THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF REPRODUCTION IN JAPAN
BETWEEN NATION-STATE AND EVERYDAY LIFE
Hiroko Takeda
This book analyzes the political economy of reproduction and its role in the process of Japanese modernization. Takeda Hiroko examines policies used by the state to intervene into women’s bodies and everyday lives to integrate them into the Japanese political economy. Using Foucault’s concept of governmentality, she develops a model to assess reproduction in three forms, economic, biological and socio-political, from 1968 until the present day.

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Takeda Hiroko
A note on the text

Following the convention, the family name precedes the given name in Japanese unless the British convention is preferred by the Japanese author. Long vowels are represented by macrons, except in cases where the words are conventionally used without them. Such cases include Japanese names and words in English publications and commonly anglicized words such as ‘Tokyo’ and ‘Osaka’.
### Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APP</td>
<td>Association of Population Problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIE</td>
<td>Civil Information and Education Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPJ</td>
<td>Democratic Party of Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EES</td>
<td>Eugenics Education Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEPP</td>
<td>Guidelines for Establishing the Population Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GHQ</td>
<td>General Headquarters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GNP</td>
<td>Gross National Product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPP</td>
<td>Institute of Population Problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPPF</td>
<td>International Planned Parenthood Federation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISPP</td>
<td>National Institute of Population and Social Security Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IWW</td>
<td>International Workers of the World</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JPPF</td>
<td>Japan Planned Parenthood Federation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JSP</td>
<td>Japan Socialist Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDP</td>
<td>Liberal Democratic Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGOs</td>
<td>Non-governmental organizations</td>
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<tr>
<td>NKK</td>
<td>Nippon KōKan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPOs</td>
<td>Non-profit organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSMs</td>
<td>New Social Movements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFRWO</td>
<td>National Federation of Regional Women’s Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUWSS</td>
<td>National Union of Women’s Suffrage Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHW</td>
<td>Public Health and Welfare Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCAP</td>
<td>Supreme Command for the Allied Powers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDPJ</td>
<td>Social Democratic Party of Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMEs</td>
<td>Small and Medium Enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<td>US</td>
<td>United States</td>
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Introduction

‘Reproduction’ is both an old and new problem in the mainstream literature of political economy. On the one hand, reproduction, namely, childbirth, education and socialization, along with the everyday revitalization of the labour force, has been acknowledged as an indispensable and essential part of the production process in capitalist economy since Marx and Engels’s time. Marxist feminists, in particular, have paid much attention to the reproductive side of the economic and social process (Delphy and Leonard 1992: 57–63). On the other hand, the problematics of reproduction have been marginalized, through reproduction being seen as an essentially ‘private’ phenomenon occurring in everyday life. Discourses on ‘everyday life’ usually exist at the opposite end of the spectrum from the studies of politics and political economy. That is, the world of everyday life, associated with private and intimate relationships, is separated from the world of political and economic activities in studies conducted by professionals who pursue a particular form of rationality. Logically, each world is envisaged, analyzed and discussed in different, separate and unadulterated ways. Various disciplines in the social sciences have traditionally incorporated this discursive division between everyday life and political economy. Everyday life is supposed to belong to the private sphere, political economy to the public; and there is a division of labour in terms of research rigorously applied to each world as a separate, discrete and, in many cases, hermetically sealed ‘other’. In a word, research on political economy tends to concentrate on phenomena in political/economic institutions and systems by excluding issues related to private matters.

In the face of orthodoxy, a range of academic works have questioned this conventional private/public distinction, especially during the last two decades. Already, in the 1960s, Habermas addressed the ‘colonization of everyday life’ in the era of mass welfare-state democracy caused by the increase and intensification of governmental intervention in everyday life (Habermas 1989). Since the 1970s, the welfare state has emerged as a subject of fierce criticism, both from the right and from the left spectra of the political world, as it had become an enormous governing apparatus, which was too inefficient and uneconomic as a governing system and deeply entangled
with the agents and governance of everyday life. The rise of the welfare state in the postwar period brought the social welfare of the nation-state’s population onto the governmental agenda, but this inevitably made the governing system of especially the industrially developed nation-states larger and more inclusive. In this respect, people’s everyday life under the welfare state appears to be a crucial site of political economy and, as a result of this, the world of political economy is intricately mingled with the world of everyday life. Thus, the distinction between the public and private spheres of activity has become blurred and irrelevant with the blossoming and growth of the welfare state, and both right and left critiques of the welfare state denounced the expansion of political intervention in everyday life, albeit on different ideological grounds, as political intervention was seen to erode individual freedom and agency.

As the oft-cited slogan of the second wave of feminism, ‘the private is political’ cogently states, feminist scholars also sought to reformulate the concept of power in order to crystallize power relationships hidden in the social and private worlds. As Landes rightly points out, ‘the personal is political’ was the term for envisioning new languages which were needed in order to engrave in discourse a ‘problem that has no name’, that is, a problem which has been considered as a ‘normal’ state or phenomenon and hence the basis for people’s everyday lives (Landes 1998: 1). Since then, a multitude of conventional frameworks of everyday life from the nuclear family and the sexual division of labour to the dichromatic category of ‘sex’ and heterosexuality have been brought into question by feminists. For example, Butler argues, referring to Michel Foucault and Monique Witting, the category of sex is ‘a compulsory order’ that ‘imposes a duality and uniformity on bodies in order to maintain reproductive sexuality’. In other words, sexual and reproductive activities in the private world are no longer perceived as mere private matters, but ‘violent’ matters, namely the matters belonging to ‘the political’ (Butler 1992: 17).

As such, these recent academic contributions to the field have destabilized the boundary between the private and public worlds. What they suggest is that the two worlds are inseparably interwoven. And hence, reproductive activities need to be discussed as an issue of political economy. This is certainly the case when we discuss reproductive activities in Japan. Looking back on the historical trajectory of the Japanese nation-state since it embarked on the modernization process in the late nineteenth century, ‘reproduction’ has always been an issue of concern for the nation-state, although the focus of this concern has shifted back and forth over time, and the mode of intervention has varied according to the specific historical context. In prewar Japan, as a well-known slogan of the early Meiji period ‘enrich the country, strengthen the military’ (fukoku kyōhei) suggests, having the national population in a good state to produce good soldiers, that is, having good mothers who could reproduce good soldiers, was of crucial concern to the administrative bodies of the state. Hence, the then govern-
ments\(^1\) and bureaucrats developed policies seeking an incremental improvement in the ‘healthy’ population. A gamut of policies was implemented, from population to education policies meant to improve the quality of everyday life, in order to ‘enlighten’ the population. This situation had to change partly as a result of the Japanese nation-state’s march down the path of military aggression. During the period associated with ‘the total war regime’,\(^2\) the population was counted as part of the national resource, to be exploited in waging war, along with other materials and resources, and hence reproductive activities were viewed both pragmatically and ideologically as a contribution to the increase in Japanese human resources which were to be incorporated into the totalitarian mobilization system. Faced with absolute defeat in 1945 and the subsequent ‘democratization’ of the Japanese nation-state under American tutelage, the situation surrounding reproductive activities was again forced to change. One of the most crucial issues just after the war was again, as in the prewar period, the ‘population issue’, but this time the focus was on adopting measures to decrease the population. In these circumstances, the legislation of the Eugenic Protection Law legitimized abortion for economic reasons for the first time in world history, and contraceptives, which had been prohibited under the prewar regime, were widely introduced into everyday, domestic life, along with lessons on how to use them. Interestingly, the effort to spread information on contraceptives throughout the Japanese population was implemented in close cooperation with the large corporations that had played a main role in the period of high economic growth. During the next twenty years the birth rate dropped sharply (see Appendix B), without such overt interventions into everyday life practices as had been seen during the total war period. This first demographic change in the postwar period resulted in a second demographic change. In the middle of the 1970s, it was recognized by some politicians and administrators that the decline in the number of children during the first twenty-five years after the war had gone too far: the Japanese nation faced problems in the reproduction of the future population due to the decrease in the number of childbirths. In order to reverse this trend, the government and national bureaucracy made some propositions, which included revisions of the Eugenic Protection Laws in ways which restricted the practice of abortion. However, these attempts to turn the clock backwards in the face of the global trend among women in the major industrialized states at that time, that is, the growing awareness among women of their own reproductive health/rights, were fiercely contested by the rising women’s movements and did not come to fruition. In the new millennium, the Japanese nation-state still keeps alerting its population to a prospective shortage in the future population and is looking for relevant arrangements of familial, social and economic lives.

It is worth noting that the politics of reproduction mentioned above are not particularly, nor uniquely, a ‘Japanese phenomenon’. The population problem has been a main issue of the political economy of the nation-state
since Thomas Malthus first formulated his relationship between poverty and population as an economic theory, famously as ‘the population has this constant tendency to increase beyond the means of subsistence’ (Malthus 1803/1992: 15). Malthusian concerns with the quantity of the population later merged with concerns over the quality of the population, as some neo-Malthusian discourses – for instance, by Margaret Sanger and Havelock Ellis – suggest (Chapter 2). Eugenics, which was influenced by the concept of Darwinian evolution, was a prevailing intellectual trend at the turn of the last century, first in Britain and then across Europe, triggered by anxiety over a ‘deterioration’ in the population during the Boer War that casualties in the war bought about. This led to legislation that attempted to control the quality of the population, as seen in North America and Europe, including the development of social welfare services. This suggests that reproduction had been recognized as an object of governing by the modern nation-state long before the welfare state system. In order to form, maintain and strengthen a nation-state, needless to say, the nation-state requires a population, and the better the population the better chance for the nation-state to prosper. Although it has not been discussed directly in much of the literature due to the predominance of the myth of the public/private distinction in social theory, state intervention in the reproduction of each member of the population in order to facilitate reproduction of the nation-state has always been on the agenda of modern nation-states.

Therefore, the Japanese case is not particular or unique in terms of the way that the national government expressed its concern over the reproduction of its population; nor is it particular or unique in the way that it actually intervened in reproductive activities. Moreover, when looking at the current reproductive problems in Japan, namely, the falling birth rate, transitions (or the oft-called ‘break-down’) in the conventional family system, the ageing society, the crisis in the school system and increasing unemployment, to name but a few, it seems that Japan still shares with other major industrialized states a similar agenda in terms of reproductive issues. Yet, because the nature of intervention has varied according to the specific period of Japanese history, the Japanese case offers some ‘uniqueness’ in terms of mode, speed and intensity of state interventions in reproductive activities compared to other major industrialized states.

The overriding aim of this book is to explore, elucidate and analyze the historical trajectory of ‘political economy’ deployed around multi-levels of reproduction throughout the Japanese modernization process from the late nineteenth century onwards: namely, the recreation of human beings and the replenishment of human resources for the continuity of the economy, the nation-state, and society. The first goal, then, is to focus on the political economy of reproduction in Japan. Although there are a very small number of articles and books that deal with limited aspects of reproduction (e.g. childbirth, sexuality, education and the school system), neither linkages between the multiple ‘reproductions’ nor their political implications have
been fully discussed in the extant literature in the discipline of political economy and Japan studies (Coleman 1991; Gordon 1990; Jolivet 1997; Fujime 1997; Bourdieu 1990). However, this book’s scope is not limited to making empirical and historical contributions in order to fill an existing gap in the literature, it also intends to develop the discussion of reproduction on a theoretical level, too, in the following two senses. Firstly, in order to create a clear distance between the ubiquitous cultural perspective regarding so-called ‘Japanese uniqueness’, a range of influences on the impact of the modernization process on the Japanese nation-state will be re-examined. Secondly, and related to the first point, the development of methods and knowledge concerning governing peculiar to the modern nation-state will be discussed in order to shed light on the quintessence of modern ‘government’ which, in contradistinction to the conventional understanding of the national government, concerns the bodies, lives, sexuality and subjectivity of each member of the nation-state, and intervenes in the everyday life of people both in Japan and in the other major industrialized states. Consequently, it is worth noting that the term ‘political economy’ as used in this book is not always equivalent to its use in the orthodox literature on political economy, where it is frequently viewed as the national government, parliamentary politics and economic activities within the market mechanism, but rather implies a web of political, economic and even social interactions across the public and private sphere, seeking, producing and reproducing power in a contested process of interaction between the state and individuals as subjective agents and living beings. In sum, then, what we are going to analyze here is the political economy of the reproduction that exists ‘between nation-state and everyday life’ concerning our lives and bodies, a subject which has never been sufficiently explored in the disciplines of political economy and Japan studies.

Structure of the book

As mentioned above, the main objective of this book is to provide a clear picture of the ‘reproduction’ from the late nineteenth century to the present in Japan. For this purpose, the book introduces studies on ‘govern mentality’, which sheds light on historical transitions in the mode of exercising ‘power’ by states in the world of everyday life in modernity. Governmentality is the core of the theoretical approach used here in order to elucidate the efforts and activities of modern nation-states in intervening in the everyday life of the people. However, the studies of governmentality simultaneously provide us with perspectives through which we may analyze the power dynamics between the organization of everyday life at the level of the individual and the institutional arrangements of states. Indeed, what is suggested by the discussion on governmentality is that a multitude of everyday acts including fostering our very subjectivity is intricately interlinked with the state governing.
Then, the systematization of a multitude of reproductive activities by the state including legislation and policy-making are chronologically discussed from the prewar period to the early postwar period. In Chapter 2, we look at the prewar situation as a prelude to the postwar situation, while Chapter 3 focuses on the wartime and Occupation period, and Chapter 4 deals with the postwar. Throughout these chapters, I will seek to show the consolidation of the reproductive system, deployed from the ‘low’ level of the everyday lives of the people to the ‘high’ level of national politics, with specific attention being paid to issues of ‘continuity’ and ‘discontinuity’ from the prewar period to the postwar period. After mapping this basic picture of the consolidation of the reproductive situation, mostly from the ‘top-down’ perspective of the state, the discussion shifts to a case study of people’s practices and activities in everyday life under the reproductive system analyzed in the previous chapters. For this purpose a postwar social movement called The New Life Movement (in Japanese, Shinseikatsu Undō) is the focus of attention in Chapter 5. In contrast to the previous chapters that focus on the process of consolidation of the reproductive system in Japan, Chapter 6 seeks to examine a period from the mid-1970s to the present, in which the reproductive system has been calibrated due to transitions in the political, economical and social settings. Finally, based on the discussion of the previous chapters, the concluding chapter will provide a final account of the Japanese reproductive system and of the political economy of modern and contemporary Japan, as well as develop discussion on the significance of agency.
1 Reproduction and governmentality

Introduction: ‘powers in everyday life’ and reproduction

It is true that I became quite involved with the question of power. It soon appeared to me that, while the human subject is placed in relations of production of signification, he is equally placed in power relations which are very complex. Now, it seemed to me that economic history and theory provided a good instrument for relations of production; that linguistics and semiotics offered instruments for studying relations of signification; but for power relations we had no tools of study. We had recourse only to ways of thinking about power based on legal models, that is: What legitimates power? Or we had recourse to ways of thinking about power based on institutional models, that is: What is the state?

It was therefore necessary to expand the dimensions of a definition of power if one wanted to use this definition in studying the objectivizing of the subject.

(Foucault 1983: 327)

The concept of power is conventionally associated with physical force. According to Dahl’s classic definition of power in the 1950s, ‘A has power over B if he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do’ (Dahl 1957). In such a remark, power is generally perceived as an external pressure or force that affects one’s behaviour, thoughts and feelings, and changes the direction of previous states and courses of action, regardless of one’s intentions.

While such a definition of power has its merits, it has been countered by different approaches to this concept.¹ For instance, Michel Foucault’s work, as cited above, provides a major impetus to recent debates on power. As has been widely indicated, Foucault posited two new concepts of power, firstly ‘disciplinary power’, and later a broader concept, ‘bio-power’, which subsumes ‘disciplinary power’ within it. As the above quote suggests, these concepts of power are not only limited to those domains typically associated with power, such as politics or law, or indeed, activities involving physical force (military and police force) engaged in by nation-states. Rather,
Foucault’s conception of power is more particularly concerned with human bodies and human beings themselves, as well as their sense of ‘self’. Importantly, these new forms of power appear and are practised in the form of legitimated knowledge. In Foucault’s words, these forms of power relate to ‘a law of truth on him which he must recognize and which others have to recognize in him’ (Foucault 1983: 331). Thus, the Foucauldian concept of power ‘is productive in the sense that it is constitutive, working to produce particular types of bodies and minds in practices which remain invisible from the point of view of the older model of power as sovereignty’ (Nash 2000: 20). Such a conception of power poses fundamental questions with regard to the construction and management of our everyday lives and ourselves.

The multitude of reproductive activities carried out in different scenes of our everyday lives offers an arena in which to consider the Foucauldian concept of power that concerns human bodies, minds and the sense of self. Through different forms of reproductive activities, human beings are procreated, raised, trained, educated and revitalized, and such activities constitute the replenishment of human resources in society, the economic system and the nation-state. In this sense, a set of reproductive activities ensures both the sustenance and growth of individuals and ensembles of people, and is logically and imperatively ‘productive and constitutive’. In other words, different forms of reproductive activities are to be arenas in which bio-power is functioning.

Yet, as Ginsburg and Rapp state, ‘reproduction’ is a particularly amorphous and contested term, and hence it is a necessary step to clarify the multi-layered meaning of reproduction when analyzing different forms of reproductive activities in our everyday lives. Indeed, the term reproduction conveys different meanings depending on the context in which it is used. In their words, ‘reproduction is a slippery concept, connoting parturition, Marxist notions of household sustenance and constitution of labour force, and ideologies that support the continuity of social systems’ (Ginsburg and Rapp 1991: 311). Reflecting this multiplicity of connotations of the term, reproduction has been discussed in various disciplines such as economics, anthropology, linguistics, sociology and so on. Yet, focusing upon functions and outcomes of various reproductive activities, it could be said that there are three dimensions to ‘reproduction’. Firstly, reproduction is a part of the economic activity that ensures the continuity and maintenance of the economic process. In order to maintain production, products need to be consumed in order to facilitate the continuation of the production process. Hence, ‘reproduction’ of products is an indispensable process in the maintenance of the economy, and consequently of society. However, as Marx himself pointed out in Das Kapital, economic ‘reproduction’ needs the ‘reproduction’ of the labour force (Marx 1887/1977: 167–70), and this relates to the second and third dimensions of ‘reproduction’, biological ‘reproduction’ and social and political ‘reproduction’. ‘Biological reproduction’ refers
here to human re-creation in a biological sense, as when this word is used in phrases such as ‘reproductive health’ or ‘reproductive rights’. However, this biological re-creation does not in itself assure the continuity of the economic process, the society or the nation-state, though it is a prerequisite thereof, and so a third dimension of ‘reproduction’ is necessary: social and political reproduction. This area of reproduction is required to transmit the normative values and the multitude of skills in society from generation to generation, through training in the home, in the education system, and through other media in society. In other words, socio-political reproduction is what is usually called ‘socialization’ in sociological research.

Interestingly, all the three dimensions of ‘reproduction’ are correlated with each other, and each dimension needs the other two. In so doing, they together contribute to renewing the political, economic and social system. This implies that the three dimensions of reproduction function politically. They are a precondition for the maintenance and growth of the nation-state, despite being practices in society and private life, rather than those commonly associated with the level of the nation-state. ‘Biological reproduction’ replenishes the nation state with new human resources, and ‘economic reproduction’ generates resources for keeping and raising a productive population, and ‘socio-political reproduction’ transfers socio-political norms and practices to future members of the state in order to sustain and ensure the smooth functioning of those three dimensions of reproduction. And for this purpose, the nation-state formed a national system which aims to survey the state of its population and support its members in order to maintain the appropriate standards of everyday life. In this way, the three dimensions of reproduction are closely and intricately connected in the management of everyday life, mediating between individuals and the nation-state, and forming parts of the governing system of the nation-state. Therefore, ‘reproduction’ is a vital practice, in which the Foucauldian concept of power that governs our bodies, and the sense of self functions, and without them, the nation-state cannot sustain itself. The description above is summarized in figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1 Three dimensions of reproduction
The Foucauldian concept of power working in different forms of reproduction, namely disciplinary power and bio-power, has resulted in a new approach to the semantics of the verb ‘to govern’ and to the noun ‘government’, subsumed today within the discipline known as ‘studies on governmentality’, to use Foucault’s terminology. Foucault’s attempt to write a book on ‘governmentality’ was thwarted by his death in 1984, and he left only fragments relating to this topic, along with short articles and records of lectures at the Collège de France. Thus, studies on governmentality have remained relatively marginal to the main body of his work. Nevertheless, studies on this subject have continued to be undertaken, firstly by Foucault’s colleagues, and later by a broader range of social scientists. By the end of the twentieth century, such approaches to governmentality were beginning to provide some essential insights into the quintessential logic and dynamics of power in everyday life.

The aim of this chapter is to treat more fully approaches to the Foucauldian concepts of power and ‘governmentality’ in relation to the three dimensions of reproduction. In so doing, the chapter may be seen as an attempt to demonstrate that our everyday life and tri-dimensional reproduction is, in effect, a direct consequence of multiple layers of ‘governing’ concerning our bodies, minds and the sense of self. Concretely, the first part of the chapter discusses the Foucauldian concepts of power and governmentality in further detail. Then, the second part tries to examine how governmentality operates within the actual governing systems of nation-states, and for this purpose, the welfare state system and its transition since the 1970s will be focused upon. Finally, the chapter introduces ‘gender’ into the discussion. Gender is an essential concept through which we can analyze this tri-dimensional reproduction, since reproduction tends to be operated on the basis of the division of labour by gender. The discussion on gender is particularly important because gender has more often than not been overlooked in the studies on governmentality.

**Governmentality and governmentalization of states**

In one sense, studies on governmentality demonstrate how people’s bodies and minds became objects of governing, often through governmental interventions, in everyday life in order to manage mounting social problems in the course of European modernization. This transition in governing through the discovery of ‘social problems’ caused by the ‘contradictions of capitalism’ has been a central area of discussion in the social sciences (Polanyi 1957), and ‘studies on governmentality’, along with many other studies, made approaches to the core part of this transition in order to elucidate its political significance. ‘Governmentality’ is a Foucauldian neologism. Although some new implications have been added to the term due to recent research in this area, it is perhaps more instructive here to look at Foucault’s original use of this term.
The word ‘governmentality’ is a combination of the verb form ‘govern’ and the noun ‘government’, although what it refers to is much broader than the current usage of each word. As Gordon explains, Foucault employs the word ‘government’ both in wide and narrow ways (Gordon 1991: 2–8). On the one hand, Foucault defines the words ‘government’ as ‘the conduct of conduct’, which means ‘a form of activity aiming to shape, guide, or affect the conduct of some person or persons’ (Gordon 1991: 2). Dean develops Gordon’s explanation, defining it as follows:

Government is any more or less calculated and rational activity, undertaken by a multiplicity of authorities and agencies, employing a variety of techniques and forms of knowledge, that seeks to shape conduct by working through our desires, aspirations, interests and beliefs, for definite but shifting ends and with a diverse set of relatively unpredictable consequences, effects and outcomes.

(Dean 1999: 11)

These definitions of the word ‘government’ suggest that ‘governing’ activities involve multiple levels of human activity, ranging from internal ones closely connected with the self to those connected with the public, that is, state or administrative apparatuses. Moreover, in line with the titles of Foucault’s lectures (1983–4) ‘the government of one’s self and of others’, different forms of government are correlated, and herein lies one of the crucial issues regarding ‘governmentality’ (Gordon 1991: 2–3). On the other hand, Foucault used the term ‘government’ to describe historically specific knowledge and practices of the ‘art of government’ that had been developed in Europe over the last three hundreds years. This new form of governing was a renovation of the concept of ‘government’, so that it had a new set of objects and employed a new kind of rationale. It has been incorporated into the state system of governing through a long history of the development of the modern state.

Accordingly, the term ‘governmentality’ has two dimensions. It concerns general attitudes and recognitions of how the ‘government’ functions, and how it is recognized and implemented, but it also refers to a historically and regionally limited phenomenon regarding the process of governing. Importantly, ‘to govern’ or ‘government’ in the Foucauldian sense is closely related to the emergence and proliferation of a new type of ‘governing’, in which ‘bio-power’ was incorporated within West European history.

The transformation of the governing of the state through the incorporation of ‘bio-power’ lies at the heart of studies of governmentality. Foucault named this process the ‘governmentalization of the state’ (Foucault 1991: 102), and sets this means of exercising power against an older type of power, namely ‘sovereign power’, which refers to the laws and parliamentary system exercised through the juridical and executive arms of state (Dean 1999: 19). ‘Bio-power’ proliferated in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, to
become internalized within individuals as norms and patterns of behaviour through institutional disciplines such as the prison system and schools. An example of this was the ‘panopticon’, originally a design for the British workhouse by Bentham whereby prisoners might internalize the ‘gaze of the observer’ in order to make them act in ways suited to the social norm. The panopticon functioned by placing prisoners under continuous observation. Although that observation was not necessarily continual, the power of discipline trains individuals to observe the current rationality for coordination and operation of their behaviour. According to Foucault:

One of these poles – the first to be formed, it seems – centered on the body as a machine: its disciplining, the optimization of its capabilities, the extortion of its forces, the parallel increase of its usefulness and its docility, its integration into systems of efficient and economic controls, all this was ensured by the procedures of power that characterized the disciplines: an anatomo-politics of the human body [original emphasis].

(Foucault 1978: 139)

In addition to having a disciplinary function, furthermore, the bio-power focuses on ‘bio-politics of the population’, namely, ‘the species body, the body imbued with the mechanics of life and serving as the basis of the biological processes: propagation, births and mortality, the level of health, life expectancy and longevity, with all the conditions that can cause these to vary’ (Foucault 1978: 139). Therefore, bio-power is concerned not only with the discipline of human bodies but also the calibration of the health, body and sexuality of each member of the population. More precisely, in order to build a healthy population, bio-power functions as a means of organizing apparatus such as medical organizations, schools and social welfare systems for dealing with families. In so doing, the discipline of bio-power analyzes and surveys each member of a population, and consequently, ‘in the field of political practices and economic observation’, ‘the problems of birth-rate, longevity, public health, housing, and migration’ emerged as crucial issues (Foucault 1978: 140). In other words, by exercising bio-power, governing that concerns our bodies, health and well-being came to be established as a means of control deployed in nation-states.

As has been discussed above, the introduction of bio-power by Foucault brought a paradigmatic change into contemporary research on governing. First and foremost, the population now appears to be the central object of the government of the state. Secondly, in comparison with the conventional understanding of power, this new kind of power does not physically oppress people, but by being dispersed into everyday life, comes to be like a compass which directs people’s everyday actions. In other words, bio-power is an integral part of our lives, and accordingly, leads us to the recognition of the existence of politics in our lives. Thirdly, this mode of power associated with the human body suggests a transition in the techniques of governing. These
techniques come to be oriented more firmly towards the management of the population of the nation-state. Such management may be achieved via the management of individual bodies by dint of multiple surveillance and techniques of caring. Fourthly, these powers develop certain types of rationality and knowledge in liberal-capitalist societies. For example, being economical became one of the most crucial principles of modern governing in the liberal capitalist state, and hence the discipline of economics and its knowledge was incorporated into the state governing system. Another important example is that of studies on public health, which came to be initiated so as to provide knowledge of the state and social institutions, and therefore, to safeguard the general health of its population. Fifthly, as Foucault suggests in the last chapter of *History of Sexuality Volume 1*, the reverse side of these powers is the right for the nation-state to demand that its population engage in a war propagated by the state, or more boldly, demanding an individual’s death in war for the good of the nation. This is the ultimate objective of care for the population by the state. In Foucault’s words, ‘wars are no longer waged in the name of a sovereign who must be defended; they are waged on behalf of the existence of everyone; entire populations are mobilized for the purpose of wholesale slaughter in the name of life necessity: massacres have become vital’. More straightforwardly put, ‘the power to expose a whole population to death is the underside of the power to guarantee an individual’s continued existence’ (Foucault 1978: 137).

