowledge was indispensable to modernisation in non-Western countries (see also Sievers 1999, Chapter 2). In other words, modernity is seen from a

Western perspective as a 'post-traditional order' (Giddens 1990, 1991, in Tanabe and Tokita-Tanabe 2003: 4). However, Asian scholars have begun to intervene into debates about modernity. Asian scholars Tanabe and Tokita-Tanabe (2003) point out that modernity in Asia and the Pacific cannot simply be seen as post-traditional, because tradition and modernity are always evaluated in the context of their national and cultural identities. They (2003: 4) then argue that Asian modernity is a 'complex self-reflexive endeavour to position oneself for and against "European modernity" and "indigenous tradition" that characterise the modern cultural-politics of identity in these regions.'

Concerning the study of modernity, Jackson (2015) points out that there are two imbalanced relations between the West and others. One of these is that Western scholars are barely interested in academic works from outside the West. In fact, it is uncommon for Western scholars to quote from Asian academic works; by contrast, Asian researchers incessantly cite Western theories. This indicates that Western researchers have tended to think that Western theories have universal applicability and thus they largely ignore works from outside the West. The other problem is that Western theories of modernity constructed by well-known male theorists travel to the East, whereas many other works, especially feminist critiques, do not. Thus, academia has two hierarchies, Eurocentrism and androcentrism (Jackson 2015). In masculinised theories of modernity, women are always marginalised (Stivens 1998), linking to binary logic such as male/female, modern/traditional, West/East (Tanabe and Tokita-Tanabe 2003). Here, the East, as well as women, is regarded as other to the West, as in Orientalism (Said 1978, see Chapter 6). Jackson (2015: 6) states that, as long as these double hierarchies are not resolved, there is the danger that a false analysis of modernity will be made, comparison with modernity in the West will be twisted, and the Western concept of modernity will be taken as the 'truth'.

Unlike other disciplines, in the case of feminism, while there are citations from male theorists such as Lacan and Derrida, it seems that quotations from female theorists are seen more often than quotation from male theorists. However, I have perceived that even academic feminism in Japan involves similar hierarchies. As Kanai and Jung pointed out, feminism in Japan has depended on Western feminist ideas in terms of theoretical works (see Chapter 6). What is more, it has primarily followed white Western feminisms (Jung, see Chapter 6). This indicates that America has been added to Eurocentrism, and that white Western feminisms have replaced androcentrism. Feminism in Japan itself also involves an ethnocentric hierarchy against the background of colonialism (Suzuki, Jung, see Chapter 5). Unfortunately, hierarchical structures may be endless, even in feminism.

On the other hand, East Asian researchers have begun to challenge Western theories of modernity. It is possible to say that my research contributes to this endeavour, in terms of investigating the hegemony of Western feminisms by asking participants whether feminism in Japan is imported. By conducting this research, I have also confirmed that Western feminist theories cannot always be applied to Japan since we are facing different problems. I suggest that the study of East Asian feminisms has the potential to find new ways of challenging the Western concept of modernity.

In connection with Orientalism, one more issue to which I have to refer here is Jung's criticism that there was a danger in this research that the emphasis on the strong points of Japanese feminisms might slip over into nationalism (see Chapter 4). In other words, it was risk that my research may fall into reverse Orientalism. However, I did not aim to stress the good points. Indeed, I found shortcomings in Japanese feminisms such as ethnocentrism rather than strong points (see Chapter 5), but it is certain that her criticism encouraged me to consider how I should take a stance within this research.

Limitations and Further Research

Reflecting on my research, I find that it has three main limitations. The first is the small number of participants, which was due to restricted time and funding. This made it difficult for me to present a fuller picture of Japanese feminisms. The second is that I could not make in-depth comparisons with other contexts. The third is the imbalanced power relations with participants, which might have had a negative impact on this research (see also Chapter 4).

The small number of interviewees is unavoidable in qualitative research. If I had interviewed more scholars, I would have had different findings. In addition, their disciplines and the age range were limited. In choosing participants, I of course considered their disciplines and ages, but seven interviewees were sociologists, and the others were two historians, a philosopher, an ethicist and a researcher in religious studies. If I had had interviewees from other disciplines, I might have found different perspectives on Japanese feminisms. As to the age range, ten participants were born in the late 1930s to the 1950s, belonging to the pioneer generation of academic feminism. They are also the *Lib* generation who witnessed or participated in the *Lib* during the early 1970s, which was reflected in some of my findings. In particular, their responses to the question of whether

feminism in Japan is imported indicate their generational stances. Against the background that the *Lib* is often seen as an import, they tended to focus on the autonomy of the *Lib*, which indicates that they felt proud that they were pioneers. I was born in 1967, and I felt a distance from them. From my viewpoint, the *Lib* is no more than a historical event and participants who discussed it seemed to me to be assertive in expressing their opinions. This is because I belong to ‘the pioneer generation of the EEOL’, which tends to have a greater interest in gender equality than other generations, but to have less experience of struggling against female oppression than the older generation, resulting in a generation gap. Much younger generations, who tend to be more conservative (see Chapter 1), probably feel even more distance from the older generation. If I had had more participants from younger generations, I might have identified generation gaps more clearly.