In short, Foucault’s concept of ‘bio-power’ is concerned with human bodies, and more precisely, the management of the population of the nation-state. This may be achieved through the management of individual bodies and psychology by dint of various techniques of surveillance and caring. By resorting to this form of power, the roles of the government of the state change naturally, that is, through a process of internalization, whereby the government no longer needs to wield its power either crudely or violently. Instead of physical oppression, the government seeks a rational and economical means of governing, realized through a secured society and achieved by internalization of disciplines and surveillance on human bodies. Modern experts in areas such as medicine, psychiatry, school teaching and company management come to be key agents in this system of government. They act as providers of techniques and knowledge required by each citizen in order to live her/his life and make decisions. That is to say, through this process, our bodies, ourselves and our lives per se become enmeshed with the nation-state, with each person constructing herself or himself in a manner which is suitable for the ruling of liberal-democratic capitalist society (in Foucauldian terms, this process is called ‘subjectification’). In other words, the governmentalization of the state, that is, the process of incorporating ‘bio-power’, comes to be an optimum process for producing and reproducing modern individuals in liberal democratic capitalist society. It is precisely due to the linking of this form of power that the concept of ‘governmentality’ may be deemed appropriate for the study of reproduction.
Stimulated by studies on governmentality that initially started from a small intellectual circle, many social scientists across the world have examined the proliferation of the nation-state’s means of implementing ‘governmentality’ (Burchell, Gordon and Miller 1991; Rose and Miller 1992; Dean and Hindess 1998; Hänninen 1998). Indeed, the extant literature suggests that the ‘governmentalization of the state’ has been carried out through developing various modern institutions such as policing, medical systems, schools and educational systems, or occupational organizations. Moreover, despite Foucault’s emphasis on the influence of early Christianity on the genealogy of governmentality (Foucault 1981; Foucault 1983), this process can be observed not only in Europe and North America but also in nation-states which lie outside Western culture, including Japan.8 However, among the wide range of research related to the governmentalization of the state, the central enquiry is the significance of the governmentalization of the state in major industrialized states, especially its relationship with the rise and fall of the postwar Keynesian welfare state. Indeed, studies on governmentality were motivated by heated debates on the welfare state. Foucault’s words ‘we live in the era of a “governmentality” first discovered in the eighteen century’ demonstrate this point eloquently (Foucault 1991: 103). Under the governing system of the postwar Keynesian welfare state system, development and security of the individual has become closely related to the growth of the nation-state. A nation-state organizes systems, organizations and agents that may choose to endorse a minimum standard of living and provide security systems, for instance the social security system, in order to prevent potential harm that can be inflicted in everyday life. In so doing, a nation-state tends to reproduce what may be termed an ‘adequate’ population from time to time. For this purpose, the postwar welfare state system developed a massive body of administrative apparatus of which agents with adequate knowledge and skills of governing constitute a major part.

Neo-liberals challenged the validity of the Keynesian welfare state system in terms of the question of the legitimacy of governing. The next two sections examine the way in which the welfare system came to be consolidated and devolved. The goal is to trace the development of governmentality in the postwar major industrialized states.

The postwar welfare state

Pierson has indicated that the postwar Keynesian welfare state is ‘widely identified with the (partial) implementation of the recommendations of Sir William Beveridge’s celebrated Report on Social Insurance in the first years of the postwar UK Labour government’ (Pierson 1991: 102). The influence of this well-known report spread outside the United Kingdom, thereby setting a standard in postwar welfare state systems, namely, the aim of full employment and social insurance. However, it also represented a serious demand for relief in a society affected first by the Great Depression and
then by the destruction of war. More significantly, as Pierson also notes, there are some views that consider the Beveridge report not so much as the ‘founding charter of a radically new UK welfare state after 1945, but as a rationalization of existing prewar legislation’ (Pierson 1991: 124). According to this perspective, the ‘golden age’ of the welfare state in the postwar period appeared as a direct result of the wartime period. The same point has been made by Thane from a feminist perspective (Thane 1991: 115).

The two world wars in the twentieth century could be viewed as ‘total wars’. One significant change here is the forming of a powerful administrative machine of the state, namely the contemporary bureaucracy, in order to implement war, or more precisely, to seek victory over the opposition, i.e. the enemy. In his book on the development of the bureaucratic surveillance system, Dandeker describes how the non-military bureaucratic administrative machine expanded during the war out of a bureaucratic military organization which was established in the early stage of modern society. According to him, ‘the military imperatives of the world in the twentieth century’ required more surveillance capacities beyond the military field than ever, and as a consequence the state started to mobilize ‘the resources of the society in ways quite unmatched before’.

It subjected society to detailed regulation in respect of the requisition of manpower for the armed force, the registration and allocation of the adult population to priority sectors of the war economy, the regulation of production and distribution of goods and services, the surveillance of domestic public opinion which democratized war had made such an important weapon in the armoury of modern states.

(Dandeker 1990: 102)

Thus, the emergence of a large-scale governing machine covering the whole nation provoked other significant changes. As the whole population became the object of attention for the national government, both social integration among the population and ‘homogenization’ came to be seen as the necessary prerequisites for the nation-state to exist in the first place. The total war regime demanded that each member of the nation-state cooperate with the national purpose, that is, to achieve victory in war. In order to attain this, the whole of society within the nation-state became mobilized by smoothing over social conflicts and social exclusions such as class difference or discrimination on the grounds of gender or ethnicity. Total war provided more opportunity for women to join in the labour market, replacing the male labour force that was sent to the war front (Higonnet and Higonnet 1987; Takahashi 1992; also see Chapter 3). Meanwhile, volunteers from ethnic minorities who went to the war front were especially praised for doing so (Yamanouchi 1995: 10–12 and footnote 5).

However, this homogenization does not mean that society became more equal during the war. On the contrary, the integration process that occurred
within the nation-state during wartime incorporated each person into the nation-state system by assigning her/him an ‘appropriate’ role in a particular social system. Consequently, difference and discrimination became rationalized in a way which actually suited the nation-state system. Recent research on female cooperation with the war by feminist scholars shows that, at most, the incorporation of the female population into the nation-state system turned them into ‘second class’ citizens, regardless of which side that particular country allied with (Narita 1995; Ueno 1998: 87–92; Wakakuwa 1995/2000: 68–128). Therefore, as Yamanouchi argues, the total war regime led to an enhancement in the systemization and rationalization of the nation-state (Yamanouchi 1995: 11–13). Moreover, the advancement of modernization can be observed through the organization of the total war regime. It rationalized the systems of the nation-state, and systematically integrated people into the nation-state system in the name of ‘citizenship’. In this respect, it could even be said that the total war regime completed the process of creating ‘society’.

In this system, the entitlement to public assistance came to be institutionally established for each citizen. Some basic welfare provisions provided by the state such as child benefit or prenatal support were realized in both Allied and Axis nations during the Second World War, and the life of each citizen became more deeply interwoven with the nation-state. In this sense, the implementation of total war provided a mechanism for realizing the ‘governmentalization of the state’ in the nation-state system, although the total war regime is by no mean a liberal government. By establishing a total war system, a system was established whereby the national population could be administered. In such a system of governing, each member of the nation-state became the very focus of state government, and the state sought to mobilize individuals as human resources for war purposes. In order to do so, administrative bodies established a sophisticated web of mechanisms capable of surveying the population and promoting the internalization of discipline.

In sum, total war brought about the first comprehensive governing system whereby the everyday life of each member of the state became the concern of the national government. Also, this system strengthened solidarity within the geographical territory of the nation-state itself, and consequently, ‘society’ came to be promoted within this structure. Under this system, the national government organized a flexible assembly of a multitude of agents of governing where the national level of governing apparatus is closely linked to local ones such as schools and medical professions. By using this mechanism, the national government became better able to intervene in the private lives of its citizens through means of different local agents. That is to say, the governing mechanism established during the total war period made it possible for a nation-state to implement ‘government at a distance’ (Miller and Rose 1993: 83) over its complete geographical territory.

The postwar welfare state was established on the basis of an advanced national governing system constructed during the wartime. This constituted,
in effect, an early legitimatization of the state in providing the means to secure people’s lives from latent ‘misfortunes’ (i.e. natural or financial disasters and so on) and ‘dysfunctions’ (i.e. ageing or disability and so on) by means of ‘socializing’ such risks. It was also the first time that those means provided by the state were recognized as a social right, which might in theory be ‘guaranteed’ for anyone in a nation-state. This ideal is clearly expressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations. Written in 1948, this document states in Article 25:

Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and his family including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

(United Nations 1948)

Member states are, as prescribed in the preamble, pledged to achieve this statement along with other human rights stated in the declaration. After the end of the Second World War, nation-states began to organize and establish a national welfare system in accordance with the principles expressed in the Declaration. The British welfare state, institutionalized by the Beveridge Report, ensured a national minimum standard for the whole population, a national social insurance system, full employment and a family allowance (Tabata 1988: 16–22; Shibata 1997: 35–6; Bryson 1992; Muncie and Wetherell 1997: 42–8). The Scandinavian welfare states were also established by social democratic initiatives on the basis of a broadly corporatist regime. Introducing social rights into the governing system is not restricted to European states, of course. Social provisions are found in the constitution of the newly independent India, or the postwar Japanese constitution drafted after defeat in the war.

In the course of the next twenty-five years, social expenditure expanded across the major industrialized states. The welfare state system came to be firmly established as a comprehensive and highly legitimated governing system. Politicians on the left and right not only accepted this governing system, but also engaged in its very promotion. The welfare state system was founded on a presupposition known as the ‘postwar consensus’. Pierson notes that this postwar consensus was formulated around three points:

1  Keynesian economic policies to secure full employment and economic growth domestically, within the agreed parameters of an essentially liberal capitalist international market;

2  a more or less ‘institutional’ welfare state to deal with the dysfunctions arising from this market economy;

3  broad-based agreement between left and right, and between capital and labour, over these basic social institutions (a market economy and a
welfare state) and the accommodation of their (legitimately) competing interests through elite-level negotiation'.

(Pierson 1991: 129)

The very predominance of the ‘postwar consensus’ led to the postwar welfare state system becoming in a sense ‘de-politicized’. The postwar Keynesian welfare state was now believed to be the best governing system in a liberal-democratic capitalist society, and the legitimacy of the postwar welfare state as a national governing system remained unthreatened. Hence, a mechanism of governing was developed in which a national government intervened in its people’s lives in order to secure a certain standard of life in its territory. In so doing, the state attempted to maintain its stability and safeguard its economic growth rate.

Thomas H. Marshall viewed this postwar consolidation of the welfare state as a process of evolution in the concept of citizenship. He classified historical development of citizenship into three dimensions: civil rights, which secured individual freedom such as property rights or freedom of speech; political rights, which ensured political participation through universal suffrage (initially for men); and social rights, which involved securing social welfare in society (Marshall 1950; Hirschman 1991). In other words, social rights appeared in the twentieth century to guarantee rights to education, economic welfare, labour and a minimum standard of life. This third right attempts to ensure not only institutional equality, but also actual equality among the population by embarking on ‘the social’ involving education, public medicine and so on. In this sense, the postwar welfare state was considered an achievement: its purpose was to minimize inequality between classes and provide a means of promoting equality by redistributing income and guaranteeing a minimum standard of living. In sum, social rights were a means to reconcile the contradictions between capitalist society and the democratic orientation towards equality (Procacci 1998: 13). For this purpose, a network of governing was developed that covered the whole society. The golden age of the welfare state system was, at the same time, considered as the institutional realization of the third stage of the evolution process of citizenship.

Importantly, the process in which the postwar welfare state was consolidated and citizenship was granted made each member of the nation-state a ‘subject of welfare’. As Leonard comments:

The subjects of the welfare state find themselves located within these discursive constructs, their subject positions carrying with them a moral judgement and an incitement, in the present or in the future, to moral instruction by state apparatuses. But perhaps most important for the constructing of subjectivity within the area of state welfare has been the discursive division between the subject as dependent or independent.

(Leonard 1997: 50)
Leonard’s comments here demonstrate how the postwar welfare state appeared as a set of discourses. The postwar welfare state provided a population within its territory with a normative framework of dependence/independence, whereby individuals formed their own identities. Thus, the postwar welfare state not only fostered and managed its population through governmental interventions in people’s everyday lives, but also turned each member of the population into a subject. This suggests that the postwar welfare state was deeply rooted in the government in terms of governmentality.

The linear view of citizenship advanced by Marshall was deemed somewhat optimistic by the 1970s, or rather, it did not allow the historical process behind it to be sufficiently observed. Faced with economic difficulty after a period of global economic growth, social rights were seen as vulnerable within the modern nation-state system, and the welfare state again became politicized. Reactions against the postwar welfare system appeared as a predominant trend in the 1970’s due to changes in economic structure. This phenomenon will be examined more closely in the next section.

The welfare state in crisis and the ‘enterprising self’

Since the late 1960s, major industrialized states have been forced to face contradictions within the modern nation-state system. A number of ‘new’ social and cultural movements such as anti-discrimination movements or women’s movements, to name but a few, appeared to voice a ‘problem without a name’ in the postwar socio-political system. Meanwhile, the serious world-wide economic setback caused by stagflation and the ‘oil shocks’ of 1973–4 damaged the Keynesian premises and optimistic expectations of the postwar ‘myth of growth’. Such destabilization of the postwar social, cultural and political arrangements brought fierce criticism from all sides of the political spectrum with regard to the welfare state as a national governing system deeply rooted in the postwar consensus. Not only the neo-liberals or neo-Marxists, but also feminists, anti-racists or ecologists questioned the validity of governing by the welfare state at multiple levels. As a result of this, the welfare state came to be re-politicized as part of the political agenda.

In considering a multitude of critiques regarding the welfare state since the 1960s, there are similarities between different schools, regardless of obvious ideological differences, especially regarding the roles of the market mechanism. Firstly, the governing apparatus of the welfare state, now an enormous body, appeared to be the main target of criticism. The welfare state system was responsible for the implementation of numerous policies from the planning of the national economy down to securing people’s lives by reducing potential risks. This required a comprehensive governing mechanism, and consequently, both the government and administrative system have become a ‘large government’ that consumes a substantial budget every
year. This large government is closely bound up with other social/private agents located outside of the sphere of the political, and constitutes a ‘corporatist’ regime where conventional social democrat forces such as trade unions co-act with the government so as to maintain and amplify their interests. The neo-liberals see the functions of the market as being primarily a social and political adjustment mechanism, so that ‘big government’ is unsustainable and costly during periods of low growth. Therefore, it sees the enormous body of government as something that needs to be eliminated, since it disturbs the market economy and sound governing. Neo-Marxists, allied with feminists and anti-racists, agree with neo-liberals that such a large government is deficient in terms of governability. For them, the enormous governing body of the welfare state system has become an obstacle to delivering appropriate services to those who need them, as its bureaucratic system lacks the flexibility to respond to cultural and social diversity in society. In consequence, the governing system of the welfare state is against the principles of democratic rule (Offe 1996: 149–57).

Secondly, the ‘large government’ of the welfare state system is criticized by all schools in ethical terms. For neo-liberals, large government oppresses and violates the autonomy and freedom of individual citizens, while the neo-Marxists also problematize the oppressive character of large government. From Fordism rooted in Antonio Gramsci’s or Marcuse’s ‘one-dimensional man’ to Habermas’s ‘colonization of the life world’, innumerable accounts have been given from the centre-left relating to the effects of social control brought about by the enormous governing system of the postwar welfare state. Such accounts also highlight the alienation that results from government (Pierson 1991: 53–6). Feminists and anti-racists also joined this argument.13

Thirdly, as a counterpoint to the critiques of the postwar welfare state system named above, agencies composed of individuals or private associations, from families to voluntary organizations such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or non-profit organizations (NPOs), became central to the debate. ‘Dependency’ or ‘dependency culture’ was an oft-discussed term in the 1980s, and these debates elevated the value of the term ‘enterprise’ to a cultural and moral position within the social lexicon. In Britain, under Margaret Thatcher’s conservative party, ‘enterprise’ – that is, ‘each striving to maximize its own advantage by inventing and promoting new projects by means of individual and local calculations of strategies and tactics, costs and benefits’ (Rose 1992: 145)14 – was considered to be an essential concept on which ‘new Britain’ tried to rebuild its nationhood through national economic revival. As Thatcher herself stated ‘our aim has always been more than just economic process; it is to renew the spirit and solidarity of the nation’ (cited in Heelas and Morris 1992: 1).15 ‘Expertise’ as a cultural and moral norm encourages individuals to organize their lives around a life-aim of maximizing the self. Moreover, each individual is expected to endeavour to obtain the necessary skills and know-how and by
using and advancing these intellectual resources one tries to amplify one’s ‘own power, happiness and the quality of life’ (Rose 1992: 151).16

In terms of enterprising activities, neo-Marxists or other schools which seek new ways of political challenge do not seem to be entirely at odds with the standpoint of the alliance of neo-liberalism and neo-conservatism. Since the 1970s, new types of social movements, later coined ‘New Social Movements’ (NSMs) attracted the attention of social scientists. This type of new social movement, in which women’s movements, peace movements or ecologist movements fall, ‘abandons revolutionary dreams in favour of the idea of structural reform’ (Cohen 1985: 664), and at the same time, raised different kind of issues centred around identity and everyday life from the preceding labour movements. NSMs criticized the bureaucratic system, and consequently, refused to have such rigid organization as political parties or trade unions. Instead of becoming quasi-public organizations in the corporatist system, they took the forms of NGOs or NPOs. Nor were NSMs comprehensive in that they did not deal with a wide range of problems. Rather, each was oriented to a particular issue. At the same time, however, NSMs created horizontal loose-networks with other movements, and by utilizing the networks, had the ability to organize major demonstrations if necessary. Cohen notes that ‘the NSMs have all raised the theme of the self-defence of ‘society’ against the state (and the market economy), since they all, in one way or another, struggle for a ‘postbourgeois, post patriarchal’, and democratic civil society’ (Cohen 1985: 664). According to Offe, however, these activities by the NSMs led to the impossibility of governing contemporary states in major industrialized states. He argues as follows:

As public policies win more direct and more visible impact upon citizens, citizens in turn try to win a more visible immediate and more comprehensive control over political elites by means that are seen frequently to be incompatible with the maintenance of the institutional order of the polity.

(Offe 1985: 817)

What Offe notes here is resistance from the social sphere which attempted to regain control over the bureaucratic system of large government, and this resistance started to disturb the governing system. Therefore, a body of research on NSMs suggests, firstly, that they were growing counter-movements from the grassroots level seeking autonomy and redefinition of identity in the welfare state system, and at the same time, and secondly, there was growing interest among centre-left critics such as neo-Marxists and feminists in these contemporary counter-movements.

As such, it might be said that there is a certain pattern in a multitude of discourses which are critical of the welfare state system. First, such discourses problematize a large governing body that has lost flexibility and efficiency. In addition, they extend their argument to the moral/psychological
level (the welfare state as an oppressive system). Finally, they discuss methods and techniques of regaining autonomy as human-beings in contemporary society. Yet, they logically end up addressing different remedies according to their standpoints; while neo-liberals favour the market as a mechanism of adjustment and calibration in the social system, the centre-left side of the argument has been striving to reconfigure social democracy.

All in all, what is criticized here is an integrated governing machine of the nation-state based on solidarity in society. Here a redistributional system such as social benefits by which the welfare state system socializes various risks occurring in people’s everyday lives is denied or at best stigmatized, and every person is expected to be self-steering and responsible for their own autonomy. In short, they should literally be ‘an individual’. More concretely, this new situation requires every person to be productive, competent, competitive, and innovative: in the other words, to be ‘an enterprising self’, in all sites of everyday life such as the family, school, workplace, and even while at leisure. At the same time, dependency, the opposite state of the enterprising self, became construed as a pathological problem.

According to this increasingly accepted norm of enterprise, the reorganization of political, social and private entities was initiated, and the welfare state system was the main site of this transition. Since the 1980s, the welfare state has not only been ideologically criticized, but also institutionally reconstructed and, indeed, in some measure scaled down: nowadays, substantial parts of its functions have been ‘privatized’ or delegated to third parties. However, this revision came to be relatively more problematized in what Fraser and Gordon posit as the second track of a two-track system of welfare benefits, which is thought to indicate the state of dependency, for example benefits to low income families or to spouses of bread-winners (Fraser and Gordon 1994: 321). Throughout the twenty-year reconstruction of the welfare state system, many individual systems have been the main targets of this reduction. Today, they have been replaced by training or counselling schemes, for instance, whose aim is to lead dependants towards an enterprising state. As set against the programmes for dependants, programmes such as the old-age pension scheme have tended to maintain their legitimacy, and reduction or revision of such services still evokes fierce debates.

It was Margaret Thatcher who publicly stated the norm of enterprising and national governing on which the structural and institutional change of the welfare state system was based. She once commented:

I think we’ve been through a period where too many people have been given to understand that if they have a problem, it’s the government’s job to cope with it. ‘I have a problem. I’ll get a grant.’ ‘I’m homeless, the government must house me.’ They’re casting their problem on society. And, you know, there is no such thing as society. There are individual men and women, and there are families. And no government can do
anything except through people, and people must look after themselves first. It is our duty to look after ourselves, and then to look after our neighbours.\textsuperscript{18}

(cited in Dean 1999: 151)

Donzelot reveals the hidden import of Thatcher’s statement. He argues that there was ‘a considerable price to be paid’ for this development, as discussed above, regarding the large government of the welfare state system. He comments succinctly:

It [the price] is that, having eliminated responsibility from the sphere of social relations, the disposition of State and individuals is such that the former has to make allocations to everyone as the price of the \textit{promised} progress for which it is responsible, while individuals settle for being permanent claimants from the State as compensation for the grip on their evolution of which it has dispossessed them. And it is that between state and individuals, so it comes to be said, there is no longer a society.

(Donzelot 1993: 136)

Both statements crudely point to the bankruptcy of a fiction within governing practices of the welfare state system, namely that society might intervene in governing the welfare state system. In a welfare state system where governing mechanisms are organized across the private sphere, interventions in private lives carried out as a part of national provisions were realized by social and private agents or medium apparatuses (a Foucauldian term, referring to organizations and institutions located between state and individuals and dealing with matter relating to the everyday lives of individuals; typical examples of medium apparatuses are schools, hospitals and organizations related to social welfare) in the name of society. Most of these practices were not considered as national business, but as social and private matters. Consequently, the fiction that Marshall refers to as ‘social rights’ formed a part of a strategy employed by the nation-state in order to pursue economic growth and progress. However, the postwar consolidation and growth of the welfare state has increasingly ‘nationalized’ welfare provision to the extent that the presence of nation-state becomes predominant. This tendency was in particular strengthened when faced with the economic crisis after the oil shock across the major industrialized states. Accordingly, the fiction became recognized as ‘something to be eliminated’ in a vain effort being made by states seeking to recover from the crisis.

The norm of the ‘enterprising self’ during the reconstruction of the welfare state system provided major industrialized states with a chance of renovation and advancement following the recognition of problems in society. What was required by this norm was to strive to make oneself most useful and productive in the liberal capitalist and post-industrialized state by disciplining and caring for one’s own mind and body. In other words, now
each person is expected to exercise for themselves the internal powers of governing in the form of governmentality, namely ‘bio-power’, which was formally supposed to be functioning through various social agents and organizations in the welfare state system. Hence, what we can see here is a further rationalization of the economy of governing by transforming each member of the population into an agency which is able to conduct activities in accordance with the manner of the major industrialized state. Moreover, many of the left/liberal governments which took over the neo-conservative/neo-liberal administrations in the 1990s seem to share new norms and ‘elimination of the dependant’ has been established as a central theme for national government.

The result of this is double-edged. On the one hand, the ‘enterprising’ norm has created a greater chance for each person to exercise her or his own power in order to make her/his life better, or at least, create a greater recognition that each person can do so by exercising bio-power autonomously. However, on the other hand, as Rose mentions, there are a certain number of people, usually in the bottom of the social stratum, who fail to adjust themselves to the norms of enterprising, but those ‘dropouts’ or ‘deviants’ from the norms are rendered more marginal and invisible than ever (Rose 1992: 159–60). In this respect, the norm ‘enterprising self’ certainly functions in a way to constrain people’s subjectification, while it also empowers people in a sense that it contributes to a process of subjectification.

In summarizing the historical trajectories of governmental interventions in everyday life through the welfare state and the norm of the ‘enterprising self’, it can be argued that a governing system, in terms of governmentality, was further incorporated into the political system of nation-states. However, one should also emphasize that the mode of interventions varied between the first and second half of the postwar period. In the earlier era, states played a more central role in organizing a governing system that fostered and maintained the welfare of its population by socializing risks latent in everyday life. As a consequence, states often implemented rather direct interventions in everyday life, and state institutions and agents became deeply embroiled in everyday life.

This situation changed drastically from the 1960s to 1970s when the welfare state became an object of severe criticism across ‘post-industrial’ or ‘advanced capitalist’ countries, although there are certain differences derived from particular national contexts. Indeed, the welfare state now appeared to be too inefficient as a governing system that required a great amount of finance to maintain, and hence ‘the social’ that was posited in order to absorb socialized risks was required to be replaced by the norm of the ‘enterprising self’. This norm encourages each person to maximize her or his ability in accordance with the necessity and requirements of the liberal capitalist and post-industrialist states by disciplining and caring for one’s own mind and body. In this respect, each person is expected to be an agent in terms of governmentality, without direct intervention and surveillance on
the part of the states. The state still provides financial and moral support (for example, setting up and advertising job training courses targeting lone parents) for fostering the ‘enterprising self’ among its population.

The above historical trajectories of governmentality suggest that this concept continues to occupy a core part in the political system of nation-states today. Through this process, a particular form of governing that is concerned with people’s bodies, minds and lives became a more significant element of the nation-states’ conducts. This is the very reason that studies on governmentality offer indispensable insights into tri-dimensional reproduction, since tri-dimensional reproduction is basically a process that produces, fosters and maintains people’s bodies, minds and lives. Yet, in order to analyze tri-dimensional reproduction from the perspective of studies on governmentality, another concept, that is, ‘gender’, needs attention. Although this is an area that has not yet been fully explored in studies on governmentality, as will be discussed below, ‘gender’ seems to engrave governmentality in relation to reproduction.