Of course, in the process of choosing participants, I looked for younger scholars who had published much work, but there are not very many feminist scholars in the second generation born in the 1960s. Rather, a much younger generation has more feminist researchers who were or are under the supervision of the pioneer generation. Much younger people, who are familiar with computers, can also be seen in online activism, such as the Women’s Action Network (WAN), managing the only feminist portal site in Japan. The chairperson of the board of directors is Ueno. The WAN was founded in 2009 in order to pass the baton of feminism to a younger generation. Being much younger and having more distance from the pioneer generation might be the very reason why they take an interest in feminism and explore the *Lib* more objectively. They may even be interested in the powerful image of the pioneer generation. Unfortunately, they do not have many publications yet, so that before the interviews I could not grasp their arguments as clearly as those of the pioneer feminists and so I gave up contacting more than a few of them. In further research, interviews with them will be needed, in order to discover how their views differ from the pioneer generation’s, how academic feminism is developing with generational change and whether new key issues characterising feminism in Japan can be identified.

The second limitation is that I could not make a systematic comparison with other contexts in all my findings, which is due to my language problems as well as limited available information related to feminisms internationally. Therefore, I only partially compared feminism in Japan with feminism in other countries and regions. On the one hand, I believe that this was not necessarily a useless attempt to throw differences into relief. On the other hand, I have realised that it is difficult to establish differences without in-depth

comparisons. Thus, what I have done throughout this research was to find *some* aspects of differences between diverse feminisms in Japan and elsewhere alongside some particular characteristics of Japanese feminisms. In further research, greater systematic comparison would be helpful to establish differences.

The other limitation, the imbalanced power relations between myself and the participants, was a serious problem for me. In Confucian culture, double hierarchical relationships exist between older and younger, teacher and student in the same academic sphere, and this was a heavy pressure on me. My interviewees are influential feminists, who can see into my ideas easily. It was quite natural for me to be nervous when I faced these powerful people. At the same time, I was bewildered by the various differences between interview techniques in academia and journalism, which created additional insecurity. A great deal of academic work about feminist research methods has been published, but most of it deals only with power balances with powerless participants, giving no advice to me. The only way for me to reduce the power gap was to be polite to them by tidying myself up, being punctual, speaking using respectful language, and preparing a gift and a reward. Nevertheless, I am afraid that my nervousness and unskilled academic interview technique might have negatively impacted on this research. The only salvation was that they were feminists, who care about power balances, so they tried to reduce the power gap. Because they were powerful people, their confidence to argue, which could not be swayed by an unskilled interviewer, also helped me. In the future, when I have improved my academic interview skills, if I interview feminist scholars who are younger than me, there will no longer be such unbalanced power relations with participants in terms of age, but my academic career may still be shorter than theirs. As a result, I hope that the power balance will be equalised.

My Contribution to Feminism

Despite its limitations, my work has made a contribution in four ways. Firstly, this is a pioneering work in terms of the study of Japanese feminisms, which has identified how it has been influenced by culture, history, politics and religion. My data enabled me to identify not only some specific characteristics of feminism in Japan but also various weaknesses, such as ethnocentrism, and to make some suggestions. Secondly, this research is an invaluable record of the views of feminist scholars, especially the pioneer generation, which should be passed on as an academic legacy to the next generation. The third

contribution is that this research suggests the study of East Asian feminisms as a new key topic. Japan-Korea and Japan-China relations are politically strained, but research on East Asian feminisms may cut a new path for feminism internationally. Finally, I have done this doctoral research in the UK, where I encountered diverse cultures that I had not contacted until I came to the UK. This environment outside Japan opened up a new world to me and made me more critical of my own culture. This thesis, which I have written in English in this situation, will make Japanese feminisms more accessible to foreign readers.