Gender, family and the government of reproduction

The concept of ‘gender’ has been reformulated throughout the late 1980s and 1990s. ‘Gender’ was initially utilized in direct contrast to ‘sex’, to refer to culturally or socially constructed differences founded on (or learnt from) biological sexual differences (Oakley 1985: 173–88). As influenced by post-structuralist work that has sought to emphasize the discursive functions of producing power, this bipolar sex/gender distinction came to be severely contested by feminist scholars. For example, Scott points out that ‘gender’ has contributed to organizing and maintaining hierarchical relationships between men and women in society by producing knowledge regarding the differences between these two categories (Scott 1988: 25). Delphy further argues that ‘gender’ functions as ‘the principle of partition’ that established an asymmetrical and hierarchical relationship between two biological sexes (Delphy 1993: 3). These arguments by Scott and Delphy were further developed by Butler. For Butler, ‘gender’ is essentially a ‘performative’ notion. She argues that ‘the substantive effect of gender is performatively produced and compelled by regulatory practices of gender coherence’. Therefore, there is ‘no gender identity behind the expression of gender; that identity is performatively constituted by the very ‘expressions’ that are said to be its results’ (Butler 1990: 24–5). According to her, the performed and substantialized gender is, in effect, a quintessential part of ‘the institution of compulsory and naturalized heterosexuality’, since accompanied with the binary relation of sex and heterosexual desire, ‘gender’ constitutes a regulatory frame on which people’s practices are perceived (Butler 1990: 17).

The development of the concept of ‘gender’ provides an analytical tool which refers to the ‘differentiation mechanism’ or ‘system of knowledge of
differentiation’ regarding the dichotomy of female/male and masculinity/femininity (Franklin 1996; Nicholson 1994; Ueno 1995; Ehara 1995). This new means of analysis has come to be applied to a number of disciplines from history to political economy (Scott 1988; Folbre 1994; Cook and Roberts 2000). In this application, the concept of ‘gender’ reveals unquestioned and underlying assumptions in social science in which the ‘normal’ is constructed according to the standards of the masculine gender, as can be seen in the example of ‘citizenship’ or ‘rational choice’ theory (Folbre 1994: 4–10; Waylen 1998: 12–13; Waylen 2000: 17–19). In discussing the purposes of a ‘gendered political economy’, Waylen observes that one of the main themes of such an economy is as follows:

First, a gendered political economy needs to gender mainstream political economy whether ‘new’ or ‘old’. Too little of the current mainstream work takes gender into account either implicitly or explicitly, thereby rendering it partial and inaccurate. A gendered political economy has, for example, an important role to play in the re-evaluation of rational choice, emphasizing as it does the notion of purposeful choice, which can provide a bridge between the false dichotomy of structure and agency. It also stresses the need to analyze the reproductive as well as the productive economy, as well as the links between the two, for example through the analysis of women’s unpaid labour and a more sophisticated analysis of the household. While some political economy recognizes the socially constructed nature of institutions and markets, a gendered political economy highlights the need for gender as a dynamic to be fully incorporated within the analysis of these institutions and processes.

(Waylen 2000: 31–2)

As has been briefly mentioned above, studies relating to ‘governmentality’ have not yet fully incorporated the concept of gender into their analysis.

Yet, as long as governmentality is concerned with organizing people’s everyday lives and reproducing human lives, bodies and minds, ‘gender’ appears to be an essential element of analysis when considering governmentality: being defined according to the norm and knowledge concerning ‘gender’, men and women are conceived as different agents who are taking on different roles in society and in nation-states.

The notion of ‘family’, too, demonstrates the importance of ‘gender’ in discussing ‘governmentality’. By taking the French examples, Donzelot provides significant insights into the reorganization of the family during modernization, when the arts of governmentality were initially incorporated into the structure of the nation-state. According to him, for the last two hundred years, the family has been an indispensable part of the governing mechanism within France. Incorporation of the family into the governing system first started by reorganizing each family unit into a
modern (nuclear) family, which practised the care of children, undertaken, of course, by mothers. At the outset of *Emile*, Jean-Jacques Rousseau made an ardent appeal to women regarding the importance of childcare, and the need to keep their babies under their own care (Rousseau 1991: 37–8). In eighteenth-century France, women of the upper-middle class commonly sent their children away to be cared for by nannies, who were usually wives of peasants in the countryside, and they did not raise their children by themselves. In such a situation, children rarely saw their parents until they grew up, and frequently died due to improper care, or by being abandoned. Consequently, the child mortality rate remained high. This created a vicious cycle. Because children frequently died, women were compelled to give birth more frequently in order for a child to survive. However, an increased number of births led to more pronounced childcare problems, and hence more children died, or were abandoned. Rousseau’s work was an attempt to change this prevailing practice which caused mistreatment, and ultimately, a dysfunction of reproduction (Donzelot 1997: 9–13; Badinter 1981: 6–114).

Efforts to revise inefficient reproductive practices were initiated not only at a discursive level, but in the domain of governing practices, too. A national qualification system for medical professions was organized and newly established medical professionals, namely, doctors, started to become more deeply involved in the households of the upper middle class as ‘home doctors’, replacing female care-takers and midwives. Childbirth was, thus, ‘medicalized’. Also, basic medical knowledge regarding nutrition, hygiene and sexuality was introduced into each home through home doctors. Meanwhile, a national educational and disciplinary system was organized, first for middle-class children, then for working-class children and children with problematic behaviour. Teachers, social workers and counsellors were new, nationally qualified professionals assigned to implement disciplinary tasks in cooperation with each family (Donzelot 1997: 17–26).

In terms of increased modernization and industrialization, two changes occurred in the form of the family itself. Firstly, each person was encouraged to settle inside a newly formed ‘modern family’, organized, in effect, as an isolated space composed of only a couple sharing the strict sexual division of roles and children. Secondly, a number of agents who interacted with this new type of family emerged, and were situated around the family in order to help in its sound management. As a result of this, the family had become a part of the national governing system. In Donzelot’s words, what can be observed here is ‘the transition from a government of families to a government through the family’ (Donzelot 1997: 92). More concretely:

It [the family] became a relay, an obligatory or voluntary support for social imperatives, conforming to a process that did not consist in abolishing the family register but in exacerbating its existing tendencies, in exploiting to the maximum its advantages and drawbacks as perceived
by its own members, so as to link together normative requirements and economico-moral behaviors.

(Donzelot 1997: 92)

Through the mechanism described above, economic independence emerged as a key factor for families. On the one hand, ‘the absence of financial autonomy and the demand for assistance’ was marked as an ‘indicator of an immorality that produced educative and hygienic deficiencies and thus justified an economic tutelage to enforce these norms’. Consequently, families without economic independence appeared as ‘the object of a direct management’. On the other hand, families were able to maintain and augment economic independence by maximizing their economic competency. For this purpose, knowledge and techniques for organizing everyday life in a more ‘suitable’ way, in accordance with the norms of industrial society, were transmitted by systematized socialization, provided by social agents who were closely linked to families (Donzelot 1997: 92–3). For instance, Donzelot points out that the idea of saving was introduced into people’s everyday lives through philanthropic endeavours. According to him, the discourse on saving functioned because saving ‘enabled them [workers] to achieve a greater family autonomy [original emphasis] in relation to the blocks of dependence or networks of solidarity that continued to exist after a fashion’ (Donzelot 1997: 57).

Secondly, the transition in the form of the family enabled a certain type of family, namely the modern family, to be ‘homogenized’. It was the ‘bourgeois’ family, rather than the ‘working-class’ family, that provided the model and normative values around which families were organized. As Donzelot maintains, ‘the device of savings, educational prompting, and relational counselling became operative by connecting the moralized and normalized working class family to the bourgeois family’. He adds that between ‘the powerlessness of the former and the blossoming of the latter, they wove an obsessive web of social promotion which was to furnish the petty bourgeois with its characteristic traits, its overinvestment of family life, its sense of economy, its fascination with education, its frantic pursuit of everything that might make it into a good “environment” ’ (Donzelot 1997: 93). In this sense, the family was transformed as an entity, to become deeply incorporated into a web of governing mechanisms through a number of social agents, and so pursued better human and economic reproduction and socio-political reproduction. Importantly, this form of family established the sexual division of labour within the family: women increasingly became reproducers rather than producers in the domestic sphere, taking responsibility for raising and educating children and caring for family members. Through this process, more women of the upper-middle-class households were encouraged to stay at home via a multitude of discourses on childcare and the education of children, as were more women of working-class families who worked outside of the home in order
to subsidize household income. At the same time, demands for welfare provisions, for example, family wages, public housing and public education, increased (Donzelot 1997: 39–40; Land 1980: 56–9).

Donzelot’s analysis of the reorganization of the family demonstrates that the family has become a locus of governmentality in the process of modernization. The family has provided care and socialization by cooperating with other social agents. In effect, it cares for, raises and comforts human beings, and transmits knowledge and techniques required for a member of the nation-state. In other words, it has become the locus in which bio-power is played out. More importantly, bio-power works in two ways. On the one hand, it is directed by the national government to the family, in order to control each person through the family. On the other hand, as discussed above, bio-power produces and raises human beings, and provides a chance for ‘autonomy’ in so far as families and individuals within families act in accordance with the values of major industrialized states. According to Donzelot, even well into the latter part of the twentieth century, the function of the family as a locus of governmentality appeared to be intensified through the advancement of technologies to care for and discipline individuals and families in areas of Freudian psychiatry, education and Keynesian economic arrangement in which ‘a circular functionality between the two registers of the production of goods and the production of the producers (and consumers)’ are formed (Donzelot 1997: 232). In this governing system, ‘familiasm’ that seeks the development of family life based on the celebrated theme of the ‘happy family’ became ‘the locomotive to which all the elements of today’s policy in matters of sexuality, reproduction, and education were progressively attached’ (Donzelot 1997: 198).

It must be noted that there is significant tension between Donzelot’s analysis and feminist studies. Donzelot argues that the rise of the modern form of the family undermined ‘patriarchal domination’ within the family. For example, in discussing the philanthropic strategies of state intervention based on the implementation of ‘bio-power’, which attempted to foster and discipline those who needed assistance, Donzelot writes:

If the hygienist norms [original emphasis] pertaining to the rearing, labour, and education of children were able to take effect, this was because they offered children, and correlatively women, the possibility of increased autonomy within the family in opposition to patriarchal authority [original emphasis].

(Donzelot 1997: 57)

This statement, in fact, contradicts feminist claims that posit patriarchal domination as an essential part of the modern family, especially when considering women’s economic dependence on male bread-winners (Delphy and Leonard 1992: 136–44). Replying to this feminist criticism, Donzelot argues as follows:
In working-class and bourgeois strata alike – albeit by quite different means and with different results – women were the main point of support for all the actions that were directed toward a reformulation of family life. For example, the woman was chosen by the medical and teaching professions to work in partnership with them in order to disseminate their principles, to win adherence to the new norms, within the home. This is not to deny the resistances of women to this domestic instrumentalization of their persons – for example, their resistance to the reduction of their mastery in the ancient techniques of the body in exchange for the role of devoted auxiliaries of men doctors. But this is providing we recognize the extent of the revaluation of power relations between man and woman inside family, which was the positive consequence for the latter. It is on condition that we perceive in this increase of woman’s domestic power not only the support of all the ‘social’ professions that would give her a new access to public life but also the springboard she needed for the recognition of her political rights. How are we to assess the importance of militant feminism in the nineteenth century if we ignore its alliance with social philanthropy?

(Donzelot 1997: xxii–xxiii)

It seems, however, that the feminist analysis of patriarchy and Donzelot’s discussion of family reformation may ultimately be different sides of the same coin. Feminists, in effect, problematized the modern family in that it tended to fix women in their gender role, designating them as reproducers rather than producers in the domestic sphere, through the regime of the sexual division of labour. In consequence, women were economically, psychologically and morally subordinate to men. On the other hand, Donzelot points out that women’s gender role within the family offered them opportunities, firstly to change power relationships within the family through their roles as wives and mothers, and second, to channel themselves into the public domain by utilizing their gender role. In this sense, ‘gender’ as a ‘differentiation mechanism’ functioned in two ways in the governing system in terms of governmentality: ‘gender’ empowers women while constraining them within the gender norm. This dualism of constraint and empowerment, which can be observed in the government of governmentality, makes the concept of gender an essential component in analyzing the government of reproduction.

Summary: governmentality and Japanese modernization

This chapter has discussed the development of a governing system based on ‘governmentality’, in which ‘bio-power’, namely power that is concerned with human bodies, minds and subjectivities, or in other words, with the reproduction of human beings, functions at the level of everyday life. In particular, studies on governmentality shed light on the process of ‘the
governmentalization of the state’, through which ‘bio-power’ has been incorporated into national government and the body, mind and the ‘subjectivity’ of the population, as a primary object of the government practised by nation-states. In this governing system, tri-dimensional reproduction (namely, childbirth, training and the education of children, the maintenance and renewal of the labour force as well as the whole population) appeared as a central focus of national government. The institutional realization of ‘the governmentalization of the state’ was the postwar welfare state. The welfare state became an object of fierce criticism as a governing system from the 1960s to 1970s, but today, the ‘enterprising self’ emerged as an enhanced form and norm of the government that drives each member of the population to be competent and productive in advanced liberal capitalist societies. Finally, although studies of governmentality have been underscored here, analysis of ‘gender’ and ‘family’ can provide an indispensable perspective on governments, in particular regarding the tri-dimensional biological, economic and socio-political reproductions, as the concept of gender functions as a ‘distinction mechanism’ in hierarchical relationships.

At first glance, resorting to ‘governmentality’ as an analytic tool seems to provoke controversy, since governmentality and Foucauldian discussion is deeply rooted in the European intellectual tradition, and hence there is always the possibility that it might not be ‘adaptable’ to the Japanese situation. Nevertheless, the use of governmentality here might be justified or even necessary for the following three main reasons. Firstly, Japan was not alone in modernizing itself in the late nineteenth century: indeed, the modernization process was ‘enthusiastically’ carried out through multiple interactions with Western European and North American states. In this process, knowledge and information regarding modern technologies from law and the military system to medicine, hygiene and education, which are closely related to governmentality, were transmitted from the West to Japan. This suggests that the Japanese experience may actually be synchronized with the Western experience in the development of governmentality. Moreover, the course of modernization and industrialization in Japan from the nineteenth century to the present suggests that the development of the Japanese nation-state and economy have traced the same trajectory observed in the genealogy of governmentality discussed above. Namely, phenomena such as nation-building, industrialization, total war, the Keynesian welfare state and the welfare state in crisis are commonly observable in Japan, even though the actual embodiment of them in Japan may also demonstrate some departure from Western models. In this sense, not only is the focus on governmentality indispensable to the analysis of modern and contemporary Japanese state, economy and society, but it can also illustrate some uniqueness in the Japanese case. Secondly, as will be stated in the following chapters, reproduction has been a primary concern of the modern Japanese government in order to achieve national development. Given the close relationship between different forms of reproduction and bio-power, studies on governmentality
should thus offer useful insights that might lead to a more effective analysis of the Japanese context itself. Finally, it seems that to dismiss the usefulness of a particular European theory to the Japanese situation is as misguided as it would be to adopt unquestioningly a European theory on the Japanese situation. Both extremes, in effect, ignore the need for casting ‘a fresh eye’ on the differences between Western Europe, North America and Japan posited by conventional research, in which the Japanese experience has been interpreted from the dichotomies of Eurocentrism or ‘Nihon tokushu-ron’ (Japanese uniqueness). In this sense, the subsequent chapters of this study are a series of attempts to illuminate and envisage Japanese modern history in a different way.
2 The creation of a modern reproductive system in prewar Japan

Introduction

Maruyama Masao, one of the most influential scholars in social science in postwar Japan, wrote in his article ‘The Premodern Formation of Nationalism’ (Kokuminshugi no Zenkiteki Keisei) in 1944,\(^1\) that the ‘Japanese nation’ in the modern sense did not exist when Japan embarked on its path to modernization in the late nineteenth century. While the Tokugawa Shogunate ruling system was in fact a league of regional fiefs (han) that local feudal lords (daimyō) ruled with relatively independent administrative power, the rigid class division between people hampered vertical interactions and communications between classes, indispensable in the creation of a modern nation-state. Hence, both the ruling systems and the people were so geographically and socially divided that political integration as a nation lay beyond people’s perception. The British diplomat Sir Ernest Satow witnessed in the middle of the conflict between a fief and the allied Western marine forces (Britain, the US, France and the Netherlands) that local people voluntarily and happily helped the allied force to remove cannons, obstacles that had caused considerable difficulty in their everyday lives (Maruyama vol. 2 1996: 240), when the administrative body ruling the region where they lived surrendered.\(^2\)

The 1990s witnessed a flourishing of literature concerning Japanese nation-building and the creation of the Japanese nation through its modernization process both within and beyond Japan (Tokyo Daigaku Shakaikagaku Kenkyūjo ‘Gendai Nihon Shakai’ Kenkyukai 1991b; Nishikawa and Matsumiya 1995; Oguma 1995; Lee 1996; Sakai 1997; Morris-Suzuki 1998; Vlastos 1998). In various social science disciplines, ‘the creation of the nation-state’ became a focus of academic debate. Influenced by Hobsbawm’s *The Inventions of Tradition* (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983) and Anderson’s *Imagined Communities* (1991), a multitude of social and cultural practices that helped to build the Japanese modern nation-state, for example, the school system, the national gymnastic competition, art exhibitions, literature, the writing system and the mass media, have appeared as objects of academic scrutiny (Fujii 1994; Yoshimi 1992; Yoshimi 1994; Fujitani 1994).
Feminist scholarship in Japan has been essential to this movement. The ‘second-class’ citizenship of women inside the nation-state has been/is derived from the ‘gendered’ structure of nation-states. Hence, the deconstruction and demystification of the Japanese nation-state from the perspective of gender (see Chapter 1) has become a primary task for Japanese feminists wishing to analyze women’s situations in past and present-day Japan (Ueno 1998: 24–7). By the new millennium, numerous works had been produced, analyzing the following: the development of modern female education (Koyama 1991; Kashiwagi 1995); the activities of women’s organizations and their leaders (Suzuki 1989a; Suzuki 1989b; Suzuki 1997; Narita 1995); policy-making or political movements (Tachi 1994; Miyake 1994); and the nationalization of medical and popular practices in the management of women’s bodies and their sexuality (Yoshimura 1985; Fujime 1997). What these studies inform us about are the different channels of ‘incorporation of women into the nation-state’ (jōsei no kokumin). In reading them, we may learn of the hidden side of the nation-state, that is, interventions made by the nation-state into the everyday lives of women, which have conventionally not been discussed in research on modern Japan. Consequently, this new perspective has posited a different problematic of modernization and nation-building.

In this chapter, we shall analyze the process of the creation of the reproductive system in the Japanese nation-state following the establishment of the Meiji government. This task will be carried out with specific reference to the findings of historical research on the incorporation of women into the nation-state. The reason for placing a focus on women is that they appeared as a primary target of state intervention. The ubiquitous presumption within the medical, legal and political spheres as well as among the general populace posits that women are the main actors in, and are mainly responsible for, biological, economic and socio-political reproduction. Through the discussion, therefore, what is to be presented is, firstly, the fundamental interests of the Japanese nation-state in the ‘private domain’, and, secondly, the systematization of political techniques that manage objects in the private domain, namely, people’s (especially women’s) lives and bodies, leading as they did in the case of the Japanese state to form the reproductive system across the three areas of reproduction (biological, economic, and socio-political). However, at the same time, those state strategies of incorporation resulted in fostering ‘agency’ among some elite Japanese women at the time; that is, women emerged as independent actors with volition. Consequently, as a final point, women’s negotiations with the state’s strategy will be also discussed. In this sense, the following brief discussion of historical events since the late nineteenth century is by no means a comprehensive history of modern Japanese women or other topics. Rather, it aims to examine how women were linked to as well as linked themselves to different practices of reproduction at the beginning of modernity in Japan.
**Fukoku kyōhei policy and the politicization of reproductive issues**

In his lecture on ‘governmentality’, Foucault stated that ‘governmentality’, which introduced issues concerning ‘the population’ into the political and administrative vocabulary, was born out of the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, as well as the archaic model of Christian pastoral power (Foucault 1991: 104). When newly established nation-states in Europe started to form modern international relations where the balance of power was sustained by the diplomatic and military competence of each nation-state, the population of these nation-states appeared as an essential object of governing, forming as they did the very base of their national strength, with which states compete in the international system. Foucault explained this mechanism by referring to von Justi’s eighteenth-century theorization of ‘police’, by which individuals were kept ‘happy’ – happiness being understood ‘as survival, life, and improved living’ ‘in such a way that their development fosters that of the strength of the state’ (Foucault 1981: 251–2). Hence, the state began to investigate and analyze the ‘population’, a group of people inhabiting the state, in order to revise its conditions of life.

In Japan, the initiation of the modernization process was externally brought about by an encounter with the modernized West. The ‘arrival of the black ships’ led by the American, Commodore Perry, after over two hundred years of voluntary self-enclosure remains almost synonymous with the beginning of Japan’s modernization. In other words, the picture of black ships carrying monstrous images of the ‘Other’4 pressed Japan to depart from the stable feudal state and to go forward to the modernization process. Hence, for leaders of the Meiji Restoration, who began a fundamental transition from the feudal political and social system to the new, modern and Westernized one, the possibility of a period of modernization was ‘imperative’ in order to survive in international relations. Otherwise, Japan would become a colony of powerful Western states, as had been the case in China after the Opium War from 1840 to 1842, and already a sense of colonization had partly been realized in Japan in the form of the considerably unequal treaties concluded with the Western states.5

Consequently, strengthening the state was considered as the primary task by the leaders of the new Meiji government, and it was widely recognized that this must be carried out by eliminating feudal social and political elements and catching up with Western states, i.e., by modernizing the Japanese nation. ‘Fukoku kyōhei’ (‘enrich the country, strengthen the military’) was a national goal widely discussed among elites in the early Meiji period. For this purpose, ‘wakon yōsai’ (‘Japanese spirit, Western knowledge’, meaning that the Japanese absorb Western knowledge while keeping the Japanese spirit) was advocated as the optimum means for Japan to choose so as to proceed along the path of modernization.

It was the Meiji enlightenment ideologues gathered around the Meirokusha 6 who had an influential voice in advocating Japanese modernization in the
early Meiji period. In the *Meiroku Zasshi*, a magazine published by the Meirokusha, as in the European Enlightenment, various kinds of themes regarding the modernization of the Japanese nation and society through Westernization, from the romanization of the Japanese script to abolition of the public prostitution system, were discussed, and thus, issues concerning women, especially in terms of reproduction, were among the crucial tasks of modernization as identified by the Meirokusha. Here, women, as well as men, appeared as ‘subjects’ of the modernization project, showing a clear contrast with the previous period.

It was Mori Arinori who first addressed ‘the women problem’ in the magazine. First of all, he problematized the widely spread and admitted practice among men of having concubines, which resulted in women’s slavery and subjugation to men. In feudal Japanese society, it was common for men in the upper middle class to have concubines besides their wives, such a practice being normal among men in the late nineteenth century when the new Japanese nation attempted to join the circle of ‘civilized countries’. Mori came out in clear opposition to this practice, stating that the wife and husband should be equal, as the wife managed the household and educated the children while the husband engaged in business outside the house (Inoue 1975: 30–5; Sievers 1983: 20–1; S. Kaneko 1999: 24). The same point was made by Fukuzawa Yukichi (Inoue 1975: 26–30; S. Kaneko 1999: 24). Nakamura Masanao and Tsuda Mamichi further stressed the importance of equality between the married couple and of female education for turning women into competent mothers. Nakamura wrote an article entitled ‘On Creating a Good Mother’ (*Zenryōnaru Haha o Tsukuru Setsu*), stating that good mothers were indispensable in order to increase the strength of the Japanese nation. To become a civilized state based on the Western model, procreating and raising good children was essential, and for this purpose, women were required to be educated, just as were men (Nakamura 1875: 208).

As such, for the Meirokusha group, educating and enlightening the female population in the new Japanese nation-state appeared to lie at the heart of the Japanese modernization project. It is worth noting that the discourse of the Meirokusha was considerably diverse, and often constructed for purely rhetoric purposes. Yet the following four points need to be noted in relation to reproductive practices. Firstly, writers of the Meirokusha group generally addressed their opinion from a firmly held value perspective towards the state and the relationship between Japan and the ‘West’ as the Other. A large part of the group had travelled to Europe and North America, and this allowed them to determine those elements and components of Western civilization, from lifestyle to philosophy such as the natural rights theory, that the Japanese nation needed to absorb. On the other hand, their travels encouraged them to reflect on Chinese civilization, especially Confucianism, which had dominated the Japanese intellectual world in Tokugawa Japan. Through their experience in various Western
countries, Chinese civilization essentially turned into a representation of the backward state of the non-Western world. Hence, they had a strong inclination towards the importation of Western techniques, knowledge and value systems including lifestyle. This is the very reason why the Meirokusha group raised the issue of inequality between men and women, and the importance of female education. For the Meirokusha group, the state of Japanese women, especially their subjugated position and lack of intellectual competence, in comparison with their Western contemporaries who were acting as equal partners of husbands by governing the domestic sphere, symbolized the uncivilized and unenlightened Japanese state. Therefore, reforming the status of Japanese women into one equivalent to that of Western women appeared to be a crucial part of the modernization project planned by the Meirokusha.

The second point is that the Meirokusha group emphasized the value of modern romantic marriages and the gender role of women as wives and mothers that were the prevailing norms and practices among middle-class homes in the West, especially in Victorian Britain. Moreover, they often acted on their ideas, and thus both Mori and Fukuzawa committed contractual marriages with their wives as ‘equal partners’. For this purpose, the group addressed the importance of introducing and extending modern education for women in order to prepare them to be good mothers. For example, in the oft-quoted words below, Nakamura stated:

Thus we must invariably have fine mothers if we want effectively to advance the people to the area of enlightenment and to alter their customs and conditions for the good. If the mothers are superb, they can have superb children, and Japan can become a splendid country in later generations. We can then have people trained in religious and moral education as well as in the sciences and arts whose intellects are advanced, whose minds are elevated, and whose conduct is high. Not having had adequate prenatal educational nourishment, I am at middle age unable sufficiently to realize my ambitions, only sadly languishing in shabby quarters (Japan) and envying the enlightenment of Europe and America. I have a deep, irrepressible desire that later generations shall be reared by fine mothers (translated by Braisted).

(Nakamura 1875: 208; Braisted 1976: 401–2)

In this discourse, women’s presence was reduced to being mothers, and in this very sense, women deserved to be educated. Yet this was a very radical idea, as Koyama points out, for in the previous period, men were largely involved in household management including the education of children while women were left uneducated according to the feudal norm (Koyama 1999: 16–25). In this sense, the modern sexual division of labour that the Meirokusha advocated was something new that needed to be imported from Western society.
Thirdly, as a logical consequence of the second point, the Meirokusha group was undoubtedly grounded on the premise of a difference in nature between men and women. This led them to the common tendency to stress the importance of general equality between men and women, but the equality often failed to be extended to political rights or economic independence by committing to paid work outside of the home (Sievers 1983: 20–2). In other words, the Meirokusha group addressed equality between men and women and the importance of female education as far as the norm and nature of the gender role of women could allow. For instance, Kaneko analyzes Fukuzawa's discourses on women, concluding that Fukuzawa’s intention was to reform women’s status within the home, and for this reason, his writings on women collected substantial support from contemporary men. For Fukuzawa, women were required to acquire legal and economic knowledge as far as was necessary for them to manage the household economy, and were capable of receiving education as far as menstruation, childbirth and child-rearing, namely women's biological functions allowed (S. Kaneko 1999: 57). It was Ueki Emori, a leading activist of the People’s Rights Movement (Jiyū Minken Undō) influenced by the works of John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer, who addressed women’s political rights and the issue of general suffrage (S. Kaneko 1999: 55–60).