As I indicated in the Introduction, I was motivated to conduct this research by the current lack of theoretical feminist work in Japan as well as my personal experience of culture shock. In Japan, there is no recognised history of feminist theories and feminist theoretical work is still in the process of being developed (Ehara 2009, see Introduction). In other words, feminism in Japan has hardly been described yet, for which there might be two reasons. One is that in Japan empirical sociological work carries more weight than theoretical work (see Chapter 5). The other reason, I suggest, is that feminism is an interdisciplinary field of study, in which almost all disciplines can contribute to feminism and feminism can also contribute to them. In the sciences as well as the arts, there are essential feminist issues, such as reproductive and medical technology. For this reason, feminism needs to develop by absorbing diverse research from various disciplines. However, it seems that feminism has not always developed in this interdisciplinary way. In my case, I have a BA in Law, but I was practising feminism as a journalist as part of the pioneer generation of the EEOL, I have an MA in Gender Studies and also conducted this doctoral research in women's studies, so that I have approached feminism directly from women's studies without depending on any long-established disciplines. Since I was studying feminism, I did of course encounter some difficulties during the process of the research. In fact, I had to obtain some basic knowledge in the various disciplines of the participants such as philosophy and religious studies, but I believe that this research presents a new way of approaching feminism.

Moreover, my findings include various suggestions. For example, feminism in Japan is weak, which indicates that patriarchy remains deeply entrenched (Ehara, see Chapter 5). This argument plainly revealed that the elements of patriarchy, such as Confucianism, the *ie* system and gender discrimination in religion, are formidable. As to the weaknesses of feminism, one example that was pointed out was a lack of interest in minority issues. I suggest the argument that feminism has fallen into ethnocentrism and heterosexism can help feminism to examine itself. This research also responded to the nuclear crisis in

Fukushima. By examining how feminists perceive nuclear issues, various findings stood out, such as arguments opposing the idea that women are associated with peace, the weakness of eco-feminism and the Emperor's war guilt. Discussing these shortcomings of feminism may help it to develop.

The second contribution is feminism's legacy in terms of the interviews with influential feminist scholars, especially in the pioneer generation. There are in existence a large number of their books, individual interviews and records of scholars' round-table talks, but as far as I know there is no collection of interviews that ask all of them the same questions, except for this research. Through their answers to the same questions, differences in their stances, views and arguments stood out. Additionally, in this research I have tried to discuss their arguments against the background of their personal histories, such as their home environments, schooldays, encounters with feminism and transitions in their research interests. It is easy to imagine that the impact of feminism on the pioneer generation must be immeasurable. Why they were attracted to feminism, what motivated them to study feminism and how feminism influenced their lives could also be a research topic in the future. Therefore, this research may become part of the essential legacy of feminism in Japan, showing how academic feminism became established during the early period.

Thirdly, it is suggested that the study of East Asian feminisms will contribute to the development of feminism (see Chapter 6). Sechiyama has undertaken a comparative study: *Patriarchy in East Asia: A Comparative Sociology of Gender* (Japanese version 1996, updated English version 2013, see Chapter 3). There is, however, almost no research into East Asian feminisms. By investigating the similarities and differences between East Asian countries in the Confucian cultural bloc, each individual feminism as well as East Asian feminisms as a whole can be identified. As the comfort women issue indicates, arguments about Japan's war guilt have continued, so it might not be easy to build a transnational feminism in East Asia. However, putting it the other way around, the study of East Asian feminisms has the potential to break fresh ground.

The other significant issue is that studying for a PhD in the UK gave me opportunities to understand various cultural differences. In the Centre for Women's Studies at the University of York, in which half of the postgraduate students are international students, I have actually learned that we have different behaviours, ideas and customs depending on our culture. By moving away from Japan and understanding diverse differences in the UK, I came to be more critical of my own culture. Additionally, my thesis is written in English, which may make a contribution. During my study at postgraduate level in the UK, I

realised that there were few academic works about Japanese feminisms translated from Japanese into English. I searched for them online, but even Ueno, who has a great number of publications in Japan, has had only two books translated into English, except for joint works. In addition to Ueno, only two other interviewees, Sechiyama and Amano, have each had one book translated into English. There are also very few journals written in English by feminists in Japan, an exception being *Gender and Sexuality*, published by the Centre for Gender Studies, International Christian University in Japan. Hence, academic works about feminism in Japan are hardly known overseas.

There is a language barrier, but as long as feminist academic works are available only in Japanese, there is a danger that their influence will be limited to Japan. English has power as a global language, and non-English language blocs tend to be marginalised, but, like economic activities, academia has become globalised over time. In fact, at international conferences, English is always employed as a common language. By using English, scholars in non-English language blocs can communicate with each other, too, which will also help East Asian feminisms to develop. At this point, this research is significant because it can widely disseminate information about feminism in Japan.

When I was in my twenties, feminism gave me a new angle on various issues. Since then, it has been very significant to my thinking. Feminists in Japan are currently still struggling against patriarchy, but I see a glimmer of hope there. Since the patriarchal elements were artificially created, they can also be artificially broken.

Appendix 1

Common Questions in the Interviews

1. What are specific issues in Japanese feminism?
What characterises Japanese feminism?
2. What do you think about the present state of feminism in Japan?
3. What do you think is a problem to be solved in feminism in Japan?
Please tell me your suggestions to develop Japanese feminism.
4. How do you perceive anti-nuclear politics in Japanese feminism?
5. How do you perceive *bosei* in Japanese feminism?
6. How do you perceive the Emperor system?
7. Do you think that Japanese feminism is imported or not?
8. How do you perceive the differences between Japanese feminism and Western feminism?
9. Does Western feminism have too much influence in the world?
10. Would you like to see Japanese feminism having more influence beyond Japan?
How relevant would Japanese feminism be elsewhere?

Appendix 2

Specific Questions in the Interviews (in order of birth year)

1 **Masako Amano**

Q What do you think about current feminist theories and activism?

Q What do you think about administrative feminism and housewife feminism in Japan?

2 **Mikiyo Kano**

Q You ([1991] 2009) argue that *bosei* in Japan is an illusion. However, women who campaign against nuclear power stations tend to emphasise their *bosei*. For example, they argue as mothers that they want to give their children a future without nuclear energy. What do you think about this?

3 **Teruko Inoue**

Q Your definition of women's studies is 'The study of women, by women, for women'³²⁵ ([1981] 2009). Is this still your view?

Q What do you think about relations between current feminist theories and activism?

4 **Yoshiko Kanai**

Q You (1996) discuss Japanese feminism such as housewife feminism, feminism within administration, and the global issue of north versus south. Currently, young people tend to be conservative. How do you think Japanese feminism can tackle these issues?

5 **Aiko Ogoshi**

Q Why did you start to tackle issues of discrimination against women in Japanese Buddhism during the 1980s? Please tell me about the situation in those days.

Q How do you define universal human rights?

Q Please tell me about the stream of post-modernism in a Japanese way.

6 **Junko Minamoto**

Q Please tell me about the environment surrounding feminism in Japan when you first encountered feminism. Why have you suggested Buddhist feminism?

Q Please tell me about your current research.

³²⁵ My translation.

7 **Chizuko Ueno**

Q You (1997: 292) argue, 'I think I would still consider Marxist feminism to be an important aspect of my work, but I am concerned that there has been a move away from Marxist analysis at the very time it is most needed in Japan.' How do you think Marxist feminism can be developed?

Q You (1998, 2004) argue that feminism should move beyond nationalism. However, it is not easy for post-colonial people to do this. How do you think this problem can be solved?

8 **Yuko Suzuki**

Q The current women's anti-nuclear campaign seems to emphasise their motherhood. What do you think about this?

9 **Yumiko Ehara**

Q Why have Japanese feminist theories not been established yet? Please tell me about the current situation of Japanese feminism in terms of feminist theories.

Q It seems that feminist theories in the West are complicated and there is a gap between theory and practice. What do you think about this situation?

10 **Ruri Ito**

Q You are studying various issues such as financial impact and immigration. Please tell me about global feminism.

11 **Yeonghae Jung**

Q You criticise the fact that feminism has excluded minorities. What do you think about the solutions?

Q How do you think that feminism should move beyond nationalism, and why?

12 **Kaku Sechiyama**

Q It has been more than 15 years since you published *Patriarchy in East Asia: A Comparative Sociology of Gender* (1996). How do you think Japanese society can move beyond patriarchy?

Appendix 3

CONSENT FORM

This form should be discussed with participants before the interviews begin. Two copies of the form will be signed by the interviewees; they and researcher will each keep a copy. Please read the following statements on the research procedures and how your responses and contribution to the study will be used. If you agreed to participate in the study, please indicate your consent.

Name of Participant:

Organisation:

- a. This PhD study will use semi-structures and in-depth interview. All the interviews will be recorded and will be transcribed by the researcher.
- b. All the information and the typed transcription of the interviews will be kept secure.
- c. You will be identified by your name, academic career and birth year in the thesis and any publications from it. You can withdraw from this study or ask to stop the recording at any time.
- d. You are free not to respond to any questions during the interview.
- e. You will be sent a copy of the transcript and will be free to edit it.

I have read and agreed to the terms and conditions above.

Therefore, I.....have been given information about the study and consent to participate in Takako Nonaka's research on "Going beyond Western Feminism and Forming an Original Japanese Feminist Theory".

Participant's signature Date.....

I certify that I have explained the research procedures as well as the terms and conditions to the participant and consider that she / he understands what I have explained and freely accepts to take part in the study.

Researcher's signature.....

Date.....

Name of researcher: Takako Nonaka

Institution: Centre for Women's Studies, the University of York, UK (PhD student)

Mobile number:

Email:

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