Fourthly, it may be said that for the Meirokusha group, the attainment of equality between men and women and female education itself were the tools for modernization: their ultimate object lay in the increase of the strength of the Japanese nation. As Nakamura’s article (cited above) clarifies, women were required to be educated in order to raise good children, future members of the nation-state, and in so doing, Japan would be a better state. In other words, the women’s issue was only discussed, in relation with, and in the scope of, fukoku kyōhei.

It would nevertheless be misleading to say that all writings by members of the Meirokusha had such tendencies. Rather, staunch opposition to female enlightenment surfaced even inside the Meirokusha. For example, Katō Hiroyuki bitterly criticized the idea of sexual equality addressed by Fukuzawa and Nakamura in a later issue of the Meiroku Zasshi (Kato 1875: 70–81). It should also be noted that the members of the Meirokusha came from the elite in the bureaucracy and academia, and their discourses on female enlightenment were only accepted and experienced by a small number of people within the Christian school.10 The reality of people’s everyday lives was far from those of their Westernised counterparts.

Nevertheless, the discourse of the Meirokusha on female enlightenment remains a significant paradigm change regarding women and their reproductive functions in the following three senses. Firstly, it introduced and advocated the modern idea of the division of labour by sex, which gradually infiltrated into Japanese society through its modernization process. As Oakley’s classic work informs us, the sexual division of labour emerged as a common model of family forming in the process of industrialization and the
development of capitalism (Oakley 1976; Ueno 1996b). Facing the need for the rapid development of the Japanese nation-state and capitalism, the model of the sexual division of labour suited to the time of economic expansion was chosen as a model of the family in a new era in Japan. Secondly, in so doing, it clarified that Japanese women should take domestic responsibilities as competent agents and raising children, preferably good children, as women’s duty. Thirdly, it clearly posited the maintenance and improvement of the population as a national task. As discussed above, the Meirokusha group advocated the importance of female education insofar as it was a way of making Japan a stronger, more competent state through procreating and raising good children. Here, biological, economic and socio-political reproductions were firmly linked, and these three dimensions of reproduction were posited as crucial parts of the fukoku kyōhei policy of the Meiji government. In this sense, the Meirokusha group was well aware of the logic of governmentality, and the importance of caring for and surveying the population for the management of modern nation-states. And for this purpose, it recognized that women should take some part.

Waiting for the aftermath of the Meiji Restoration to settle, the newly established government introduced various policies that dealt with biological, economic and socio-political reproduction in the modernized way. The Meirokusha broke up in 1874, but its members remained in the bureaucracy and academia, and contributed to the realization and implementation of ideas for strengthening Japan by making the female population more competent agents. As this suggests, the discourse of the Meirokusha on female enlightenment set the course and scope of discussion on women’s issues regarding reproduction in prewar Japan.

State regulation of biological reproduction

From a perspective that emphasizes the strengthening of the state, biological reproduction remains a key element in keeping the population in a desirable condition for the state by renewing its members. Biological reproduction is a precondition for raising a good and healthy population for the modern nation-state. Therefore childbirth, and women’s pregnancy and the labour that results in childbirth, should be safely carried out without any deterrents. For this purpose, modern nation-states intervene in human procreation (Ochiai 1989: 83–9; Marumoto and Yamamoto 1997: 6). Under the fukoku kyōhei policy, the Japanese government also realized the importance of the implementation of policies facilitating ‘good’ biological reproduction, simply because without ‘good’ biological reproduction, neither ‘good’ soldiers nor ‘good’ mothers were available. Hence, in targeting biological reproduction, the government set up a series of orders and regulations intended to modernize and control biological reproductive processes, namely, childbirth and abortion.
It was in its first year of governing, 1868, that the Meiji government nationally banned abortion and infanticide, previously commonly practised among Japanese people as a method of birth control (Miyasaka 1990: 97–100; Ōta 1991: 167–74; Tama 1991: 202). There continue to be ongoing debates over details of popular practices of abortion and infanticide in the Edo period, but it could be said that although the Tokugawa Shogunate officially prohibited abortion and infanticide by the direct order of the Shogunate, and those who committed these practices were sometimes (but not always) punished, there was no effective way other than abortion and infanticide of controlling the number of children. Consequently, abortion and infanticide remained popular practices of birth control, particularly in the early and mid Edo period. In cities, obstetricians developed various techniques of abortion and attracted popular attention. In rural areas, the demand for abortion and infanticide was especially strong among the peasant classes, which survived under severe life conditions due to the duty of delivering an annual tribute to the lord. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the population actually fell under the reproductive level in some fiefs due to the widespread practice of abortion and infanticide, and that drove those fiefs to occasional initiatives for the promotion of childcare and development of local industry, which in some cases worked (Tama 1991: 200–2). Towards the late Edo period, the negative discourse on abortion and infanticide increased, and prepared the ground for the modern attitude that posited abortion and infanticide as criminal acts in many areas of Japan (Ochiai 1989: 65–9).

In December 1868, the Meiji government announced an Executive Council Order (Daijōkan Fukoku) ‘The Regulation on Acts of Prescriptions and Abortion by Midwives’ (Sanbano Baiyaku Sewa oyobi Dataitō no Torishimari kata), and prohibited midwives from the practice of abortion and infanticide. After this order, the Meiji government established laws and regulations that attempted to control human reproduction and gradually developed a national system concerning biological reproduction. This process had two phases. First, as mentioned above, the government nationally and officially banned abortion practices, and the birth and death of human beings became the object of state supervision. This resulted in the criminalization of abortion under the modern criminal codes enacted in 1880.13 This supervision of biological reproduction by the Meiji government was later extended to the birth control movements that arose in the 1920s. Second, the government was also committed to the medicalization of childbirth by replacing local midwives, who in most cases lacked any medical training in the treatment of childbirth, with nationally qualified midwives with Western medical knowledge. In 1874, the Medical Regulation (Isei) set the qualification requirement for midwives, and midwifery became a medical profession, thus moving away from a reciprocal role for elderly women in the community. Following this, government schools for midwifery were established in several regions in order to train young women as professional
midwives in the scheme of modern Western medicine. In 1899, the Regulation on Midwifery (Sanba Kisoku) set an examination requirement to become a midwife after a one-year training course at schools. Through these government regulations, midwifery changed into a medical profession, based on principles of modern medical knowledge, not just the personal and local experience of women (Yoshimura 1992: 110–37).

Women who experienced pregnancy and childbirth, however, were initially not very keen to adopt the new regulations relating to biological reproduction as promoted by the government. According to Yoshimura, who conducted anthropological research on practices of childbirth in rural Japan, the generalization of childbirth treated by a qualified midwife occurred only under the total war regime during the Fifteen-Year War, where state controls dominated people's everyday lives, since the westernized and medicalized practices carried out by qualified midwives did not fit in with prewar women's preconception of childbirth, the body and life which was closely linked to the customs in local communities (Yoshimura 1992: 136–7). Hence, in order to modernize practice in biological reproduction, the government had to tackle not only the modernization of the legal and institutional system of biological reproduction, but also the modernization of general perceptions and knowledge about such a system of reproduction.

In fact, Narisawa points out that ‘cleanliness’ (seiketsu), linked with the Western medical and administrative concepts of ‘public hygiene’ (kōshū eisei), was an item on the main agenda of the Meiji government. Governmental policy relating to ‘cleanliness’ in the Meiji period was twofold. Firstly, ‘spatial cleanliness’ was pursued, especially in order to prevent epidemics of infectious diseases such as cholera, typhoid fever and dysentery. The government developed administration of hygiene practices for strict control of infected spaces and people by separation and sterilization with enforcement by the police force. This method was employed in military, schools, factories, prisons and hospitals, and introduced ‘cleanliness’ into people's lives as a discipline. The Tokyo municipal administration also employed a hygiene administration that resulted in sweeping away the slums and the lumpenproletariat residing there. Following this, it enacted regulations for the city environment punishing untidiness and unsanitary actions (Narisawa 1991: 94–9). On the other hand, the ‘bodily cleanliness’ of each person also attracted the attention of policy-makers in order to maintain the physical and mental health that was considered a crucial component in raising a strong state with strong soldiers. For this purpose, the government introduced a medical examination that was both collective and compulsory, targeting soldiers and prostitutes, and promoted Western medical and scientific knowledge concerning the human body, such as nutrition. This process also involved the standardization and disciplinization of body movements and human behaviour. For instance, the ‘Order for the Prohibition of the Naked Body’ (Ratai Kinshi Rei) in 1871 and municipal regulations in Tokyo enacted the following year banned the accepted
practice of showing parts of the body. As a result of these regulations, the naked body came to be a subversive object in the new social order. Besides this, natural make-up for women, short hair styles, and the wearing of uniforms (Western style) were promoted, while a particular pattern of behaviour derived from the military was brought into schools and prisons as a model (Narisawa 1991: 117–29).

As such, these government’s efforts to rationalize and modernize people’s perceptions, attitudes and practices concerning cleanliness and hygiene had at their root the intention to replace the existing lifestyle with new knowledge and a new set of patterns of behaviour. Consequently, the government often met much strong popular opposition as in the cholera riots which occurred sporadically from the late 1870s to 1890s (Komori 2002: 17–19). However, knowledge and concern for hygiene gradually became more widespread among the Japanese population through regional organizations, school education and the mass media. Importantly, through this process, being healthy emerged as an essential value for both the Japanese nation-state and the Japanese people (Abe 2002: 57–64). Narita analyzes the popularization of the hygiene concept around the 1900s in the middle-class family, concluding that women began to perceive and speak of the bodies of their family members including their own in terms of science and medicine around this time. By learning about medical and hygienic knowledge, women became more aware of their bodily mechanisms through their pregnancies and childbirth, as well as about newborn babies (Narita 1990: 98–9). Also in Yoshimura’s interview on childbirth, conducted in the rural islands of the Inland Sea, interviewees who experienced their first childbirth after 1929 noted that they preferred treatment by qualified midwives, despite the cost, because it was more ‘hygienic’ and endorsed their ‘new knowledge and techniques’ (Yoshimura 1985: 153–6). Although the maternity protection policy during the total war period served to complete this major transition in the practices of childbirth, governmental efforts to change practices had already engendered some impact around the turn of the century, and laid the groundwork for the approaching institutional change.

According to Narita, the popularization of the concept of hygiene among women around the 1900s resulted in the fixating of their sex roles as caretakers at home, in terms of health and hygiene, as well as the generalization of modern norms of body and sex based on medical and hygienic knowledge. He argues that the ‘home’ (katei) and the family, a relationship centred inside the ‘home’, appeared to be a unit in which women were allocated the responsibility of taking care of the family’s health. Women also defined their sexuality within the marital relationship. Moreover, this ‘home’ regime concerning body and sexuality generated the concept of the ‘deviant’ who was not able to procreate healthy children or form a healthy family, as, for instance, in the case of prostitutes (Narita 1990: 122–4). In this respect, the ‘home’ was the locus where women were expected to behave in new ways, and consequently a new type of familial relationship was required for forming the ‘home’. In the next section, we focus on the emergence and
popularization of ‘home’, and discuss its political implication in the Japanese modernization process and its influence on women.

The emergence of katei and education for ‘good wives and wise mothers’

The term ‘katei’ (the home) frequently appeared in major opinion magazines (sōgō zasshi) in the second decade of the Meiji period (1888–1897). It was a new concept in terms of the household and the familial relationship that was employed in close relation to the English word ‘home’, although it was not exactly a neologism (Ishida 1975: 321–26; Muta 1996: 56; Sand 1998:192; Koyama 1999: 25–6). Discourse relating to ‘katei’ around this time showed a clear contrast to the previous ideas regarding familial relationships in terms of the following four points. Firstly, the ‘katei’ was considered as an ideal place where a certain familial relationship could flourish, based on a concrete model, i.e., the Western-style, middle-class nuclear family (Koyama 1991: 79; Muta 1996: 55–6). Secondly, as was the case in the model of the ‘modern family’ in Western Europe and the US, intimate relationships between members of the family were emphasized. As a result of this, the ‘katei’ appeared as the smaller unit, of one couple and their children, within the extended ‘ie’ system. The ‘ie’ was grounded on the extended family system based on the paternal blood tie. The ‘ie’ system was a model for maintaining familial relationships from generation to generation, as well as a principle by which household property and the care/support relationship, originating in the practice of the samurai class, could be managed and inherited. As compared to the ‘ie’ system, the ‘katei’ placed more weight on emotional commitments between married couples and their children, excluding paternal grandparents and uncles/aunts (Muta 1996: 54–7; Nishikawa 1996: 81–6). Thirdly, the ‘katei’ was discussed in close conjunction with the nation-state defined as it was as a unit contributing to the strengthening of the state. The discourses on the ‘katei’ posited that the ‘good’ relationships between members of the family were the foundation for development, and equated serving the nation-state with serving one’s parents. As Ueno points out with reference to Satō Tadao’s analysis of Japanese cinema, the popular moral code of ‘serving parents, serving the ruler’ reversed the order between parent and ruler (‘serving the ruler, serving parents’) when it was incorporated into the Imperial Rescript on Education (Kyōiki Chokugo) established in 1890 (Ueno 1994: 129). In this sense, the ‘katei’ was articulated as a suitable unit for reorganized morality, namely a morality compatible with the developmentalism of Japan as an emerging modern nation-state. Lastly, the ‘katei’ appeared as a gendered place. In the discourses on ‘katei’, the sexual division of labour was strictly maintained, and the ‘katei’ became more the women’s problem and responsibility, where housewives (shufu) were the main actors in dealing with housework. According to Muta, discourses on ‘katei’ disappeared from the mainstream
mass media in the third decade of the Meiji period, and were ghettosed in newly established gender-specific (women's/girls') magazines.\textsuperscript{18} This is reflected in the generalization of the sexual division of labour, especially women’s role as housewives, who were in charge of domestic business, in contrast to the feudal age in which women were not considered eligible to deal with the management of the household. In these women’s magazines, being a housewife was praised as the most dignified of duties for women, and referred to as being the ‘Prime Minister’ of the home. However, at the same time, women were expected to identify themselves with their husband’s achievements by helping him at home, as ‘her husband’s occupational promotion means her family’s promotion as well as the housewife’s promotion’ (Muta 1996: 66–7). Based on this view of woman’s gender role, prominent female educators such as Hatoyama Haruko (mother of Hatoyama Ichirō, who was the Prime Minister from 1954 to 1956)\textsuperscript{19} introduced knowledge and practical skills in housekeeping in these magazines.

The new ideals of home and women were not only promoted through mass media, but also incorporated into the newly established general educational system. In 1872, the government announced a general education system which enforced a three-year compulsory education period for all Japanese subjects. This system of equal education was initially accepted only by the upper-middle-class families, and the generality was later toned down by the introduction of feminine subjects such as sewing into the curriculum (Komano 1975: 122–4). Nevertheless, female education was formally institutionalized and gradually expanded from this time.

It has been the conventional view that the ideology of ‘good wife, wise mother’ (ryōsai kenbo), a thought strongly influenced by Confucian thinking, which dominated prewar female education. For example, Komano explains the trajectory of prewar female education, as after a brief and superficial trend of female education towards Westernization, the reverse trend that called for an education suited to ‘Japanese’ women and the ‘Japanese environment and tradition/history’ through being grounded in ‘Japanese’ customs turned female education towards more Confucian ways, emphasizing the female duty of being obedient to the husband and the ‘ie’ system (Komano 1975: 127–31). Nakajima also stresses the significance of the Confucian influence on the ‘ryōsai kenbo’ ideology. She points out that the ‘ryōsai kenbo’ ideology was a hybrid, being influenced by Western ideas and Japanese folk customs besides Confucian thinking. Yet, at the same time, she maintains that in the actual process of ideology formation within the Japanese female education system, administrators, most of them from the ex-warrior class in which Confucian norms dominated, favoured the Confucian view of women and the Western view was just a supplementary source of ideas (Nakajima 1984: 101–5). In this kind of discussion, the ‘ryōsai kenbo’ ideology was a source of female subjectivity and limiting of female status in prewar Japanese society, and hence considered as a symbol of prewar reactionary policy.\textsuperscript{20}
Koyama refutes this kind of discussion and argues that the ‘ryōsai kenbo’ ideology needs to be re-evaluated as a modern concept. According to her, the ‘ryōsai kenbo’ ideology appeared to contribute to incorporating the female population into the modern Japanese nation-state by assigning women to domestic roles as housewives. In this sense, it had a common quality with contemporary Western trends in female education which emphasized the importance of female education from the perspective of the state’s development (Koyama 1991: 4–8). Concretely, she analyzes the role of the ‘ryōsai kenbo’ ideology in prewar Japan as follows:

Since the Meiji Restoration, women were incorporated into the nation primarily as mothers, and then as wives. Through the transition from the Edo period to the Meiji, women had for the first time in history appeared to be expected to raise and educate children, and the requirement for a good wife had become carrying out housework reliably and managing domestic business as well as being obedient to husband and his parents. Furthermore, women were expected to help their family with sufficient knowledge and demonstrate high morality. These suggest that the ‘ryōsai kenbo’ ideology means the dichotomous perspective towards men and women and the establishment of the ideal female conformed to the sexual division of labour. The concept of sexual division of labour is a condition for the establishment of the modern society where production and reproduction are separated and allocated to the public and private individually. In this respect, the ‘ryōsai kenbo’ ideology was indispensable for the formation of the [Japanese] modern society. And it was a key concept when women were integrated into the modern nation-state.

(Koyama 1991: 58)

As mentioned above, the Meirokusha writers enthusiastically promoted female education, especially in relation to women’s maternal role which is crucial for the strengthening of the nation. One of the prominent writers, Mori Arinori, later the Minister of Education to the Itō Hirobumi’s cabinet from 1885, completed the process of the creation of the modern educational system summarized in his statement:

Education is the foundation for strengthening the state, and female education is the foundation of education. Hence, the implementation of female education is a matter of the security of the state.

(cited in Maeda 1993: 38)

This statist and developmentalist view towards female education was maintained after reactions to and criticisms of the Westernization policy of early female education, which welled up in the 1890s, especially around the time of the Sino-Japanese War (1894–5). The necessity of female education
for providing women with knowledge and skills regarding women’s duties, namely managing the household, became the consensus among administrators when higher education for women was introduced in 1899 according to this logic.

As such, prewar female education was designed to turn the female population into a group of competent agents of the new type of family, the ‘home’. In order to do so, domestic science, which is a subject that teaches scientific knowledge and skills of housekeeping, was called for as an essential part of female education. In the 1890s, the Meiji government sent Yasui Tetsu and Ōe Sumi to Britain to study the newly established subject domestic science (Nihon Kasei Gakkai 1990: 67–8), and Ōe systematized the educational programme for domestic science after her return to Japan (Kashiwagi 1995: 75–80). She was appointed as a teacher at Tokyo Women’s Senior Normal School and later established the Tokyo Domestic Science College, which contributed to training numerous domestic science teachers. Ōe’s view regarding domestic science was in the same statist line with her predecessors. As did Mori, Ōe placed the ‘home’ as the foundation for strengthening the nation-state. Her domestic science, known as ‘sanbō shugi’ (three ‘bō’ principles), advocated that it was with wives, religion and the military that lay the foundation of modern states, referring to a historical maxim that said the world was governed by three kinds of treasure (sanpō), namely, wives (nyōbō), religion (seppō) and the military (teppō). Ōe explained that these three elements in fact contributed to strengthening the state power in Britain. In her book published in 1911, she maintained Japanese homes needed to learn from the merits of Victorian British homes (Kashiwagi 1995: 90–6). The other founder of Japanese domestic science, Naruse Jinzō, who established the Japan Women’s College in 1901, also shared the statist tendency, while at the same time, he addressed the necessity of female education for training women for the professions (Koyama 1991: 128–31).

Stimulated by the First World War the Japanese economy grew, the middle class gradually increased in number, and developed a more visible role in Japanese society. This first Japanese middle class in the modern sense consists of families whose breadwinners were employees of companies or self-employed, with high academic qualifications but without property. According to Sawayama, this new middle class was generally very enthusiastic about children’s education since it empirically knew that education was the only resource for the middle class to exploit in the labour market, and for this purpose, it formed a nuclear family with a rigid sexual division of labour where women acted as mothers who raised and educated the children, and men were increasingly excluded from the child-rearing process as fathers (Sawayama 1990: 132–49). In this respect, the new middle class of 1910s Japan was the modern nuclear family, with mothers who were expected to manage the household competently. This suggests that the feature of the family that the ‘katei’ discourses advocated and the female
education attempted to construct was at last realized in Japanese society in the aftermath of the First World War, although still for only a minority residing in the cities.

The spread of female education was intended to turn women into competent agents at home, but it also generated a critical perspective among women themselves towards family, home and sexuality as framed by the ryōsai kenbo ideology, as its logical consequence. Influenced by the brief atmosphere of liberalism and democracy during the Taishō Democracy period (1905–1925), new types of women started to raise their voices, claiming political and social rights and seeking their own identities. In these movements, the maternal role that largely defined women’s lives through the official ryōsai kenbo ideology at that time faced severe challenges and demands for reconstruction. In this sense, female education provided opportunities, competence and skills for women, although for a limited number in the total female population, to tackle ‘women’s issues’ by themselves, while it at the same time appeared as a frame within which women were expected to organize their lives.

‘New women’ and maternalist politics

Nishikawa analyzes prewar debates concerning women’s issues and points out ‘women needed their own media in order to discover their problems and publicly express them’ (Nishikawa 1997: 224). It was Seitō established by Hiratsuka Raichō and her friends in 1911 that first played the role of women’s media in Japan. Although the Seitō initially was intended to be a literature magazine which encouraged women’s artistic talent by providing an outlet for the modern ego, it also provided opportunities for female writers to discuss social and political problems publicly at a time when women’s political participation was officially prohibited by laws that coincided with the emergence of ‘katei’ and the fixing of a sexual division of labour (Sievers 1983: 163–88; Nolte and Hastings 1991: 156; Tachi 1994: 131–2).24 In this sense, the women gathered around the Seitō were ‘New Women’ (Atarashii Onna), as the mass media named them at that time, women who penned and publicly expressed their feelings, thoughts and opinions.

A typical example of debates on women’s problems by women in the Seitō is the so-called ‘Abortion Debates’ (Datai Ronsō). In 1915, Harada Satsuki contributed to the Seitō a short story entitled ‘To a Man from an Imprisoned Woman’ (Gokuchū no Onna yori Otoko ni). Harada’s story was a fictional letter sent to her lover by a woman who had been sent to prison due to a breach of the anti-abortion provisions of the criminal code, and in the trial relating to the incident, she questioned the propriety of sanctioning the act of abortion. The judge in the story blamed Harada’s heroine for a crime ‘worse than that of the anarchist party’. The heroine appealed to the judge that she was wrong in a sense that she had been ignorant of the fact that she
was not prepared for being a mother, and moreover, she had not made careful contraceptive efforts. For her, her foetus was just a pre-life existence or an additional part of her body without a personality. She maintained that she had committed abortion in order to be responsible: it would be more irresponsible if she had had this baby, a different person from herself, since she had known that she could not be a responsible mother (Harada 1915: 14–18). Harada’s expression of women’s reproductive rights and freedom in this way caused a government ban to be placed on the issue (Sievers 1983: 183–4; Fujime 1997: 135). Also, Itō Noe and Yamada Waka objected to Harada’s short-story in the Seitō. Hiratsuka also published an article that analyzed the discrepancies existing between women’s personal life, sexual life and motherhood, and because of the discrepancies, she in theory accepted abortion, especially in the case where a mother-to-be was not ‘eligible’ for taking on the responsibilities of childcaring (Hiratsuka 1915: 121–2).

The discourses of the ‘Abortion’ Debates in the Seitō suggest important transitions regarding reproduction in the following three senses. Firstly, except for Itō, who stressed the naturalness of pregnancy and childbirth, the other three contributors held that woman’s sexuality was a matter of a woman’s own decision. For example, even though Yamada denied the right of abortion, she did so because she argued that one should have a partner before she/he became eligible to be a parent (Yamada 1915: 30). Here, a woman was perceived as an agent who could control her own sexuality by fully owning it. This tendency can be also seen in the other debate, the so-called ‘Chastity Debate’ in the Seitō (Muta 1996: 142). Secondly, motherhood was also perceived as a matter of decision. In the debate, the issue was of becoming a mother and was not just a result of sexual activity; it was rather a project in which a woman engaged herself. In this sense, ‘voluntary motherhood’ promoted in the birth control movement that arose in the 1920s was accepted in Japan on the grounds prepared by Japanese feminists. Thirdly, the decision regarding either women’s own sexuality or motherhood was discussed in close relationship with the concept of ‘eligibility’ as a mother. Insofar as that eligibility became the focus of attention, the quality of reproduction such as the competence of a mother as caretaker, educator, or financial manager of a household, i.e., the issue of competence to raise good children, was required for parenthood. This suggests that being a mother had become something demanding the making of effort: the mere fact of pregnancy and childbirth no longer endorsed being a mother. On the other hand, children were supposed to be in need of proper training and education by their mothers, but not by their fathers, relatives including grandparents, and household servants. In sum, the ‘Abortion’ Debate was in one sense an enterprise in which modern ‘New Women’ tried to articulate reproductive issues from the perspective of women who actually carried out reproductive tasks in the modern nuclear family.

The reproductive issue of the Abortion Debate was further developed by the so-called ‘Motherhood Protection Debates’ (Bosei Hogo Ronsō). This
debate has already been discussed in numerous works (Tanaka 1975: 203–5; Sievers 1983: 183; Kouchi 1984; Suzuki 1989a: 49–67; Rodd 1991: 189–98; Molony 1993: 126–9; Muta 1996: 127–30; Kano 1997: 200–4; Nishikawa 1997: 228–31; S. Kaneko 1999: 104–8). The extant works have explained the reason for giving attention to the debate. The Motherhood Protection Debates presented a map of feminist standpoints that can be still seen in contemporary Japan. This map introduces us to the difference in views regarding the significance of motherhood for women’s identity and their relationship with the state (Kouchi 1984; Molony 1993: 129; Nishikawa 1997: 237).

It was Yosano Akiko who embarked on the debate. Yosano had already been known as a prominent poet and accomplished female intellectual by the time she published an article entitled ‘Eliminating Overestimation of Motherhood’ (*Bosei Henchō o Haisu*) in an opinion magazine *Taiyō* (Sun), despite the fact that she was also a mother of eleven children. Her point was twofold. First, she stated that motherhood is not the only element of a women’s life by criticizing the theories of a Swedish feminist, Ellen Key, whose theory on the supremacy of motherhood and child welfare was particularly influential in the early-twentieth-century Japan. She also criticized the idea of sexual division of labour, referring to Leo Tolstoy and again Key. For Yosano, children needed care by fathers as much as by mothers, and also a person should perform a multiplicity of roles as she herself did as a wife, mother, writer and artist. As a keen reader of Key, Hiratsuka challenged Yosano’s opinion from a maternalist perspective. The confrontation between Yosano and Hiratsuka on the significance of motherhood continued. When Yosano discussed the importance of women’s economic independence in the newly established female opinion magazine *Fujin Kōron* (Women’s Public Opinion) in 1918, Hiratsuka again criticized Yosano, stressing the importance of motherhood for society and state. After a series of exchanges of articles between Yosano and Hiratsuka, Yamakawa Kikue summarized the debate as a contradiction between female rights and maternal rights in a capitalist society and concluded that only a change of economic relationship could resolve women’s problems, while Yamada Waka addressed a stronger maternalist view which called for state support of motherhood.

The focus of the debate lay in the discrepancies between female economic independence and the reproductive role. Whereas Yosano believed that all persons needed to seize economic independence through labour in order to become independent and refuted maternal protection by states even during the period of pregnancy and childbearing as ‘dependency’, Hiratsuka maintained that pregnancy and childbearing, which is the quintessential experience in women’s lives, forced women into harsh circumstances without financial competence, and demanded state support for motherhood and child welfare, as the women’s reproductive role ultimately contributes to state and society. Yamada advanced Hiratsuka’s opinion, and emphasized the statist function of motherhood, and Yamakawa questioned the validity
of the debate between Yosano and Hiratsuka from the socialist perspective. In sum, the debate between Yosano and Hiratsuka (and Yamada) can be attributed to a timeworn and fundamental question of feminism regarding differences between men and women and strategies for improving the female situation. Namely, whether men and women are essentially different due to the female nature represented by motherhood, and whether the economic and political equality between the two sexes needed to be attained. Yamakawa expressed her scepticism towards the dichotomy of ‘difference/equality’ itself as it was imbedded in the capitalist system.

Importantly, feminist debate regarding this dichotomy of difference/equality is neither historical nor Japanese. For example, as mentioned earlier, the confrontation in the Motherhood Protection Debate is repeated in a debate among Japanese feminists. In the 1980s, an ecological feminist was criticized by a Marxist feminist according to whom ecological feminism contributed to the fixing of the asymmetrical power relationship between men and women (Nishikawa 1997: 237). Moreover, around the same time as the Motherhood Protection Debate, the dichotomy of difference/equality can also be observed in writings by Western feminists, as Key’s theory can be opposed to those of Charlotte Perkins Gilman or Olive Schreiner. Also, this dichotomy was a confrontational one for contemporary women’s movements in Europe and North America that sought not only general suffrage but also mother’s and children’s welfare, which led to the introduction of the welfare state. For example, Eleanor Rathbone promoted the campaign for a family allowance after the First World War in Britain as a project of the National Union of Women’s Suffrage Societies (NUWSS). As a result of this, Garrett Fawcett objected to the ‘way in which the priority Rathbone accorded women’s “natural” role as mothers led her to accept the claim of employers and other labour market analysts (such as Sydney Webb) that women workers were inherently less productive than men’ (Lewis 1991: 83).

Bock and Thane argue that there were ‘close links’ between demands for women’s political rights and social rights including the right of receiving protection during motherhood. According to them, the discovery of poverty among working-class families through philanthropic activities led some women to demand voting rights in order to reform social problems that male-dominated states could not settle (Bock and Thane 1991: 7). Addressing maternal causes was an essential part of advancing women’s rights in the circumstances where the struggle for survival occupied a large part of women’s lives. Furthermore, Koven and Michel argue that the maternalist discourses based on difference between men and women built a bridge linking women to the public world.

Many late nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century women envisioned a state in which not only had the qualities of mothering we associate with welfare, but in which women played active roles as electors, policy
makers, bureaucrats, workers, within and outside the home. Suffrage per se was not a decisive turning point in the history of maternalist politics. Before 1919, women in most Western nations (with the exception of Australia and New Zealand) lacked full citizenship rights, and necessarily operated in the interstices of political structures. Undaunted, women exploited their authority as mothers to expand women’s rights in society before and after some gained political enfranchisement.

(Koven and Michel 1993: 3)

In this sense, maternalism was ‘one of women’s chief avenues into the public sphere’ (Koven and Michel 1993: 29). It was a political tool and a resource for women in order to climb the ladder in the male-dominated world of politics.

These insights into maternalist politics in late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Western societies shed a new light on the Motherhood Protection Debate in 1910s Japan. The traditional interpretation of the debate tends to summarize Yosano as a modernist and Hiratsuka as anti-modernist. It also depicts Hiratsuka as shifting her position from the Seiō period through her own pregnancy and childbearing to a more reactionary one that led her to cooperate with the military regime during the Second World War (Suzuki 1989a: 49–67; Ueno 1998: 42–9). However, research on the Western maternalist movements suggests that Hiratsuka’s discourses on maternal protection were resonant with contemporary Western ones, in the sense that she was clearly aware that the state had vital interests in women’s motherhood. She was also aware that she could politically utilize the state’s interest in motherhood, as her movement thereafter suggests.

After the Motherhood Protection Debate ended without any agreement, Hiratsuka in fact embarked on her project of pursuing political rights as well as social rights. In 1919, she established the ‘New Women Association’ (Shinfujin Kyōkai) with a suffragist Ichikawa Fusae and an activist Oku Mumeo. The ‘New Women Association’ was a political group that clearly promoted women’s political participation. As its platform written by Hiratsuka declared, the association was, through unification of women who had by then become educated and competent, to improve women’s social status, protect women’s and mother’s rights, and carry out social reform with the cooperation of men (Shinfujin Kyōkai 1920: 160–2). Thus, the aims of the association were twofold. It sought to extend women’s right of political participation, and for this purpose, it deployed a movement to revise Article 5 of the Security Police Law (Chian Keisatsu Hō),\(^{32}\) which succeeded in 1922 and partly opened for women a path to political participation after a thirty-year absolute ban (Ichikawa 1977: 39; Sakomoto 1922: 191–6). On the other hand, the association also organized movements for the maternalist cause, as it appealed to the Government for legislation to restrict marriage by men who were carriers of venereal disease. According to Ichikawa, Hiratsuka set this agenda without Ichikawa’s positive agreement (Ichikawa 1977: 38). In
fact, for Hiratsuka, the association was grounded in maternalism. She addressed the purpose of the Association in the journal *Josei Dōmei* (Women's League) as follows:

> Once, various rights were demanded for women in order to advocate equality between men and women from a human point of view. However, we today demand various additional rights in real life in order to complete the life of women as mothers, which, for women, is a right as well as a duty. In the early stage of the women's movement, women's political participation itself was considered as a goal as it would bring about political equality between men and women. Compared to this, our demand for suffrage is for utilizing political rights in order to effectively attain particular goals, namely the 'freedom of love in terms of the female point of view' and 'social reforms' in order to attain the former.

(cited in Shimada 1975: 206)

What we can see here is a Japanese version of the declaration of maternalist politics, which was constructed in a similar way to its contemporary Western counterparts. Hiratsuka, as a leading figure of the 'New Women' fully comprehended the values and functions of the mother in the modern nuclear family for both society and state, identified with these norms, and furthermore utilized the fact of being a mother as a political resource. In this sense, what she tried to achieve through her venture of the New Women's Association after the Motherhood Protection Debate was a contemporary political enterprise by women who demanded full control of their sexuality and motherhood. And interestingly this almost exactly coincided with its Western counterparts.33

The New Women's Association broke up in 1922. However, their maternalist causes remained in the mainstream of women's movements and politics in Japan where, until the postwar constitution was promulgated in 1946, the citizenship for women had still not been established. Although Hiratsuka herself engaged in a consumers' cooperative movement and withdrew from the front line of the women's movement after she left the Association, issues such as protection for mothers and children, reduction in gas prices and problems of dealing with waste were incorporated in a series of suffrage activities, in which Ichikawa or Oku played significant roles. In the 1930s, the Women's Suffrage League, founded by unifying various women's groups in the cause of suffrage in 1924, embarked on a campaign seeking legislation in the form of maternity protection law, which was in the end realized in 1937. In fact, the maternal cause survived the Second World War, and appeared as a central current in the postwar anti-nuclear and peace movements.

The Japanese economy in the 1920s was in an unhealthy condition. A series of financial panics, the disaster caused by the Great Kantō
Earthquake of 1923 and the retrenchment policy by the Financial Minister Inoue Junnosuke resulted in an increase in unemployment and further hardship in everyday life. This was especially so for lower-class mothers who had to manage both housework and paid work outside of the home in order to survive the hardships resulting from the poor economic situation. Hence, the maternal cause then had a certain actuality and practicality as a political strategy in Japan. Also, the maternal cause contained some advantages in the male-dominated political system. As it suited the scheme of ‘gender’, as Ichikawa confessed, ‘the Upper Diet which rejected the suffrage bill supported the bill for mothers and children protection as these laws would maintain a good Japanese custom, namely the family system’ (Ichikawa 1977: 60).

Bock and Thane maintain that after experiencing the second wave of feminism, stressing motherhood as an important feature of women’s lives ‘is often seen as “traditional”, “conservative” or “reactionary” ’ (Bock and Thane 1991: 7). In fact, the maternalist claims in Hiratsuka and Yamada’s work have been analyzed as an expression of pre-modern or even reactionary elements in their thoughts. However, what the development of sexual and maternal discourses from the establishment of the Seittō to the suffrage movement actually demonstrates is that the enterprise of a certain part of ‘New Women’ succeeded in constructing their identity through scrutinizing and then internalizing femaleness, namely their sexuality and motherhood. And the maternal cause arose as a political resource for those women in the process by which they challenged and negotiated with the male-dominated society and state as independent ‘women’. In this sense, maternal politics was born out of women’s ‘subjectification’ (Chapter 1) through motherhood and sexuality (Foucault 1978: 60).

However, as Ichikawa pointed out above, the maternal cause responded to the Japanese state strategy of targeting women to incorporate them into the state through the family system. Or more precisely, even maternal politics in Europe and the United States had ambivalent relationships with the state’s campaigns of appraising motherhood and mobilizing women for imperialist purposes through their biological reproductive functions. For instance, according to Skocpol, President Theodore Roosevelt publicly attacked ‘the woman “who shirks her duty as wife and mother” ’. He further declared that the ‘mother is the one supreme asset of national life; she is more important by far than the successful statesman or businessman or artist or scientist’ (Skocpol 1992: 337). Therefore, in this sense, maternalist politics remained in the frame of the nation-state; as long as it was so, it was effective as well as burdened by severe limitations.

Below two significant maternalist political attempts in prewar Japan – the Everyday Life Improvement Movement and the birth control movement – will be examined and analyzed in terms of the bargaining between women and the state. The reason why the two movements were chosen is twofold. Firstly, both of them were significant movements. Their pinnacle came in
the 1920s and many women from different classes and different regions in Japan were involved in the movements. Secondly, despite the similarities mentioned, they appeared quite opposite in terms of their relationships with the government. One was initiated by governmental initiative, while the other had a far more complicated relationship with the government. In this respect, they provide some interesting insights on women’s agency and the restrictions with which women had to deal.

The Everyday Life Improvement Movement

In 1919, the Home Ministry and Ministry of Education initiated a movement called the Everyday Life Improvement Movement (*Seikatsu Kaizen Undō*)\(^3^4\) as a part of the Private Sector Cultivation Movement (*Minryoku Kanyō Undō*). The Private Sector Cultivation Movement was, according to Abe, an ideological and economic movement planned by the Japanese state. It originated directly from an official order by Tokonami Takejirō, the Home Minister, and aimed to cultivate a ‘healthy idea of nationalism’, ‘self-governance’, ‘public responsibility’, ‘self-sacrificial spirit’, ‘mutual help through harmony and cooperation’, and ‘stability of life through stoic work ethics’. Characteristically, it did not organize a unified national movement but encouraged the bureaucrats in charge in each prefecture to further the development of movements suited to the particular situations of each community. In its first stage, women were not part of the movement. However, in 1920, driven by the severe recession following the First World War and the accumulating difficulties of everyday life, the Home Ministry became more prone to mobilize women for domestic, social and state activity for social reform purposes. They also promoted local organizations for women, especially young girls, partly as a restraining influence on the women’s movement which was demanding political rights (Abe 1982: 77–80).\(^3^5\)

These local women’s organizations contributed by providing knowledge and skills in order to reform and rationalize everyday life, from improving kitchens and everyday menus at home to simplifying the wedding ceremony, with the cooperation of the Everyday Life Improvement League (*Seikatsu Kaizen Dōmei*) established in 1920 in Tokyo in order to promote the Everyday Life Movement (Abe 1982: 88). The Everyday Life Improvement League was a semi-governmental organization sponsored by the Ministry of Education. Its inaugural ceremony was attended by the Prime Minister, Hara Takashi, the Home Minister, Tokonami Takejirō, and the Ministry of Education, Nakahashi Tokugorō. Further, bureaucrats of the Ministry of Education served as secretaries of the League which later became an incorporated foundation (Koyama 1999: 113–14). Hence, the Everyday Life Improvement League was, in one sense, a top-down governmental project. It was premised on the notion of a strong governmental initiative in the scheme of ‘social education’ (*shakai kyōiku*),
which was carried out outside of the school education system, and appeared as a focused administrative task after the First World War, dealing with concrete and practical issues such as consumption, leisure and health in people’s everyday life (Koyama 1999: 98–9).36

However, it would be misleading to say that the Everyday Life Improvement Movement led by the semi-governmental Everyday Life Improvement League was just an official project in which the government attempted to seize more control over people’s everyday life. Rather, the formation and popularization of the Everyday Life Improvement Movement responded to people’s needs and desires in everyday life for a ‘better life’. Reforms of everyday life attracted popular attention long before the Everyday Life Improvement Movement was initiated. Influenced by social reformism originating in nineteenth-century Britain, the word ‘reform’ (kaizō or kairyō in Japanese) itself was a buzzword from the 1910s to the 1930s in Japan. For example, the magazine *Kaizō*, which clamoured for social reforms, was established in 1919, and ‘Kaizō’ became the most popular name for boys around that time (Suzuki 1989b: 74–5; Kashiwagi 1995: 170).37 Similarly the reform of homes was talked of as the most popular and crucial case for social reform. This can be seen from the following three examples.

Firstly, women’s magazines which flourished around the turn of the century often featured the ‘rationalization of everyday life’ and promoted new techniques of cooking, washing clothes or cleaning the house and offered hints on increasing home savings. The most typical example is the magazine *Fujin no Tomo* (Women’s Friend) established by Hani Motoko and Hani Yoshikazu in 1911. Based on the Protestant faith of the couple, the magazine encouraged women to be equal and competent agents at home, and it aimed not only at providing knowledge and skills for rationalizing the household but also of organizing social activity such as learning circles and readers’ associations (*Fujin no Tomo Zenkoku Tomo no Kai*). Professionals of domestic science and female education such as Yasui Tetsu and Iwamoto Yoshiharu38 helped the Hanis with their enterprise, and these activities later developed into the establishment of a private school, *Jiyū Gakuen*, which promoted the importance of ‘home education’ undertaken by mothers (Komano 1975: 217–22). Also, the *Fujin no Tomo* is known for its enthusiasm on the management about household economy. Hani Motoko published her original version of housekeeping books (*kakeibo*), and provided concrete advice on rational and healthy organization of household economy. Readers of the *Fujin no Tomo* were limited to upper-middle-class women, but in 1917, a magazine *Shufu no Tomo* (Housewife’s Friend), in a sense a water-downed version of the *Fujin no Tomo* targeting the mass-market, was established. The *Shufu no Tomo* also featured concrete techniques and skills for managing households, including methods of birth control, and advocated saving through economizing. These magazines featuring household management were aimed at women who faced everyday tasks of running households. Readers eagerly welcomed those articles as
‘helpful’, ‘convenient’ and ‘interesting’, and the magazine Shufu no Tomo became one of the most popular magazines among Japanese women. Secondly, there are a number of private enterprises which sought the ‘rationalization of the household’ such as the ‘Association of House Improvement’ (Jūtaku Kairyō no Kai) or the ‘Study Association of Cultural Life’ (Bunka Seikatsu Kenkyūkai). Both associations aimed to reform everyday life, thereby generating a new life environment by utilizing new technologies in architecture, domestic science, economics and even the Taylor system (Kashiwagi 1995: 171). Thirdly, ‘life at home’ had appeared as a popular theme of national exhibitions since the early twentieth century. According to Yoshimi, the Japanese state sponsored a number of industrial exhibitions in order to promote the fukoku kyōhei policy by informing ordinary people about modern and Western industry, technology and knowledge in the early Meiji period. Inevitably, the display of those exhibitions was generally centred on the fruits of Western industry and imperialism (Yoshimi 1992: 115–35). But this tendency changed in the 1910s. Large newspaper companies, department stores and railway companies started to sponsor more entertainment-oriented and more consumption-focused exhibitions, and ‘home’ and ‘children’ emerged as popular themes taken up by them (Yoshimi 1992: 152–72; Koyama 1999: 49–61). At these new-style exhibitions, people could experience and enjoy new lifestyles at home through viewing modern kitchens, new model houses, hygienic and rational washing methods and children’s nurseries. As Yoshimi points out, the exhibitions of ‘home’ and ‘children’ advertised on a large scale a new image and model of everyday life at home to people. Moreover, they stirred up desires for a ‘better life’ among Japanese people, especially housewives of the emerging middle class (Yoshimi 1992: 154–5).

Therefore, when the Everyday Life Improvement Movement was formed, other organizations and media were already positively engaged in activities for the ‘rationalization and improvement of everyday life’. Faced in particular with economic hardships after the First World War, the demand for reform and improvement of everyday life grew among the people, and private enterprises responded to those demands. In this respect, the establishment of the Everyday Life Improvement League and the initiation of movements by it endorsed those private enterprises as meaningful efforts. And more importantly, it provided public schemes and public means, including a subsidy from the government. The fundamental reason for this state action is the recognition of the significance of the ‘rationalization of life’ in terms of state management. One of the bureaucrats who played a key role in popularizing the Everyday Life Improvement Movement, Tanahashi Gentarō, formulated a relationship between housekeeping and state management as follows:

the healthy development of the home is a source for a rich country, therefore, it should be a common knowledge for us that the foundation
for the expansion of the state’s fortune must lie in reforms and renovation of housework.

(Koyama 1999: 96)

As this comment shows, when the Everyday Life Improvement Movement began, there was a clear recognition on the side of the designers of national policy that state management targeted creating ‘a rich country’, which required homes managed and developed in better ways. Importantly, when Tanahashi mentioned ‘the expansion of the state’s fortune’, he referred to it not only in a militaristic sense but also in an economic sense – a clear manifestation of the link between reproduction and developmentalism. According to him, reforms in everyday life by saving time, controlling consumption, and rationalizing other details of everyday life resulted in a strengthening of the state. This was because ‘in order to win in the economic war undertaken in peace time, which can be expected to be extremely severe in the future, we must enrich and strengthen the state’s power by first eradicating waste through reforming everyday life, and then re-allocating the spare time and energy from reforms to more productive projects’ (Koyama 1999: 194).

The objective of the nationalized Everyday Life Improvement Movement was, therefore, to reform and rationalize the minutia of everyday life on multiple levels: from clothes and etiquette to the management of household economy, as was stated in the articles of the Association (Kashiwagi 1995: 173). In order to attain this, it set various concrete targets: to be punctual, to simplify social customs and etiquette, to modernize and westernize houses and the facilities of houses, and to introduce scientific knowledge into women’s housework. The Everyday Life Improvement League set small working groups for each target, and published its proposals or presented them at exhibitions.

Koyama analyzes the activity of the Everyday Life Improvement League and notes the following four characteristics. Firstly, the league emphasized the value of ‘home life’ in the very modern sense. The ‘home’ that the league advocated was a ‘private space’ consisting of the nuclear family in which the wife and children in the family were considered as members as much as the husband. For this reason, the league promoted modern Western styles of house in which a nursery for children and a living room for intimate family time were central elements. The quality of family time was especially emphasized by the League. Hence, it also recommended changing the traditional male-centred social life into family leisure (e.g. going to the cinema, funfair, etc.), and having meals with all family members at the same table (Koyama 1999: 142–50). Secondly, the League strongly prioritized children. For them, children needed to be raised in a particular way that helped children to grow into good adults. Consequently, they deserved to be looked after carefully. This entailed introducing specially designed furniture, rooms, gardens and clothes – which were in most cases western-styled – for children who became
an entity that required different needs and standards from adults (Kashiwagi: 1995: 184; Koyama 1999: 151–6). Thirdly, incorporating the proposals made by the League, housework was no longer a routine work at home, but had become a task which required special and high-standard skills and knowledge. For instance, nourishment and hygiene appeared as the central criteria for arranging everyday meals, and also the concept of the budget was introduced into housekeeping. Savings and insurance policies were encouraged, and this resulted in housekeeping increasingly becoming recognized in the scheme of economics (Koyama 1999: 156–64). Hence, being a housewife was no longer a simply the legal position resulting from marriage, but rather was a project for women. Fourthly, the League opened a path for women to join in designing governmental blueprints and participating in the policy-making process. By the time the League was established, a few women had secured positions as professionals in the fields of female education, domestic science and medicine. Those women joined the panels of the League, became members of working groups, and acted as lecturers at courses on everyday life improvement held in various regions all over Japan. Since the Everyday Life Improvement Movement dealt with details at home that were mostly undertaken by women, the expertise of female professionals was indispensable to design and manage the Movement (Koyama 1999: 185–94). This certainly developed a new channel to politics. In fact, many of the senior female members of the working groups of the League were at the same time members of women’s suffragist organizations who were seeking active participation in politics. Even Inoue, who had appeared rather conservative in the suffrage movement, once wrote, these women believed that there are certain tasks in the fields of cultural and economic policy (moral education, health, prices of public service) or policy for the protection of home (protection of children, temperance, prohibition of the public prostitution system, maintaining peace and ‘cleaning up’ the corrupted political world) that women had to undertake in cooperation with men, and in order to take this responsibility women needed political rights and citizenship (Inoue 1930: 376).

In sum, by advocating such reform of everyday life at home, the Everyday Life Improvement Movement contributed to infiltrating the image of the modern family and home – the nuclear family tied together by intimacy and emotion – on a large scale among people. Moreover, it promoted the concrete and practical techniques and knowledge (nourishment, hygiene and budgeting) that required managing this type of family in a better, more rational and more scientific way.

As mentioned above, reforms of the home itself had been advocated by other media such as women’s magazines, private associations and exhibitions sponsored by the government and private companies, and had obtained a certain popularity among people before the movement was initiated. However, the endorsement, and institutional and financial help from the government to the Everyday Life Improvement Movement made the efforts
for reform more visible and effective, even in rural areas where the circulation of information was rather more limited than in Tokyo. Outside the capital, the modern techniques and knowledge of housekeeping was transmitted to women mainly through local women’s organizations. More importantly, the Everyday Life Improvement Movement provided legitimate opportunities for women to participate in political activities and influence the local and national political process. The movement established a system by which the government consulted women about ‘women’s problems’ such as protection of mothers and children, prices of public services, health and so on, in a time when women did not have national and municipal voting rights or the right to join political parties. The government even encouraged women to join social movements so long as the purposes of the movements supported the state’s objectives. This suggests that governmental support also contained certain limitations: the government supported women-oriented policies or women’s participation, insofar as the government would reap certain benefits by so doing, especially in statist and developmentalist terms, and so long as women stayed in their roles defined according to the gender norms.

The birth control issue is a good example to demonstrate the ambivalence of the Japanese state towards women’s policy and participation, as the government strongly objected to the introduction and popularization of birth control, despite strong demands and its effectiveness as a method of reforming everyday life at home. In order to discuss the relationship between women and the state further, political contestation over birth control will be analyzed in the next section.

**Birth control and eugenics**

When Margaret Sanger, the leading figure of the world-wide birth control movement, landed in Japan in 1922, the Japanese mass media called her ‘the second black ship’ (Fujime 1997: 246; S. Kaneko 1999: 179). Modern methods and ideas of birth control had been introduced into Japan before Sanger’s visit. As discussed earlier, the Japanese government employed population policies facilitating a growth in population through the prohibition of abortion and the medicalization of birth, as part of its *fukoku kyōhei* policy, to raise strong soldiers and other members of the population of a strong state that could survive and win in international economic and military competition. Yet, the economic hardships after the First World War engendered the typical Malthusian situation in Japanese society: the population has a constant tendency to increase beyond its means of subsistence. Faced with an accumulating range of social problems caused by poverty, the ‘excess’ population began to be viewed as an essential factor in the creation of these problems, and thus the methods for controlling the population, namely controlling biological reproduction artificially, attracted popular attention. Hence, when Sanger’s birth control movement, initiated in the
1910s in the US, was introduced into Japan, there were substantial demands and hopes among both the governed and governing to utilize it in everyday life.

Sanger began to commit herself to the proliferation of birth control methods when she was working as a public health nurse in the New York slums. She witnessed there that so many women suffered from frequent pregnancies and the heavy responsibility of child-rearing in severe poverty. For her, the solution to the problem lay simply in whether those women could control the frequency of their pregnancies, but she could not obtain male obstetricians’ sympathy to her ideas of introducing birth control methods. Hence, with the help of feminist anarchists such as Emma Goldman and a radical unionist organization, the International Workers of the World (IWW), she printed and distributed pamphlets titled *Family Limitation*, which explained simple and easy birth control methods. Although Sanger’s pamphlet was enthusiastically welcomed, the publishing of the pamphlet was considered a violation of the Comstock Law in 1873, which prohibited any public talks and publications on sexual matters, and Sanger had to flee to Europe (Gordon 1990: 219–20; Ogino 1991: 187; Katō 1961: 73–5).

Sanger’s approach to birth control changed in Europe. In her initial activities, Sanger cooperated with labour and unionist movements in order to advocate her ideas of birth control. Also, she named her movement ‘birth control’ in order to distinguish it from the neo-Malthusian movements, which stressed the economic rationale of controlling sexuality and procreation rather than the reproductive health and rights of women. For Sanger, the birth control movement was, in its beginning at least, for liberating women from the heavy burden of everyday life caused by frequent pregnancies and child-rearing. By utilizing the term ‘voluntary motherhood’, which refers to becoming a mother by a woman’s own decision, Sanger clearly advocated in her early involvement in the movement autonomous reproductive rights for women in order to counter the oppression of capitalism. However, after having been to Europe and mixed with the Neo-Malthusian League and sexologists such as Havelock Ellis (Gordon 1990: 220), Sanger distanced herself from the leftist standpoint, and shifted her movement to the preferences of middle-class women and the medical profession (Gordon 1990: 280–1; Ogino 1991: 187–8). Also, she absorbed the idea of eugenics, which was at the time a cutting-edge scientific approach in contemporary Europe and the US, and even went so far as to address in her book published in 1922 *The Pivot of Civilization* the compulsory sterilization of ‘the unfit’.47 According to Ogino, Sanger no longer pressed for ‘voluntary motherhood’ or women’s reproductive rights by the time of the inaugural meeting of the American Birth Control League that she hosted in 1921, but rather advocated birth control from the perspective of eugenics (Gordon 1990: 278–83; Ogino 1991:188).

Baroness Ishimoto Shizue (later Katō Shizue after her divorce from Baron Ishimoto Eikichi and re-marriage with a unionist Katō Kanjū, here-
after Katō Shizue throughout to avoid confusion; see Appendix A) was a crucial catalyst in introducing Sanger’s ideas of birth control to the movement in Japan. She met Sanger in New York and their life-long friendship was founded there (Hopper 1996: 11–12). Before she went to the US, Katō had lived in a mining town in the southern part of Japan, where she witnessed how mothers suffered from raising more children than their household finances allowed. This experience certainly drove her to adopt the birth control movement as a central force in her life (Hopper 1996: 7–8). After she returned to Japan, she established herself as an icon of the ‘New Women’, and Katō committed herself to a Japanese version of the birth control movement with her husband, Baron Ishimoto and other collaborators.

Importantly, as mentioned earlier, it was not only Katō Shizue that discovered the importance and effectiveness of birth control for Japanese politics where the ‘population problem’ was emerging as a crucial item on the policy agenda. According to Kaneko, birth control became a ‘hot’ issue in journalism around 1920, while women’s magazines such as Shufu no Tomo featured birth control and advertisements for contraceptive drugs from 1917 (S. Kaneko 1999: 186). Moreover, according to Fujime, there was already grassroots activity carried out by a midwife, Shibahara Urako, in introducing birth control techniques to Japanese women in rural areas who were suffering from the burdens of frequent pregnancies and childcare besides everyday labour to keep their lives going (Fujime 1997: 247–53). Hence, by the time Sanger landed in Japan at the invitation of the magazine Kaizō,48 the term ‘birth control’ had become well known through the mass media in Japan, and, more importantly, substantial numbers of people had become aware of it through necessity, or had even practised it.

Sanger’s visit to Japan in itself caused a large-scale media frenzy as the Japanese consulate in San Francisco initially refused to issue her a visa. For the Japanese government, birth control was not only incompatible with the fukoku kyōhei policy, but also a movement that stood against even the American government at that time, and in fact caused a number of public disturbances in the US. However, this decision by the Japanese government was changed by pure chance. Sanger travelled on the same ship to Japan as the Japanese Ambassador Plenipotentiary, Prince Tokugawa Iesato (the President of the House of Peers) and then Prime Minister Katō Tomosaburō (the Prime Minister in 1922–3) returning from the International Naval Demilitarization Conference in Washington D.C. Sanger thus had a chance to speak of her cause of birth control to those high-ranking Japanese politicians. According to Katō Shizue, highly influential men in Japan at first suspected Sanger’s cause as a new method of weakening the strength of the Japanese state by encouraging a decline in population. This was particularly so since the Nine Nations Treaty that they had just signed demanded of Japan a great reduction in naval power and the abandonment of colonial interests in mainland China. But Sanger at last succeeded in allaying their
'conspiracy theory' fears by persuading them during their voyage to Japan that birth control contributed to the management of the state. When the ship arrived in Yokohama, the ambassador helped Sanger to gain permission to land (Katō 1961: 76–7). Although Sanger was still banned from addressing the cause of birth control in front of the public during her stay in Japan, the Japanese mass media eagerly featured her, and this resulted in nationwide publicity for birth control. After this visit, Sanger became for a while the most well-known non-Japanese in Japan (Katō 1961: 78), and Katō came to be known as ‘Japanese Margaret Sanger’.

The Japanese version of the Birth Control League, the Japan Birth Control Study Society (Nihon Sanji Chōsetsu Kenkyūkai), was established soon after Sanger’s visit under the leadership of the Ishimotos and other collaborators such as a prominent Christian-socialist, Abe Isoo. In the western part of Japan, a socialist and biologist Yamamoto Senji, who acted as interpreter for Sanger when she gave a special talk in front of the medical professionals, translated the content of Sanger’s pamphlet, *Family Limitation*. The purpose of this was to spread birth control techniques, and Yamamoto’s translation was distributed through union movements in the Kansai area of Japan (Sasaki and Odagiri 1979: 688–95).

The Japanese birth control movement developed throughout the 1920s, involving all political standpoints. While a leading socialist, Yamakawa Hitoshi, refuted birth control as a bourgeois ideology (S. Kaneko 1999: 194), his wife, and a leading socialist feminist, Yamakawa Kikue, had already published an article arguing that birth control helped women escape from the exhaustion which resulted from continuous pregnancy and childcare both in capitalist and socialist political regimes. She argued that controlling childbirth was vital for women even though their economic struggle would end when the socialist state had been established (Yamakawa 1920: 43–4). An enthusiastic social reformist, Abe Isoo, who was also a devout Christian, advocated that birth control was an integral part of social reform, especially for the working class people, grounded on the neo-Malthusian theory. Discourses pointing out the effects of birth control in terms of social policy attracted even politicians and bureaucrats who were seeking strategies for resolving the Malthusian problem, namely taking a balance between population growth and food supply in order to tackle the widespread poverty then prevailing in Japan. In 1927, the Tanaka Giichi cabinet organized the Population and the Food Problems Research Association (Jimkō Shokuryō Mondai Chōsakai) in order to take some governmental measures on the ‘population problem’. The association was composed of such bureaucrats and academics as Hatoyama Ichirō, Nagai Hisomu, and Nagai Tōru (see Appendix A). The Association concluded a report to the then Hamaguchi Osachi cabinet in 1929, which included a provision recommending the establishment of facilities for birth control consultation purposes (Fujino 1998: 121–31). Around the same time, in Tokyo, the local administrative authority led by Viscount Gotō Shinpei embarked on a project of incorporating
birth control consultation into the scheme of social policy of the city by utilizing a private organization led by Majima Yutaka. Oku Mumeo joined in this enterprise (Fujime 1997: 259). While Oku engaged in the women’s suffrage movement, she organized a settlement for working women (Narita 1995: 170–1). Oku’s settlement was also utilized in order to inform women about birth control techniques. As such, by the time the Japan Birth Control League was established in Tokyo in 1931 as a national organization unifying birth control movements all around Japan, the movement had become so comprehensive that different groups of people, from bureaucrats (Hatoyama Ichirō), academics (Nagai Tōru), socialists and unionists (Katō Kanjū, Yamakawa Kikue), social reformists (Abe Isoo), journalists (Ishibashi Tanzan, Hasegawa Nyozekan), women’s suffragists (Kawasaki Natsu, Muraoka Hanako and Kaneko Shigeri) to activists of birth control (Majima Yutaka, Katō Shizue and Ishimoto Eikichi) were involved or asked to be involved in the organization (Fujime 1997: 264–5).

More importantly, the birth control movement in Japan was closely linked to eugenic ideas from its inception. It was only in 1883 that Francis Galton, a cousin of Charles Darwin, coined the term ‘eugenics’, which, as Galton notes, broadly refers to ‘the study of agencies under social control that may improve or impair the racial qualities of future generations either physically or mentally’ (cited in Searle 1976: 1). From then onwards, eugenics quickly developed as an intellectual and social/political movement in Britain involving a vast range of intellectuals and professionals. When the Eugenics Education Society (EES) was established in 1907, ‘about two hundred “people of influence” ’ attended its annual general meeting. The list of members who joined the Society included such names as Cyril Burt, William McDougall (psychology), Lowes Dickinson, Havelock Ellis (literature), Dean Inge, the Reverend R. J. Campbell (religion), Arthur James Balfour, Neville Chamberlain (politics), J. M. Keynes, Harold Laski (social science) and Sydney and Beatrice Webb (social reform) as well as ‘almost the entire biological establishment’ including Julian Huxley and the Darwin family and the most distinguished geneticists (Searle 1976: 11). What is more, the eugenics cause was supported at the pinnacle of the academic world, at both Oxford and Cambridge universities (Searle 1976: 10–16).

The background of this development and wide acceptance of eugenics in Britain was the imperialist project of the British Empire. The experience of the Boer War influenced trends of thoughts around the time when eugenics attracted the attention of intellectuals and of medical and social professionals (Leonard 1997: 21–2). According to Searle, while ‘the Boer War preoccupation with “National Efficiency” and the panic about possible physical deterioration were coming to a climax’, Galton launched his project of ‘race improvement’ (Searle 1976: 20). The war was perceived as the biggest threat to racial quality as it had caused a massive exhaustion among the population of the ‘fittest’ who would be likely to be soldiers, while the unfit who ‘ironically’ failed to be soldiers survived this ‘selection’.
In this sense, it should be noted that the eugenics idea was originally incompatible with the birth control movement. This is because birth control is supposed to cause ‘adverse effects’ in the social evolutionary process by decreasing the number of newcomers in the more preferable social strata. Birth control practices tend to be popular among the more educated and wealthier social strata whose declining birth rate was alarming to so many eugenicists, while the poorer groups continued to have children without any plans. Hence, as Kevles notes, the initial relationship between eugenics and the birth control movement was as follows:

Leonard Darwin [the son of Charles Darwin and the President of the EES] kept the subject of birth control out of the deliberations of the Eugenics Education Society and the pages of the Eugenics Review [a magazine of the society]. It was not simply that so many members of the society found the subject distasteful but that they considered birth control – in Darwin’s words – ‘racially’ devastating.

(Kevles 1985: 88)

Nonetheless, the birth control movement eventually merged with the eugenics movement via the neo-Malthusian ideology. Birth control, more concretely, contraception could be ‘employed as a deliberate eugenic device by those anxious about the rapid multiplication of the unfit’ (Searle 1976: 101). Havelock Ellis has noted as follows:

The superficially sympathetic man flings a coin to the beggars; the more deeply sympathetic man builds an almshouse for him so that he need no longer beg; but perhaps the most radically sympathetic of all is the man who arranges that the beggar shall not be born.

(cited in Kevles 1985: 90)

Margaret Sanger and her British counterpart Marie Stopes, in order to legitimize and expand the birth control movement which had been stigmatized in Western societies, adopted this very rhetoric (Ogino 1991: 187–94). According to Kevles, Sanger wrote in 1919 that ‘more children from the fit, less from the unfit – that is the chief issue of birth control’ (Kevles 1985: 90). This suggests that the birth control movement imported into Japan, as centred around Sanger’s activities, was already influenced deeply by eugenic thought. However, the introduction of eugenics into Japan was much earlier than Sanger’s visit. To begin with, Darwinian evolutionary theory was imported into Japan as social Darwinism through Spencer’s theorization, intended to be ‘a social theory that explained evolution and the development of human society’, and ‘almost all of the contemporary intellectuals were exposed to this discourse’ (Unoura 1991: 120). In terms of eugenics per se, it was said that an article written by Fukuzawa Yukichi in 1888 first mentioned the ideas of eugenics (Katō 1996: 375–9). As Fujino rightly
points out, the popularization of social Darwinism and eugenic thought was motivated by concerns which sought survival in international relations and competition with the industrially advanced countries in Western Europe and North America. This concern brought about a multitude of discourses regarding ‘racial improvement’ and constituted the grounds for the acceptance of eugenic ideas (Fujino 1998: 52–3). Interest in eugenics increased especially after the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–5 and even more so after the First World War.

Nagai Hisomu, a leading member of the Population and Food Problems Research Association, was one of the most enthusiastic advocates of eugenics. A professor in physiology at the School of Medicine, the University of Tokyo, Nagai argued that the key to the rise and fall of the Japanese race was improvement in body constitution and genetic inheritance. Hence, as a scholar of medicine, he studied eugenics as well as writing articles in magazines in order to enlighten people with eugenic knowledge. Importantly, Nagai often contributed articles on eugenics to women’s magazines such as Fujin Kōron, since the development of the science of genetics proved that maternal inheritance contributed as much as paternal inheritance to the procreation of the next generation (Fujino 1998: 58).

Nagai himself opposed the idea of birth control, seeing it as a dangerous practice that stimulated unethical sexual relationships between men and women (S. Kaneko 1999: 186). However, leading activists of the Japanese birth control movement generally shared the ideas of eugenics. Abe Isoo is probably the most well known and cited example in this sense. Abe’s engagement in the birth control movement was firmly grounded in neo-Malthusian ideology and eugenics. He argued that procreation by the poor, who did not possess enough resources for raising children, and procreation by the ‘unfit’, who had ‘bad’ genetic inheritance, needed to be prevented (Katō 1996: 392–3; Fujino 1998: 430). Besides Abe, the birth control movement included devoted advocates of eugenic ideas in Japan such as Ikeda Shigenori. More importantly, Katō Shizue equated the birth control movement with neo-Malthusianism (Ishimoto 1922: 47; S. Kaneko 1999: 191), while the maternal cause pressed by leading female activists such as Katō or Hiratsuka Raichō was closely linked with idea of eugenics (Ishimoto 1922: 48–9; Fujino 1998: 431–2). Analyzing Hiratsuka’s discourse, which claimed protection for mothers and children, Furukubo points out that motherhood was described as ‘something to seek improvement of life through multiple child births of better species’. For Hiratsuka, ‘it was a great mission for women to attempt improvement and evolution of the race’. Furthermore, Hiratsuka had gone to the extent to maintain that the ‘unfit’ did not even enjoy the eligibility to be mothers (Furukubo 1991: 78–9). In this respect, discourses of Japanese feminists were deeply involved in the eugenic cause.52

The equation of birth control with the eugenics cause was actually employed in discussions in the Japanese government. Hatoyama Ichirō, a
cabinet secretary and secretariat of the Population and Food Problems Research Association, explained at the first meeting of the Population Problem Committee of the Association that the term ‘eugenics movement’ subsumed birth control. He used it in this way because birth control was still viewed as contentious and provocative. For Hatoyama, birth control in terms of neo-Malthusianism was an integral part of negative eugenics (Fujino 1998: 123–5). Hatoyama’s terminology was, however, criticized by other members of the committee, and the final report to the Hamaguchi Osachi cabinet separated birth control from eugenics, and recommended the establishment of a system of promoting the causes of both birth control and eugenics. Yet this did not extend to recommending the establishment of laws regulating compulsory sterilization or prohibition of marriage of the ‘unfit’, which Nagai Hisomu strongly advocated in the Committee.

In sum, the Japanese birth control movements in the prewar period had an ambivalent relationship with the Japanese government. Birth control was conventionally considered as being opposed to governmental policy, and this is true insofar as it demanded women’s control over their biological reproduction supported by women’s movements. However, it also clearly contained a perspective of population control in terms of neo-Malthusianism and eugenics, which resulted in its garnering support from the Japanese government. For instance, Sakai Toshihiko, a prominent socialist at that time, assessed in his article discourses regarding the birth control movements. He concluded that both the neo-Malthusian discourses of promoting the birth control movement and discourses of countering birth control for the prevention of a decline in the number of the population benefited the governing. For him, these two types of discourse negated the responsibilities of the governing to prevent and ameliorate poverty in society, while they also deterred a decline in the population by keeping the birth rate at a certain level (Sakai 1916: 56). In other words, the prewar Japanese birth control movement contributed to the governing of the Japanese nation-state in the following two senses. Firstly, it encouraged women to govern their acts of childbirth, namely biological reproduction, more autonomously, and strove to deliver sufficient knowledge and competence to women to do so. Secondly, it contributed to developing a new area of governing by the Japanese government, namely population policy. Since the 1920s onwards, the population appeared as one of the most crucial governmental policy areas, where a specialized policy-making process was to be systematized and agents were to be created. To rephrase this, through the experience of birth control that was intricately and very closely related to eugenic thought, the government extended its scope of governing to three dimensional spheres of reproduction: biological reproduction, economic reproduction and socio-political reproduction. Meanwhile, women became more aware of their own initiative (or rather the necessity of their initiative, at least) concerning reproduction.
Summary: family in the family state system

The ambivalence of the prewar Everyday Life Improvement Movement and birth control movement symbolizes the prewar process of the incorporation of women into the nation-state. Since its establishment, the modern government of Japan has attempted to turn Japanese women into more reliable and competent agents who could well manage their households as housewives and mothers in the modern nuclear family, while it also created an administrative system that more and more came to control biological reproduction under governmental supervision. More concretely, in prewar Japan, biological reproduction began to be regulated by the government in order to procreate good children who could turn into good soldiers, good workers and good mothers who could construct the strong Japanese modern nation in terms of economic and political competition in international relations (or, more precisely, imperialist projects). In other words, in this system, driven by the developmentalist agenda of the national government, biological reproduction was linked with economic reproduction and socio-political reproduction, and the Japanese government sought control over these three dimensions of reproduction through female incorporation into the Japanese nation-state.

Women did not react to this governmental attempt with thorough endorsement. Rather, they sought their ‘autonomy’ as competent and individual agents. However, what the discourses of the ‘New Women’ suggested was, as discussed above, an ‘odd’ convergence between the governmental attempts and women’s attempts to seek autonomy. In circumstances where suffrage and citizenship as well as the property rights of women were not allowed, such ‘New Women’ as Hiratsuka Raichō or Katō Shizue utilized maternal causes, namely protection of mothers and children through birth control or other methods. This served to improve women’s situation and to voice women’s rights. These efforts certainly contributed to promoting women’s problems into ‘social problems’, and as result of this served to channel women and their problems into the public arena. However, this also caused severe limitations in the following two senses. Firstly, the governmental perspective inevitably slipped into the maternal causes by the back door, as discussed in the case of eugenics. Secondly, addressing maternal causes only opened the door to the public world as mothers and housewives, and in this sense, it appeared as a limitation strictly defined inside the framework of domestic reproductive responsibilities as well as providing opportunities. Conclusively, the maternal politics concerning reproduction resulted for women in both constraints and empowerment.

An analogy of this double-binding structure of constraints and empowerment can be seen in the core element of the prewar body politic, that is, the ‘family state’ (kazoku kokka) system. The ‘family state’ system was an ideology that essentially prescribed the prewar Japanese state. According to the ‘family state’ ideology, each family was supposed to be connected to the nation-state represented by the Emperor, who was in this ideology...
assumed as the people’s Father. In this sense, the Japanese people should admire the Emperor, as the wife and children of each family should admire the father of the household; and this admiration organically unites the Japanese nation-state from the grassroots level. Recent studies on the family state have revealed that this ideology was not only constituted by feudal ideas of the family rooted in Confucianism, as had been believed. For instance, Muta points out that the family that features in prewar textbooks of moral education, which were designed to spread the ideology of the family state modelled on the modern nuclear family, originated in modern Western civilization which was tied with intimate emotion (Muta 1996: 107–9). Nishikawa also discusses the double structure of the ‘ie’ family and ‘home’ family where ‘home’, namely the modern nuclear family, was always generated out of the ‘ie’ as children except the oldest son created their own nuclear families outside the ‘ie’ system where they were born. According to her, this phenomenon can be best observed in the transition in the structure of houses. After the Great Kantō Earthquake, many new houses built in the suburbs of Tokyo were distinguished from houses of previous eras as first, each room was more firmly separated, and second, it contained a living room for quality time for the family (Nishikawa 2000: 32–4). However, Nishikawa further points out that this new structure of the house also had a different side; each nuclear family maintained a close link with the ‘ie’ system and the family state system through photographs of the Emperor and Empress, or the Shintō shrine in the living room. Furthermore, clocks that showed the nationalized standard time and radios broadcasting national programmes in the living rooms of these modern homes functioned as devices which integrated each ‘nuclear family’ into the nation-state (Nishikawa 2000: 35). Putting this in a more simple way by looking at the legal system: the head of each family, that is the father of the family, held certain administrative rights and responsibilities as the end-administrators of the state, while women were supposed to be legally incompetent (Toshitani 1975: 58–60). In this sense, the autonomy of each family was subject to the state, just as women’s autonomy was framed inside the domestic sphere.

Such severe limitation of the double-binding structure in early modern Japan leads our attention to a condition in which government in terms of governmentality was developed through the organization of tri-dimensional reproduction. That is to say, as the example of the Meirokusha and female education has demonstrated, ideas of governmentality as a new form of governing was intentionally imported in order to be utilized in the project of modernization and nation-building. The logic of governmentality – developing and maximizing the national strength, attained by maximizing happiness and welfare of the national population that can autonomously organize its everyday life – was fully recognized, and selected by policymakers as a strategy of modernizing the Japanese nation-state and economy, through references to the foreign models of the family, home and everyday
taken from Britain, Germany and the US. For this purpose, a multitude of policies, female education, medicalization of biological reproduction, public hygiene, modernization of homes through social education, are implemented ‘from above’ to turn the female population into agents of reproduction who were able to produce happiness and welfare in everyday life. Yet, such external implementation of the policies to realize governmentality in the Japanese environment resulted in, first, the strong influence of statist and developmentalist concerns on reproductive activities, which has been illustrated by the maternalist politics of Japanese feminists in the early twentieth century. Second, the policies also resulted in the segregation of women. While elite women discovered opportunities to act as autonomous beings in society through education and mass media, and emerging middle-class women started to play the role of a competent housewife at home through consumption displayed in the exhibitions of the Everyday Life Improvement Movement, a large number of women, women in lower-class, working women, and women who could not form families (for example, prostitutes), were still excluded from those new opportunities.

The relatively liberated atmosphere of the Taishō Democracy was gradually replaced by militarism, and a brief period of party politics finally ended in the military uprising in May 1932. From then onwards, the Japanese nation-state headed towards its imperialist project based on military aggression and aggrandizement, and this at last resulted in the absolute defeat and devastation of the state in 1945. Faced with these historical changes, the project of female incorporation into the nation-state was forced to alter course, while it also expanded its target from upper-middle-class women to lower-class women. In the next chapter, the transition in the project of incorporation will be examined by focusing upon the continuity and discontinuity of the three dimensional reproductive processes through their specific historical trajectory.
Introduction: the period of emergency

Japan’s experience through and its absolute defeat in the so-called ‘Fifteen-Year War’ stands as a period of ‘emergency’ in modern Japanese history. During this time, the Japanese people’s everyday lives, as well as the lives of the other people that became targets of Japanese military aggression, were forced to change radically. Such change was necessary firstly because of the total war regime, and secondly due to the devastated condition of the state. The total war regime required all resources, both material and human, to be allocated in certain ways suited to the absolute purpose of the nation-state, namely waging total war, and people’s everyday lives became an element of the governmental project of controlling resources that prioritized demands derived from the war. The period just after the war was further marked by destruction and shortages of all kinds of resources, as both material and human resources had been largely exhausted during the war. This destruction of the state and resultant shortage of resources was experienced on the personal level as hardship in people’s everyday lives. In this sense, the period of the Fifteen-Year War and its aftermath was an abnormal and extraordinary time and as a result each person’s everyday life was in emergency (hijoji). Commenting on the significance of the Fifteen-Year War for the collective memories in postwar Japan, a prominent Japanese social critic, Tsurumi Shunsuke, points out that the Fifteen-Year War and its aftermath is an indispensable component of one of the most popular soap opera series in Japan, which has been broadcasting since 1962. The main theme underlying various episodes in the series is the catastrophe in people’s everyday lives that was brought about by the total war. According to Tsurumi, the Japanese people generally find ‘something to reflect on’ in the ‘Fifteen-Year War’, along with the Meiji Restoration (Tsurumi 1984/1991: 149–53).

Studies on modern Japanese history tend to present this ‘period of emergency’ in a certain way: the Fifteen-Year War period is generally considered as the period of deviance (Yamanouchi 1995: 9; Ueno 1998: 19–20). Yamanouchi argues that conventional research on modern Japanese history
tends to interpret trajectories through the Fifteen-Year War and its aftermath as follows:

Japanese history during the fascist era went through an abnormal course, deviating from the appropriate process of development that a modern society is supposed to follow. The trend of democratization which had advanced during the Taishō period (1912–26) came to a halt in the fascist era. Further, the authoritarian regime that was ideologically grounded in irrational ultra-nationalism forcibly drove the people to the deviant course of wartime mobilization. The postwar reforms initiated after defeat in the war in 1945 led Japanese history to return to the course of the Taishō democracy, and postwar reforms were the starting point of history from 1945 to the present.3

(Yamanouchi 1995: 9)

Yamanouchi further points out that the conventional view of Japanese history through the period of total war and its aftermath is constructed in a similar way to a view of world history that sees the Second World War as a confrontation between irrational and authoritarian fascist regimes (Germany, Italy and Japan) and the rational and democratic regimes of the ‘New Deal’ (the US, Britain and France). In other words, this kind of view of history identifies an ideal course of modernization that is modelled on the experience of Western Europe and North America. Logically, then, the period of total war and its aftermath in Japan is considered as a period of emergency when deviant elements interrupt the ideal model of modernization (Yamanouchi 1995: 9).

However, this conventional type of interpretation of history does not supply answers to all the necessary questions regarding issues of the period of total war and its aftermath, and Yamanouchi calls our attention to the advancement in integration of society through the total war regime. Yamanouchi’s argument thus presents, in a sense, continuity from the prewar political system to that following the war. The conventional interpretation of modern Japanese history emphasizes the achievements of the postwar reforms; especially the postwar democratization introduced by the Occupation forces. Recently, however, this view has been challenged by studies that demonstrate the existence of continuity in political institutions, bureaucracy and economic systems, from the democratization and liberation movements during the Taishō democracy era through the war mobilization system to the postwar reform era (Dower 1995: 10–18; Noguchi 1995: 12–18). In this respect, the postwar reforms were not completed only by external force but also as a result of internal continuities. In addition to this new ‘continuity’ view, what Yamanouchi maintains is that there was an advancement of the modernization process during the total war era. He points out that the total war regime contributed to incorporating groups of people who had been in the early stage of modernity located outside of the social and political system. Working-class men, ethnic minorities (black people
in the US or Korean people in Japan) or women were incorporated into the nation-state through the allocation of certain roles as members of the state, for mobilization purposes. What happened through this process is, therefore, not a deviation from the normal course of modernization, but an advance of the project of modernization, which is supposed to gradually develop social integration inside the nation-state. In the total war regime, all members of the nation-state were expected to be agents who functioned not only socially but also individually. Further, this occurred through processes in which people’s everyday lives became a part of the political and social system of governing. Hence, as Ueno summarizes Yamanouchi’s discussion, the wartime regime was in fact a new stage of the modernization project, namely ‘innovation’ (kakushin) in terms of development of the nation-state, which could be identified on both sides of the war, the Allied Powers and the Axis Powers (Ueno 1998: 21). In this sense, the Fifteen-Year War contributed, as was discussed in Chapter 1, towards bringing about a comprehensive governing system in Japan.

In summary, the period of total war and its aftermath is generally marked by and remembered for its abnormality and crisis, and, as Tsurumi suggests in the above, abnormality attracts the imagination of the postwar Japanese populace towards this period. Yet there are also certain elements continuing from the prewar period through to the postwar period and furthermore, certain elements which were innovations during this period.

This chapter analyzes the further development of the reproductive system during the periods of total war and the Occupation in sequence with its initiation and establishment through the early modern period discussed in the previous chapter. In so doing, transitions in the Japanese political and social system, in particular those brought about by the postwar reforms, will be discussed, and continuity and advancement from the prewar period to the postwar period will also be elucidated. In short, continuity and discontinuity in Japanese three-dimensional reproductions (biological/economic/socio-political) through the total war regime will be identified in this chapter. For this purpose, three policy areas, namely population policy, social policy and women’s mobilization, will be the focus of attention, and governmental strategies will be individually discussed as well as people’s practices of biological, economic and socio-political reproduction.

Before starting the main discussion of this chapter, however, there is one point that requires clarification, namely how the total war influenced Japanese women’s lives. As discussed in the previous chapter, the sexual division of labour was an essential part of the modernization project of the Japanese government, and Japanese feminists utilized it in order to realize their political objectives. But how did the different expectations of women function in the total war regime where all members of the nation-state were comprehensively and systematically mobilized for war purposes? Did the total war demand that women play a different role from that of men? If so, in what ways were their roles different?
War and women

In general, war lies at the heart of constructing stereotypes regarding sexual differences. Men, from the young to the elderly, are expected to go to the war front as soldiers, while women are in most cases expected to stay at home. This sexual division of labour in war is based on a universal social and cultural assumption about men and women across various nation-states and through history, that is, an assumption that men are aggressive and warlike (‘masculine’) as compared to women who procreate and raise new generations (‘feminine’) (Enloe 1988: 210–13). This also suggests that women love a peaceful world where children’s welfare can be sustained. However, contrary to the conventional assumption of the sexual division of labour in war, the ‘total war’ regime brought a new question into the sexual division of labour, as it theoretically required every single member of the state to make commitments to the war project. In fact, numerous women joined the Second World War as ‘women soldiers’ for both the Allied and the Axis powers (Takahashi 1992: 249–56). Besides being women soldiers, moreover, women waged war through their various social and familial roles. Takahashi summarizes women’s participation in the Second World War across the combatant states in the following three areas.

Firstly, women contributed to waging war through military activities, as mentioned above. Women not only joined the military forces and served as auxiliaries and reserves, but also helped the military’s activities as nurses, military-related personnel, entertainers or so-called ‘comfort women’. The extent of participation of women in the Second World War varies from state to state, but Takahashi points out that all the states in the Second World War ‘unwillingly’ made use of women in the war due to, in most cases, shortages of male military power (Takahashi 1992: 249–51). However, Wakakuwa also argues that the totalitarian regimes (Germany, Italy and Japan) were more reluctant to utilize women (Wakakuwa 1995/2000: 101). In fact, the Japanese military firmly refused to allow women to join its organizations. Also, in Germany, women were mobilized for auxiliary missions but administratively categorized as ‘civilians’ (Takahashi 1992: 251).

Secondly, women tended to fill vacancies created in the labour market after men had been recruited to the war front as soldiers, although the extent of participation again varies from state to state. In European states, women had already been mobilized for economic activities during the First World War, and the Second World War extended the trend of participation. Furthermore, the female labour force was introduced into areas of physical labour that had previously been considered as men’s work, such as moulding or riveting (Takahashi 1992: 256–7). For instance, ‘Rosie the Riveter’ was an ideal female image that was frequently resorted to in order to encourage women workers at armoury factories during the Second World War in the United States (Enloe 2000: 64). The image of ‘Rosie’ was modelled on a real woman who put 3,345 rivets into one wing of a bomber during six hours with her colleagues at the Graman factory (Wakakuwa 1995/2000: 103). The
expansion of women’s involvement in economic production required the national government to improve its social welfare provisions, especially in providing day-care facilities for working mothers and children, and this led to the realization of day-care services for children provided by nation-states, although it was limited to being a temporary measure (Higonnet and Higonnet 1987: 36).

Thirdly, women contributed to waging total war by staying on the ‘home front’. The large scale of exhaustion of material resources in the period of total war necessitated the introduction of comprehensive rationing systems for resources relating to livelihood, evacuation programmes and disaster drills. This resulted in the organization and systemization of women’s activities on the ‘home front’, and this expansion of activities in turn resulted in an expansion of responsibilities at home. Also, women, in their maternal role as caretakers at home, were expected to contribute to the total war by producing the next generation or providing care to existing children. During the period of total war, the national government was concerned with the quantity and quality of the population, which engendered governmental propaganda on maternalism and even the implementation of pro-natal policies on all sides of the combatant states (Michel 1987: 157–9; Wakakuwa 1995/2000: 68–86).

In Japan, women certainly made enormous contributions to the state’s project of waging total war through all of the three channels mentioned above. Although female soldiers were refused by military organizations, women in the form of nurses, other military personnel and ‘comfort women’ were sent to the war front. Also, in the last stage of the Second World War when the possibility of war on the Japanese mainland seemed to be unavoidable, women joined in the activities of grassroots military practices.6 Japanese women also expanded their participation in industry, mainly in the armaments industry. The Order of National Cooperation of Labour Service to the State (Kokumin Kinrō Hōkoku Kyōryoku Rei) of 1941 required unmarried women from the ages of fourteen to twenty-four to provide thirty days’ labour per year. From then on, women’s involvement in industry gradually expanded in order to fill the shortages in the labour force.7 Some Japanese feminists welcomed this development. Yamataka Shigeri8 (previously Kaneko Shigeri) urged the government to fully utilize the female labour force by providing public maternal and child protection facilities. Meanwhile, in a 1941 book, Oku Mumeo wrote to women that they should contribute to the total war regime through their ‘sleeping’ labour force (Suzuki 1997: 136–86; Wakakuwa 1995/2000: 100). Japanese women also expanded their involvement in national/regional politics. For example, the Central League of the National Spiritual Mobilization (Kokumin Seishin Sōdōin Chūō Renmei) decreed that ‘the head of household and the housewife’ should attend meetings of the Neighbourhood Association (Tonarigumi) where regional matters were discussed. This decision, which gave the housewife equal status with the head of household (the husband),
transgressed the scheme of the ‘*ie*’ system in which a housewife was supposed to be subordinate to the head of the household, and was perceived as a step towards obtaining ‘citizenship’ for women. Moreover, women started to join the national policy-making groups or administrative organizations. Once Yoshioka Yaoi was appointed a member of the governmental Educational Council, the number of women who joined the national and regional political organizations increased (Nishikawa 1982/2000: 130–1).

Women who took governmental posts included such names from civil and feminist movements as Ichikawa Fusae, Hani Motoko and her daughter Setsuko, Hiratsuka Raichō and Kawasaki Natsu (Suzuki 1989b: 75–94; Nishikawa 1982/2000: 148–57). Referring to Suzuki’s landmark work (1997), Ueno analyzes the reason for the active involvement of Japanese feminists in the total war regime as follows:

The total war regime seemed, at least for activists of the women’s movements, an ‘innovation’ [*kakushin*] which would enable them to solve a multitude of women’s problems, that is, such long-pending issues as women’s participation in the labour market, maternal protection, women’s public activities and an improvement in their legal and political status. They fiercely criticized the dubious and unenthusiastic attitude of the government, and devoted themselves to making up for the insufficient and defective women’s policy implemented by the government.

(Ueno 1998: 66)

However, the expansion of women’s participation through the period of total war was overshadowed by the norms of the sexual division of labour and the discourses of maternalism in which the Japanese wartime governmental strategies of women’s mobilization were deeply embedded. As mentioned above, the Japanese military did not allow women to become formal members of its organization, although numerous women were mobilized to play the women’s role of caretaker of men (e.g. nurses 9 and ‘comfort women’10) on the battlefields. Also, women’s participation in industry during wartime was limited by the population policy and the policy targeting ‘protection of mother and children’ of the then government, both intended to reproduce a great number of ‘soldiers-to-be’ and ‘mothers-to-be’ of good quality. The government was therefore hesitant to resort to compulsory mobilization of women. Voluntary labour service was strongly encouraged and volunteer labour corps (*kinrō teishintai*) were organized, but these schemes initially targeted unmarried women11 and only embraced married women in the last stage of the war (Takahashi 1992: 257–63; Wakakuwa 1995/2000: 98–101).

The central reason why the norms of the sexual division of labour functioned so strongly in the Japanese total war regime was seen in population policies. The intention of these policies was to increase the population and to emphasize the maternal role of women in order to produce a ‘good and
healthy’ population, both in terms of quantity and quality. In Ways of the Imperial Subjects (*Shinmin no Michi*), which was composed to popularize the ideas in the Essence of the National Body Politic (*Kokutai no Hongi*) among the Japanese people in 1941, the maternal role was strongly emphasized. This was because it was seen as the agent for the raising and caretaking of the next generation of the national population. Subsequently, the Wartime Home Education Instruction Guideline (*Senji Katei Kyōiku Shidō Yōkō*) was established in 1942, which urged mothers to construct ‘healthy and bright homes’ where the next generation of imperial subjects might be raised. The document also required mothers to increase their knowledge and train their skills in terms of science, as well as to foster virtue as Japanese women for this purpose (Nagahara 1985: 210–12). The governmental concerns placed on motherhood can be observed not only in the governmental documents but also in the words of leading politicians. As has already been cited in a number of articles, Prime Minister Tōjō Hideki clearly stated that women’s genuine quality, namely their reproductive function, must be prioritized before the expansion and maintenance of material production attained by women’s participation in industry (Takahashi 1992: 259; Wakakuwa 1995/2000: 99).

In her study on the propaganda of Japanese women’s magazines during wartime, Wakakuwa concludes that women’s role in the total war regime was as ‘cheerleaders’ (Wakakuwa 1995/2000: 111–26). The role of ‘cheerleader’ was, according to her, to watch (male) soldiers fighting from the observer’s seat, to cheer them on, support them, applaud them and cry for them in order to metamorphose them into ‘war heroes’. Furthermore, cheerleaders were responsible for reproducing new soldiers. More precisely, they needed to be willing to send their sons to the war front in order to serve the nation. In so doing, many women felt for the first time in history that their reproductive roles were crucial to politics and society, and thus they obtained social and political identity as members of the nation-state. The leaders of women’s movements played a central role in choreographing ‘cheerleading’. Wakakuwa points out that then-leading feminists such as Kōra Tomi or Ichikawa Fusae recognized precisely what the military regime wanted for women’s roles and voluntarily practised them. Their discourses were transmitted through the mass media to women at the grassroots level who joined in, cheering along with the leaders (Wakakuwa 1995/2000: 123). Wakakuwa summarizes:

> The liveliness during the time of the war was an expression of potential desires and ability for women whose presence was unknown and ahistorically at the bottom and in the margins of patriarchy. It was ‘cheerleaders for the war’ who brought this liveliness out. Mass media played the role of amplifiers for cheerleaders. Yet, they were also urged on. Surrounding a coliseum called the ‘war’, a massive circle of women was formed and raised cheers.

(Wakakuwa 1995/2000: 126)
In sum, the relationship between war and women demonstrates ambiva-
lence in the expansion of women’s participation in the public sphere. On the
one hand, women surely extended the areas of their activities, and even
began to take public responsibilities during the total war period. However,
women’s participation was strongly gendered in the sense that they were
generally expected to be supportive forces for men’s activities, and that
through this process their reproductive functions were re-emphasized and
promoted to the status of public and national duties. In other words, women
were expected to be an active part of the total war regime, but their contrib-
utions were expected to be in reproductive terms, namely as wives and
mothers.

This tendency can be observed in all the combatant states, but in Japan
the government resorted more explicitly to women’s reproductive roles,
through the active implementation of population and women’s policies. As
will be seen below, in order to further elucidate the governmental strategies
for women’s mobilization and women’s actual roles in the Japanese total war
regime, the spotlight is focused upon three policy areas: population policy,
social policy and women’s organizations.

Population policy: control over the quantity and quality
of the population

The recognition of the ‘population problems’ in the 1920s led the Japanese
government to become aware of the necessity of institutionalizing a popu-
lation policy-making system inside the national administrative framework.
The first governmental group for considering population problems, the
Population and Food Problems Research Association, which was discussed
in the previous chapter, ceased its activities in 1930 with the publication of
a recommendation for the permanent establishment of a research organi-
zation on population problems. This recommendation was realized when
the Association of Population Problems (Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūkai, here-
after APP) was established as an incorporated association. The APP was a
semi-governmental organization, which the Social Bureau of the Home
Ministry (Naimushō) planned and influenced. The government financed its
activities with the aid of a private company. In addition, high-ranked
bureaucrats (the Secretary of the Home Ministry, the Director of the
Social Bureau, the Chief of the Social Department, the Director of
Cabinet Statistics Bureau) acted as members of the APP’s board of direc-
tors. The other members of the board included members of the House of
Peers, scholars, a journalist and a president of a national policy company
for immigration, Kaigai Kōgyō Kabushuki Kaisha. The main objective of
the APP was to conduct research seeking solutions to population prob-
lems, including immigration issues, as the composition of the directors’
board suggests. Members of the board of directors with academic back-
grounds, Nagai Tōru (see Appendix A), Nasu Hiroshi and Ueda Teijirō,
were in charge of research developments, and the actual activities of the APP were carried out by the following four research fellows: Tachi Minoru (see Appendix A), Masuda Shigeki, Odauchi Michitoshi and Sōda Takeo (Takazawa 1992: 104–7).

The fruits of the research and activities of the APP were published in an academic quarterly, *Population Problems (Jinkō Mondai)*, which was established by the APP. It also hosted a number of lectures and a prize article competition based on the theme of population problems. The topics of the articles and lectures varied from problems of surplus population, unemployment and censuses, to eugenics and immigration issues (Takazawa 1992: 107–10). As such, the activities of the APP were originally more academically oriented rather than focused on policy-making, and dealt with a variety of topics rather than specific items on the governmental agenda.

This tendency changed around 1937, the year in which the Sino-Japanese War broke out. That year, the APP called for a meeting of the National Conference on Population Problems (*Jinkō Mondai Zenkoku Kyōgikai*) for the first time in order to respond to the governmental request for advice. From thenceforth, the APP became more integrated into the governmental policy-making process. Around this time, a research fellow of the APP, Tachi Minoru, was dispatched from the Home Ministry in order to prepare for the establishment of the Institute of Population Problems (*Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūjo*, hereafter IPP). This institute was finally realized in 1939 as a subordinate organization of the newly established Ministry of Health and Welfare. The establishment of the IPP demonstrated that the population problem had fully been incorporated into the administrative scheme of the Japanese state by the late 1930s.

The reason for strengthening these governmental commitments to the population policy in the late 1930s was clearly that of waging total war. Before the Sino-Japanese War of 1937, the debates over population policy had as their central agenda both surplus and shortage of population. As has been discussed in the previous chapter, the birth control movement attracted a great deal of support among intellectuals, bureaucrats and politicians as well as among social activists in the late 1920s and early 1930s, since the recognition that the Japanese state was overpopulated had a certain validity. However, the natural increase of the Japanese population statistically hit its pinnacle in 1926, and subsequently, the population trend turned in the direction of gradual decrease, with the fall in birth rates and the decrease in the juvenile population attracting particular attention after the Sino-Japanese War broke out in 1937. This demographic phenomenon caused general anxiety over human resources (Takagi 1993: 45–6), and as the demand for adequate human resources for the waging of total war mounted, the shortage of soldiers and new recruits for the workforce was more pronounced. As a result of this, policies targeting increasing the number of those in the ‘superior’ population appeared to be prioritized over the policy to restrict the size of the population (Shō 1998: 112–16).
Furthermore, as Fujime points out, by this time, the acquisition of colonial or quasi-colonial lands by the Japanese state through the aggressive war against China had allowed many Japanese to emigrate to the new Manchurian state, and consequently the neo-Malthusian cause lost its plausibility (Fujime 1997: 351–2). In sum, during the 1930s, the Japanese population policy was inclined to introduce policies for the growth of ‘population of good quality’ in order to secure enough human resources for waging the war. At the inaugural National Conference of Population Problems, the then Prime Minister Konoe Fumimaro made the following comment: ‘Suffice it to say that the rise and fall of the national population equates to the ups and downs of the national strength’ (Shô 1998: 116). Konoe’s expression clearly demonstrates that the Japanese wartime population policy, aimed at improving the quantity and quality of the Japanese population, became integrated into the governmental agenda, and that the newly established Ministry of Health and Welfare and the IPP played the main part in making and implementing the wartime population policy. This governmental policy was clearly stated in the National Total Mobilization Law (Kokka Sōdōin Hō) established in 1938, which prescribed that the law controlled the human and material resources of the Empire of Japan. As Maki Ken’ichi, a bureaucrat of the Tokyo District Council Welfare Office explained, ‘human resources’ in this context meant ‘not only human beings, but persons who have healthy bodies that make one able to obtain the mental and technical competence required by the state and society’, and moreover meant human resources in ‘a particular quality’ (Fujino 1998: 264).

As such, the wartime population policy implemented by these newly established policy agents contained two policy objectives, namely an attempt to enlarge the size of the population while at the same time improving its quality. More concretely, it covered the following four agenda items. Firstly, the wartime population policy deployed a national campaign for the promotion of childbirth. ‘Have more babies, multiply’ (Umeyo, Fuyaseyo) is a well-known slogan of wartime national policy that defined women’s wartime duties as practising childbirth and child-rearing. This national policy was officially grounded on the Guidelines for Establishing the Population Policy (Jinkō Seisaku Kakuritsu Yōkō, hereafter GEPP), which were set by a cabinet meeting in 1941. The GEPP was originally drafted by the IPP under the leadership of Kitaoka Juitsu (see Appendix A), and the Institute of Economic Planning (Kikakuin) finalized it with the cooperation of Tachi Minoru of the IPP by adding the provision for protecting motherhood and young children (Takazawa 1992: 116). The objective of the GEPP was ‘to increase the Japanese population through population policies in order to develop healthily and eternally the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere (Dai Tōa Kyōeiken) as well as in order for Japan to grow eternally and to maintain leadership in East Asia’. For this purpose, it set a target to increase the total Japanese inland population to one hundred million by 1960.
through policies that encouraged pregnancy and childbirth and aimed to reduce the death rate. More specifically, as is well known, it proposed to lower the average marriage age by three years and to increase the average number of children to five per couple, as well as to implement various policies for improving the health and quality of the Japanese population (Shō 1998: 116). Through these policies, marriage and childcare were publicly redefined as essential elements of ‘the state’s business’ for ‘the eternal development of the race’, being rephrased as ‘marriage service to the nation-state’ (kekkon hōkoku) and ‘childcare service to the nation-state’ (ikuji hōkoku) (Hayakawa 1991: 258–9).

Increasing the size of the Japanese population, however, required governmental support and incentives for pregnancy and childcare, especially under the harsh life conditions experienced during the total war period. In consequence, the Japanese government embarked on several types of social welfare policy that were aimed at the support of motherhood and children as the second population agenda. In 1937, the bill for the Mother and Child Protection Law (Boshi Hogo Hō) was passed by the Lower House of the Diet with a unanimous vote. The idea behind this legislation was derived from the women’s suffrage movement. The fifth general meeting of the Japanese Women’s Suffrage Movement held in 1934 adopted a request for legislation for the protection of mothers and children, and this resulted in the organization of the Women’s League for the Promotion of Motherhood Protection Legislation (Bosei Hogo Hō Seitei Sokushin Fujin Renmei). The platform of the League demanded that the government assist mothers and pregnant women who did not have alternative breadwinners in their families and were suffering hardships, as care by mothers was indispensable for children, the small members of the nation-state (shō kokumin), to grow up (Hayakawa 1991: 246–7). The Home Ministry took up the proposal by the Women’s League and submitted a bill for the protection of mother and child to the Lower House of the Diet. According to discussions at the Diet, the aim of this legislation was to raise the number of ‘good’ children by providing their mothers care in secure everyday lives, for example by providing aid for mothers in economic difficulty. This legislation excluded from the provisions mothers who were considered to suffer from some forms of problematic behaviour or who had mental or physical handicaps (Hayakawa 1991: 248–51). Mackie points out the paternalist nature of the legislation. She argues that the legislation ‘reinforced the role of a paternalistic and patriarchal State in “protecting” women and children, and affirmed a nationalist and militarist project which circumscribed the meanings attached to the concept of motherhood’ (Mackie 1997: 162).

After the enactment of the Mother and Child Protection Law, the Japanese government deployed laws and regulations which were aimed at protecting motherhood in order to reproduce a genetically sound and competent next generation of the Japanese population. After the GEPP was established in 1941, the government strove in particular to improve the
public health system which had contributed to an increase in the rate of childbirth and a decrease in the death rate of newborn babies. In addition, the Japanese government introduced a number of maternal promotion policies in order to honour ‘good motherhood’, of which the national commendation for families with multiple ‘healthy’ children is a well-known example. The concrete measures that the Japanese government planned or implemented also included setting up public health centres all around the nation; establishing regulations for public health nurses; promoting physical exercises for improving the physical health of the overall Japanese population and founding a national system which supervised pregnancy and children’s health, for example general examinations for babies; compulsory regular examinations during pregnancy; issuing maternity health books (ninsanpu techō)16 and the general regulation of supervision of maternity health. Furthermore, the government also put into operation measures that attempted to encourage marriage. These included marriage consultation centres (546 around Japan), a special loan system for marriage funds and a special scholarship for students from households with a large number of children, besides commendation of the Ministry of Health and Welfare for households with many ‘good’ children (Hayakawa 1991: 260).17 Also, as mentioned in the previous section, these governmental measures to support motherhood and childhood were complemented by ideological propaganda that emphasized the national and social functions of motherhood.

The first two areas were intended to encourage a high rate of childbirth, while policies that discouraged or even banned contraceptive efforts and birth control were also implemented. By the 1930s, the Japanese birth control movement had developed to a stage where it opened birth control clinics. The Japan Birth Control Association founded a consultation centre in Osaka, which was called the ‘Eugenics Consultation Centre’ in 1930 (Fujime 1997: 260–3).18 In addition, after the dissolution of the Japan Birth Control League, Katō Shizue formed the Japan Women’s League for Birth Control (Nihon Sanji Chōsetsu Fujin Dōmei) with a journalist, Kawasaki Natsu in 1931. Katō went to the US in order to study various techniques at Sanger’s birth control clinic, and in 1934, she opened a number of birth control clinics in Tokyo. Katō’s clinic was introduced in the Yomiuri Shinbun (Yomiuri Newspaper), for which Kawasaki was a consultant contributor on personal matters, and this attracted the widespread attention of the public. According to Kaneko, the number of visitors to Katō’s clinic is recorded as approximately ten thousand (S. Kaneko 1999: 192). Yet, the Japanese government eventually strengthened the ban placed on ‘harmful’ contraceptive equipment19 and abortion after the Manchurian Incident in order to curtail the birth control movement, and Katō’s clinic was finally closed by governmental order in 1938 (Fujime 1997: 271–2; S. Kaneko 1999: 192).20 Finally, the GEPP and the National Eugenics Law (Kokumin Yūsei Hō) forbade any contraceptive efforts except in cases of genetic defects, and also ordered doctors to register all operations for sterilization and abortion (Fujime 1997: 274).
The above three areas of policy intended to achieve an increase in the number of the population, while the qualitative improvement in terms of eugenics was targeted by the wartime population policy in cooperation with private or academic organizations. The eugenics movement grew steadily through the 1930s. In 1930, the Japan Racial Hygiene Academy (Nihon Minzoku Eisei Gakkai) was organized for academic purposes, and in 1935 this developed into an incorporated foundation, the Japan Racial Hygiene Association (Nihon Minzoku Eisei Kyōkai), which was intended for the general popularization of eugenic causes among the Japanese people. These private eugenic organizations’ activities included drafting a sterilization law, organizing public lectures and public exhibitions of marriage. The purpose of the organizations was to popularize the eugenics cause, and consulting the general public on eugenic issues at the Eugenics Consultation Centre, located in a department store in Tokyo, and the Japan Eugenics Marriage Popularization Society (Nihon Yūsei Kekkon Fukyū Kyōkai), a sister organization of the Japan Racial Hygiene Association (Fujino 1998: 161). Leading women’s activists, including Katō Shizue, Ichikawa Fusae, Yamada Waka, Yoshioka Yayoi and Kōra Tomi, joined the Japan Eugenics Marriage Popularization Society, an organization which primarily targeted women in its furthering of the eugenics cause (Fujino 1998: 174) and which ‘enjoyed the enlistment of about eight hundred members at its peak’ (Otsubo 1999: 46). Through these activities, and also its monthly magazine Yūsei (Eugenics), the Society attempted to transfer eugenic knowledge to the Japanese people, especially women who gave birth to future members of the Japanese state. In the late 1930s, these activities of the Society were incorporated into the governmental efforts on eugenics and the protection of mothers and children. The Eugenics Consultation Centre was utilized for governmental marriage consultation and its leading members, for instance Takeuchi Shigeyo of the Society, became more involved in the national population policy-making process (Otsubo 1999: 53–60).

Eugenics was officially and noticeably incorporated into the governmental administrative system when the Ministry of Health and Welfare was established. The Department of Eugenics (Yūsei-ka) was located inside the Bureau of the Prevention (Yobō-kyoku). Moreover, Kido Kōichi, in an address to the House of Peers, declared that the new ministry would be responsible for conducting research and surveys on eugenics. He said the Minister of Health and Welfare aimed ‘to remove the unfit from the population as much as possible and to make up the Japanese population with the healthy who show good heredity’ (Fujino 1998: 267–8). According to Matsubara, the overall structure of the eugenics policy of the Ministry of Health and Welfare was to ‘prevent the race from being spoiled, by removing effects caused by adverse selection and racial poisons (harmful effects such as syphilis, alcohol, or drugs)’. The policy was also designed to encourage healthy and good people to have more children, and thus attempt to bring eternal prosperity to the nation-state by improving racial quality as
well as increasing the number of the population (Matsubara 2000: 176–7). For this purpose, the ministry employed measures such as advising on motherhood, eugenic marriage, and childhood health protection as modelled on Nazi eugenic policies, and such bureaucrats as Miyake Kōichi, Koya Yoshio (see Appendix A), Hayashi Haruo and Aoki Nobuharu actively contributed to research, policy-making and publicizing activities for the public in close cooperation with academics and private companies. It also utilized the IPP for empirical research on eugenics. Yet, the most important legislation regarding eugenics was the National Eugenics Law that finally passed the Diet in 1940 after a few sterilization bills since 1934 had failed. As Article One of the National Eugenics Law clearly stated, the objective of the law was to ‘improve the quality of the population by preventing offspring with genetic problems from increasing’. Meanwhile, it also sought to multiply ‘those with genetically-sound quality’ (Takagi 1993: 46; Fujime 1997: 351; Matsubara 2000: 181). The law legitimized sterilization operations for those categorized as ‘the unfit’ according to the criteria laid down in the law.

In sum, the wartime population policy was installed in order to: (1) promote the number of childbirths, (2) support pregnancy and child-bearing through social policy in order to increase the number of the population, (3) discourage contraceptive efforts and practices and (4) incorporate eugenic ideas into the administrative system and reproductive regulations.

Japan’s unconditional surrender radically changed the circumstances under which these concrete measures of wartime population policy were made. The Fifteen-Year War resulted in a massive drop in the Japanese population. War fatalities numbered approximately 2.1 million for soldiers and 0.5 million for civilians. Added to this, approximately 1.4 million foreign residents including ex-colonial subjects left Japan after the war ended. However, the Japanese population grew rapidly by a rate of 2 to 5 percent per year, due to repatriation from ex-colonies (in total approximately 6.25 million) and an increase in the rate of childbirth caused by the so-called ‘baby boom’ of 1947–9. According to Ōbuchi, the total number of the Japanese population increased by about ten million, which was five times the rate of increase from 1990 to 1995 (Ōbuchi 1997: 19–21). Faced with this extraordinary growth, which was in a sense the realization of the prewar population policies, the Japanese economy suffered from the devastation caused by destruction during the war period. In macroeconomic terms, as Nakamura estimates, the total war set the Japanese economy back to the standard of 1935, and about a fourth of the overall production facilities was badly damaged. Also, as the wartime economy had demanded concentration on the development of heavy industries for the production of armaments, light industries such as the textile industry, the main driving force of the Japanese economy and a key player in the production of materials for the Japanese population in earlier years, had been largely deserted during the time of the war. Consequently, the Japanese economy lost one third of its overall production facilities (Nakamura 1986: 147–54). This macroeconomic disaster was experienced in
the everyday lives of the Japanese people in the form of shortages of not just food but also employment and housing, and the economic situation was further worsened by other factors such as price inflation and poor agricultural production in 1946. Because of these economic disasters, a genuine Malthusian situation, namely a surplus population that exceeded the limits of national economic competence, appeared in Japan, and birth control and population control re-emerged as crucial items on the political agenda. In October 1945, the Japanese government set up the New Committee of Population Measures (Shin Jinkō Taisaku Iinkai) under the leadership of Koya Yoshio, who had been one of the key players in prewar population and eugenic policies (Tama 1996: 161). Following this, the Ministry of Health and Welfare held a Round-Table Conference on Population Problems (Jinkō Mondai Kondankai), and then re-established the APP under the leadership of Nagai Tōru in order to continue discussions concerning population problems. The APP set up a special committee for population policy. Here, prewar bureaucrats were again involved in population and eugenic policy. Among these were Nagai Tōru, Tachi Minoru, Kitaoka Juitsu and Koya Yoshio, as well as women's activists (Ichikawa Fusae, Yamataka Shigeri, Katō Shizue), and academics, especially experts in social policy (Ōkouchi Kazuo, Professor of the University of Tokyo in Economics and Social Policy) and eugenics experts (Nagai Hisomu), also served as members. The special committee submitted the Proposal for the Basic Policy of New Population Policies (Shin Jinkō Seisaku Kihon Hōshin ni kansuru Kengi), which included recommendations for the incorporation of birth control and eugenics into Japanese population policies (Shinozaki 1982: 63–79).

The General Headquarters (GHQ) of the Supreme Command for the Allied Powers (SCAP) shared the recognition of the then Japanese government that the Japanese nation had population problems caused by surplus population, and the introduction of practices of birth control into people's everyday lives became inevitable. For example, the Director of the Public Health and Welfare Section (PHW), Crawford F. Sams, publicly expressed the opinion that in order to resolve population problems caused by the surplus population, Japan could resort to food imports, immigration and birth control, and that birth control was the most practical measure that could immediately be resorted to (Fujime 1997: 359). Sams was concerned with the ongoing Japanese population problems ‘from the very beginning’, and this made him ‘work at convincing first General MacArthur and then Frank McCoy, the US representative to the Far Eastern Commission (FEC)’, that action needed to be taken (Oakley 1977: 153). Around this time, there were still some Japanese politicians who kept to the view that national strength was represented by the size of the population as embodied in the GEPP. But as population policy-makers overcame the resistance within domestic politics with the influence of the Occupation force, so strategies concerning population policy shifted towards the direction of seeking a reduction in the population through birth control. This at last
resulted in the revision of the National Eugenics Law into the Eugenics Protection Law (Yūsei Hogo Hō).30

The Eugenics Protection Law legitimized abortion and birth control for motherhood protection, the prevention of heredity diseases and Hansen’s disease31 while retaining Chapter 29 of the criminal codes that sanctioned abortion. The bill was first proposed by Katō Shizue, Ōta Tenrei and Fukuda Masako of the Japan Socialist Party (JSP) in 1947. Although there was a strong recognition shared among members of the Diet, bureaucrats and officers of SCAP that the National Eugenics Law needed to be revised, some concerned parties expressed hesitation about any relaxation of abortion laws and the bill was shelved. Subsequently, after some revision that made the conditions of abortion more stringent, the bill was re-submitted by a cross-party group, composed of doctors and birth control activists, and this time it was passed in 1948 (Ōta 1967: 159–75).

Analyzing the process of legislation of the Eugenic Protection Law, Matsubara concludes that the relaxation of birth control and abortion was coupled with an intensification of eugenic policies. The purpose of the revision of the National Eugenics Law into the Eugenics Protection Law itself was to intensify eugenic provisions (Ōta 1967: 163–4). Furthermore, the intensification of eugenic provisions was introduced in order to prevent so-called ‘adverse selection’, which many policy-makers believed to be a side effect of popularization of birth control, especially the relaxation of rules on abortion at that time.

If the government officially admits that birth control is a matter of individual freedom, and tolerates the popularization of birth control even with some hesitancy, this means that the government allows ‘adverse selection’, in other words deterioration of the quality of the population occurs under its nose. In the past, the most effective measure for preventing adverse selection was to place a ban on birth control. However, the intensification of eugenic policies is the only possible option for prevention of further deterioration in the quality of the population in circumstances where the ban on birth control is no longer possible.

(Matsubara 1998: 122)

In fact, under the Eugenics Protection Law, a number of acts that had been previously unavailable became legitimized. For example, the enforcement of compulsory sterilization, the simplification of sterilization procedures and the legalization of sterilization for those with Hansen’s disease, non-hereditary mental illness and mental handicaps were open under the Eugenics Protection Law (Matsubara 1998: 118; Matsubara 2000: 188–90).

Summarizing the historical trajectory of the Japanese population policy from the total war period to the Occupation period, both continuity and discontinuity can be observed. The total war population policy needs to be
differentiated from that in the Occupation period in the sense that the former clearly targeted increasing the number of the population, as stated in the GEPP. However, they also have common elements in the following three senses. Firstly, both prewar and postwar population policies included eugenics provisions in order to improve the quality of the population. In other words, the quality of the population was considered as a crucial agenda item for the government from the 1930s through the total war period to the postwar period. Secondly, in terms of personnel and policy-makers, there is clear continuity from the prewar period to the postwar period. The APP, which had been established in the 1930s in order to incorporate population problems into the administrative system, was quickly restored after the Japanese defeat. Its purpose was to deal with the then-critical population problems. Nagai Tōru, Koya Yoshio, Tachi Minoru and Kitaoka Juitsu, who had been the main players in the prewar population policy-making, were again called in to make postwar population policy, not having been purged by the Occupation authorities. Moreover, prewar birth control activists such as Katō Shizue and Ōta Tenrei and the prewar eugenics advocates such as Nagai Hiromu were also involved in the postwar population policy-making system, including the legislation of the Eugenics Protection Law. Finally, in both the total war period and the postwar period, the reproduction of human beings, both in number and quality, was taken up as an important agenda item by the national government.

The population policy laid out certain conditions where people’s reproductive activities were concerned. Yet, this is not the only policy area that affected reproductive practices. As will be seen below, social policy and women’s organization also affected reproductive practices.

Social policy: ‘production power theory’ and reproduction

Studies on social welfare have demonstrated that the welfare state system was at least partly borne out of the above-mentioned total war projects (Titmuss 1963; Marshall 1975; Ikeda 1986, also see Chapter 1). Drawing from the extant studies, Shō generalizes in the following twelve points conditions set by the total war project that contributed to establishing the welfare state system:

1. Modern warfare triggers the interest of national governments in the quality and quantity of its population.
2. Modern warfare promoted equality among the national population.
3. Modern warfare emphasized universalism.
4. The total mobilization regime in modern warfare had aspects common with the welfare state and the totalitarian state.
5. The government engaging in modern warfare needed to provide its people with some ‘dreams’.
6. Modern warfare promoted the social status of the working class (as well as that of minority groups and women).
Modern warfare set common management and risk sharing as guiding principles.

Modern warfare justified the expansion of governmental intervention into private affairs.

Modern warfare provided a chance for the political elite to attain the knowledge and power needed to manage the welfare state.

Modern warfare required the national government to take care of soldiers’ families.

Modern warfare also required the design of measures for damages caused by the war.

Short-term and small-scaled wars happened after the Second World War delays the developments of the welfare state system.

(Shô 1998: 28–32)

More importantly, Shô maintains that the above points, mainly derived from research on Western welfare states, are also applicable to the Japanese case. The Japanese government introduced social security provisions (National Health Insurance and Welfare Annuity Insurance) as well as social welfare provisions (military pensions, motherhood and childhood protections, labour management and medical and health administration) into its governing system in the course of waging the Fifteen-Year War. The purpose of these was twofold. First, these measures were to reproduce ‘healthy’ soldiers and a ‘healthy’ labour force. Second, they were also aimed at stabilizing society and people’s everyday lives behind the war front. Research by Japanese academics who worked on social policy during the time of the war and in the postwar period also suggests the strong influence of the Fifteen-Year War on the construction of the Japanese welfare state (Shô 1998: 174–8). He concludes:

In short, the prewar Japanese state constructed a regime which was very close to a ‘welfare state’, although it did not use the exact term. Further, that regime became the core of the postwar welfare state regime. The establishment of a framework for the Japanese welfare state during wartime happened as a part as well as a product of total national mobilization.

(Shô 1998: 176)

Institutionally, the development of the social welfare system during the wartime period can be seen as a transition from the so-called ‘social enterprise’ (shakai jigyō) to the ‘welfare enterprise’ (kōsei jigyō). In Japan, social welfare, which needs to be differentiated from ‘charity’ (jizen) or ‘relief’ (kyōsai), appeared as a political and social issue when the economic setback hit people’s everyday lives after the First World War. Faced with economic disasters, in particular the rice riots and the upsurge in labour movements, the Japanese government became aware of the necessity of establishing
certain policies for ‘fighting poverty’. This led in turn to attempts to introduce a ‘social enterprise’ into the national governing system. Governmental study groups for discussions on possible social measures were set up, while a number of academic and administrative surveys on poverty were conducted. However, among these activities, the establishment of the Cooperation Association (Kyōchōkai) is the most noteworthy event, in the sense that it provided social enterprise with an ideological background. The Cooperation Association was an incorporated foundation under the leadership of the Home Minister, Tokonami Takejirō (see Chapter 2), and run with the cooperation of politicians and business associations. It was grounded on ‘cooperativism’, derived from the concept of ‘social solidarity’, and was imported into Japan through work by a French theorist, Leon Bourgeois. This social solidarity is designed to equalize personal contributions to society and benefits from the society through public intervention, so as to seek social cooperation and social reforms, and in this sense, it is differentiated from socialism as well as laissez-faire liberalism (Ikeda 1986: 480). As Nagai Tōru – who was also a key player in prewar and postwar population policy and a senior member of the APP as well as the Cooperation Association – explained, the Cooperation Association was founded to reconcile confrontations between capitalists and workers by making contributions to research on social policy. In line with this purpose, it advised the government and submitted recommendations at the government’s request, published in the journals and articles on social policy, especially its monthly journal, Shakai Seisaku Jihō (The Social Policy Journal). It organized public lectures and contributed to designing social systems that would ameliorate labour problems and poverty (Nagai 1920b: 288). In other words, what the Cooperation Association aimed to achieve were reforms of existing social and political institutions, without making fundamental changes. As such, the social enterprise represented by the activities of the Cooperation Association can be differentiated from previous attempts at dealing with poverty problems and economic disaster, namely in terms of ‘charity’ or ‘relief’, in the sense that social enterprise introduced the concept of ‘society’ as a unit for resolving problems. However, what it intended was essentially social reform, and not fundamental change in the social and political institutions and systems.

It is noteworthy that many agents (bureaucrats and academics) of population policy-making also started to engage in the development of social welfare via the social enterprise. Besides Nagai, Kitaoka Juitsu, who worked for the prewar IPP, was a regular contributor to the Shakai Seisaku Jihō and lectured on social policy at the University of Tokyo after Kawai Eijirō was forced to take leave under governmental pressure (Kitaoka 1976: 158–61). Kitaoka was a leading figure of the postwar birth control movement and a member of various councils of the reconstructed APP. Ōkōuchi Kazuo and Minoguchi Tokijirō had a close relationship with both Shakai Seisaku Jihō and prewar and postwar population policy-making. Furthermore, as the population policy then was deeply associated with
eugenic ideas, the development of the social enterprise also had a close relationship with eugenics. Ichinokawa notes that the social enterprise provided a locus for the implementation of the eugenics discourse, referring to an example of Unno Kōtoku, a leading eugenics scholar who turned his academic interest from evolution theory to social welfare. The social enterprise introduced the *hōmein inn* system, which appointed a ‘good resident’ in each community as an end-administrator, voluntary but honourable, to deal with welfare matters. The *hōmein inn* was expected to carry out ‘social survey’ and ‘social diagnosis’, namely continuous examination of the details of the everyday lives of residents. Through these activities, individuals and their everyday lives were to be monitored, and at the same time, knowledge and techniques of rationally organizing everyday life that would prevent individuals from falling into a living standard requiring welfare measures were transmitted. In this sense, the social enterprise offered concrete measures to realize the national purpose of eugenics, namely to organize a better and stronger state and society through encouraging the population to increase their ‘fit’ members and decrease the ‘unfit’ ones (Ichinokawa 2002: 150–7).

Faced with the Fifteen-Year War, the social enterprise represented by the Cooperation Association was developed into ‘welfare enterprise’. The purpose of welfare enterprise was to overcome contradictions caused by free economic competition, to stabilize everyday lives by eliminating risks and social problems and to promote the welfare of the Japanese people and the nation-state. Yet welfare enterprise needs to be differentiated from the social enterprise, as it was not grounded on liberal thoughts in the way that social enterprise was. It was, rather, derived from totalitarian motives that attempted to re-organize Japanese society in order to secure human and material resources for the waging of war. In Ikeda’s explanation, ‘the flow of discourse on welfare enterprise during the Fifteen-Year War means that social enterprise surrendered to fascism’ (Ikeda 1986: 676–81, the quotation is from 676). Hence the welfare enterprise established a social security system as well as health and medical policies aimed at improving both the quantity and quality of the Japanese population. These policies were also aimed at raising and maintaining human resources and stabilizing the everyday lives of the Japanese people. Importantly, these policies were comprehensively implemented over the whole Japanese population, not limited to those who required aid as the previous social enterprise had done (Ikeda 1986: 680).

The theory that endorsed the implementation of welfare enterprise by the government was the production power theory (*seisanryoku riron*), developed by Ōkouchi Kazuo, a professor of the University of Tokyo. The essence of Ōkouchi’s argument on social policy is that social policy must be understood as a part of economic policy since it was essentially a policy for ‘production’. According to him, social policy was a part of economic policy, for the following reasons:
it supervises the human labour force under the most appropriate circumstance and life condition on the scale of the whole national economy, given that the human labour force is an element of production which constituted the economy, that is, a circulatory order, and is continuously being reproduced on the whole economy. In other words, social policy is a policy for production because it is a care provided by the nation-state for securing the labour force as a constituent element of production power.

(Ōkouchi 1942/1979: 73)

Rephrasing this discourse that linked production and social policy, social policy during the time of the war was a part of the total mobilization plan that was targeted at securing the appropriate human resources (Ōkouchi 1938/1969: 296).36

Logically, Ōkouchi’s theorization of social policy integrated people’s everyday lives into the national economy. Hence, he maintained that it was essential for economic theory to consider people’s everyday lives, especially in terms of consumption, as everyday home life was the site for maintaining and reproducing the labour force, namely the site of economic reproduction (Ōkouchi 1943/1969: 316–20). Under the controlled economy during the period of the war, the significance of the relationship between economic production and everyday life appeared to be particularly vital for the state’s project of waging war. Yamanouchi comments on Ōkouchi’s theorization as follows:

When Ōkouchi emphasized the significance of consumption in everyday lives, we could certainly observe his rational judgment that it was required to apply any forms of break to the trend of irrational exploitation of civic life under the military dictatorship. This is why he could proudly reflect on his wartime discourses as being critical of the military dictatorship in the postwar period. However, Ōkouchi’s logic by no means objected to waging the war. It is undeniable that his theory was to attempt rationalization of the wartime economy from a standpoint positing the correlation between production activities and consumption activities. In fact, Ōkouchi suggested a way of mobilizing the process of everyday life for rational management of the wartime economy by transforming the traditional consumption lifestyle that we have been practising for a long time into something cooperative and collaborative.

(Yamanouchi 1995: 35)

Takabatake analyzes Ōkouchi’s wartime discourse in relation to ‘tenko’ (conversion of thoughts due to oppressive pressures from ruling authorities), and takes on board Ōkouchi’s postwar remarks that his wartime discourse on the production power theory was a disguised form of resistance, in a time when all criticism influenced by Marxism and directed towards the ruling
authority was forced out. The production power theory made it possible to produce a counter-discourse to the authoritarian regime through pointing out the irrationality of its governing in terms of fostering production power. Yet, Ōkouchi’s strategy was, according to Takabatake, to posit a particular type of the rationality of governing in which each member of the nation-state becomes a rational agent to act according to the rationality of the whole capital. In this sense, Ōkouchi appeared to be a ‘rare engineer who can design a rational and effective governing system that has a high production power’, and his criticism towards the war lost its edge (Takabatake 1978: 208–27).

Ōkouchi’s theorization on social policy remained as the intellectual backbone of social policy in the postwar period, and the so-called ‘Ōkouchi theory’ is even today very influential in Japanese social sciences. For instance, in order to criticize gender bias embedded in Japanese research on social policy, Ōsawa argues that studies on social policy in Japan simply ignore unpaid work carried out by housewives, because these studies have been firmly grounded on the ‘Ōkouchi theory’. In the discursive framework of postwar studies on social policy, ‘welfare’ and ‘care’ were merely posited as an unproductive cost for capital located outside the economic process, due to a premise of the Ōkouchi theory that social policy is a matter of labour and economic problems (Ōsawa 1993b: 9–15). In this sense, Ōkouchi’s production power theory set a principle for the postwar social policy that, as will be discussed in the next chapter, was designed for serving the national goal of economic growth.

In sum, the Japanese administrative system of social policy was refined during the total war period in both institutional and intellectual terms and became the basis of the postwar system. As Goodman points out, ‘a complete overhaul’ of the social welfare system was conducted by the Occupation force, and significant changes concerning the social welfare system, typically represented by the establishment of Article 25 in the Constitution (see Chapter 4), were brought into the Japanese political system (Goodman 1996: 110–11). The Occupation force also exploited the Ministry of Health and Welfare in order to deal with the social and financial crises just after the war. This resulted, as happened in the area of population policy, in the maintenance of prewar institutions, personnel and practices in the area of social policy, despite the legal and systematic changes made by the Occupation force. It also led to the provision of a chance to utilize the administrative system rooted in the total war project, this time for economic recovery and competition in the peaceful postwar period (Shō 1998: 176–7).

Women’s organizations: war cooperation and democratization

Emphasizing the importance of ‘moral suasion’ for social management in Japanese society, Garon suggests how various women’s groups functioned as
a medium for transmitting the governmental agenda to women, and consequently how they contributed to incorporating women into the Japanese state from the early twentieth century (Garon 1997: 115–45). This tendency certainly appears salient if we look at wartime organizations. In 1929, the reorganized Bureau of Social Education of the Ministry of Education started to deploy the Suasion Total Mobilization Movement (*Kyōka Sōdōin Undō*) in order to mobilize women across Japan. The ministry hosted public lectures and training courses organized around ‘home education’ as well as ‘motherhood’ in order to educate women to be good and fine mothers (Yamamura 1991: 201–3). Through these courses, women were taught concrete knowledge and skills such as housekeeping, in particular the management of household finance, morality, medical and hygiene issues as well as improvement of kitchens, nutrition or clothing (Yamamura 1991: 212–42). As the Fifteen-Year War broke, the training courses for mothers became more integrated into the war project of the Japanese nation-state. In consequence, the image of ‘mothers of the empire’, who were aware of their social and national responsibilities as mothers, came to be emphasized, and new members of the nation-state were raised who would serve the Empire in the future (Yamamura 1991: 243–4). In other words, the profile of the mother’s image that was in accordance with the war project and the national population policy was promoted through those training courses.

In addition to these measures, women were also organized in order to make contributions that were more directly related to the total war project. In 1901, the Patriotic Women’s Association (*Aikoku Fujinkai*) had already been organized in order to support military activities from the women’s perspective. To this end, it mobilized women to welcome and send off the troops, collect donations for the families of dead or injured soldiers and take care of and support soldiers’ families. Accordingly, it took on the administrative role of providing aid when the social policy for military personnel was not yet established (Saji 1978: 128–34). In 1932, the National Defence Women’s Association (*Kokubō Fujinkai*) was formed out of a grassroots movement supporting the state’s military activities. Fujii summarizes the National Defence Women’s Association as a movement of women who left ‘the kitchens, in order to welcome/send off soldiers as well as to directly take care of them’ (Fujii 1985: 38). In other words, women of the National Defence Women’s Association treated soldiers as if they were their sons. Compared to the Patriotic Women’s Association, which was essentially an organization for middle and upper-class women, the National Defence Women’s Association appealed to ordinary women. It rapidly expanded its organization and became a national movement. Through this process, practices that women utilized to support military activities through their gender roles, especially the maternal role, became popularized.

Besides these organizations, the government encouraged the activities of regional women’s associations, especially activities intended for improvements in everyday life. In rural areas, the magazine *Ie no Hikari* (The Light
of the House), which was distributed through regional industrial unions, was influential in providing farmers’ wives with practical knowledge and ideas for life improvements (Itagaki 1978: 309–12).

The outbreak of the Fifteen-Year War and the creation of the total mobilization system led to demands for women’s organizations to unite in war cooperation. In 1937, eight women’s civil organizations, including the Women’s Suffrage League, merged to form the Japan Women’s Group League (Nippon Fujin Dantai Renmei). The Japan Women’s Group League cooperated with the National Spiritual Total Mobilization Movement (Kokumin Seishin Sōdōin Undō) and also played a role as a medium for reconciliation between the Patriotic Women’s Association and the National Defence Women’s Association. Around this time, the Japanese government embarked on its policy of encouraging women’s cooperation, and started to appoint leading women to public positions. Also, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, at the grassroots level, housewives obtained a new right to attend meetings of the Neighbourhood Associations (Tonarigumi) along with their husbands (Nishikawa 1982/2000: 127–31). Finally, after the Pacific War broke out in 1941, all the women’s organizations were united into one organization to become the Great Japan Women’s Association as a subordinate organization of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association (Taisei Yokusankai) (Nishikawa 1982/2000: 148–53).

As such, women’s organizations were repeatedly exploited in order to obtain the cooperation of women for the ongoing war. Through this process, importantly, the gender norm of being a good home-maker was emphasized by policy-makers. As mentioned above, Japanese women were not allowed to join the military organizations or not compulsorily recruited for labour, while their maternal role was strongly emphasized. Referring to Wakakuwa’s work on war propaganda during the total war period, Ueno concludes that Japanese women who had to accept ‘the shame to be refused death in the war’ became the mothers of the ‘war gods’ and told their children to go to die in the war (Ueno 1998: 34–8).

However, it is also misleading to conclude that the wartime moral suasion of womanhood completely dominated Japanese women’s activities. What the trajectory of women’s organizations and leading women’s discourses demonstrates is a process of negotiation – a quintessentially political act, between women’s desire to participate in the public sphere and the demand of the Japanese state for women’s cooperation in the ongoing war project. For example, Fujii points out that contradiction often surfaced between the National Defence Women’s Association and the military, which in principle supported the activities of the Association. While the military demanded that women demonstrate ‘women’s virtue’, the members of the Association sincerely wished to serve their nation-state based on their own abilities (Fujii 1985: 70–8). In other words, what women sought to show through the activities of the Association was their own agency and ability as ‘proper’ members of the nation-state. The same tendency can be observed in discourses
produced by leading women who took public office during the total war period. Yoshioka Yayoi, for example, in her position as executive director of the National Spirit Total Mobilization Movement, insisted on equal opportunities for men and women, and also expansion of opportunities in higher education for girls (Nishikawa 1982/2000: 138). In contrast to Yoshioka’s individualistic approach, Kōra Tomi, who was another significant female player in the movement, wrote in 1942:

Mother! Mother! Now, our mother nation [my emphasis] calls for Japanese mothers. And it calls for every mother that is prepared to dedicate her beloved children whom she has raised to the country and to protect the country, improve the people and places of our homeland by offering her own sweat, sincerity and life.

(Kōra 1942/1990: 247)

What Kōra’s discourse here demonstrates is a desire to participate in and contribute to the state, which was feminized by being described as the ‘mother nation’, and here the maternal role was resorted to as a channel through which to do so. In other words, the maternal cause again provided women with a chance to bridge the gap between themselves and the public sphere in circumstances where women’s political and social competence was legally limited, as it had previously done in the 1920s in the discourses of the ‘New Women’ discussed in the previous chapter. Compared to their predecessors, however, Kōra and the other women’s leaders who appealed the maternal cause during the time of the war certainly had a wider audience, who found a certain degree of reality in the maternal cause. Women’s grassroots movements and official roles in communities functioned as venues at which many women across different classes exercised their skills as homemakers in order to organize not only the everyday lives of their families but also those of local communities. For instance, in her book on different recipes offered in popular wartime women’s magazines such as Shufu no Tomo, Saitō informs us how women organized everyday meals under rationing. The wartime rationing was allocated to each community unit, and the end-organization of distributed items to each household was left in women’s hands. This provided many women with their first opportunities to join and organize social activities outside their homes. In order to maintain the standard of their families’ everyday lives with rationed resources that were often insufficient, women learnt and developed new cooking methods among themselves, which led to the frequent organization of joint housekeeping. Shufu no Tomo, which retained a relatively high circulation after the publication of many other women’s magazines was reduced due to the shortage of paper during the wartime, played the role of medium through which the necessary knowledge for women’s activities was transmitted (Saitō 2002: 78–124).

Japan’s absolute defeat radically changed the political environment for women. The request for five reforms ordered by General Douglas MacArthur
in October 1945 laid the way for women’s liberation by providing voting rights as the first item on its agenda. Indeed, under the new constitution, women obtained full voting rights, and equality between men and women was endorsed. Women also attained eligibility for election, and at the first general election in 1946 thirty-nine women were elected (Ôgai 1996: 31).41 The civil code was also revised with attempts to eliminate the ‘ie’ system from the Japanese legal system, though the revision left some contentious areas, which will be discussed in the next chapter.42 Besides these two reforms, regulations on women’s labour, education, nursing and midwifery were revised. Furthermore, the Civil Information and Education (CIE) Section of the GHQ encouraged the democratization of women’s organizations, and to this end, it launched enlightenment projects such as distributing pamphlets, broadcasting radio dramas and arranging public lectures (Nishi 1985: 32). Through these processes of legal revision, the feudal remnants of the Japanese political and social system relating to women were largely removed, though the reforms also remained tightly constrained within the scope of the modernization project (Yoda 1979: 269–70).

As such, during the Occupation period, the formal and legitimate path to the public sphere for Japanese women was finally opened. Yet, this did not mean that the maternal cause, which pursued the protection of mothers, children and everyday life, had lost its appeal and effectiveness in the Japanese political scene. Soon after the war ended, the birth control movement was revived, maintaining the principles of motherhood protection and women’s liberation. Katô Shizue published an article in a newspaper in January 1946 maintaining the necessity of the popularization of birth control. In 1947, Majima Yutaka, Abe Isoo and others formed the Japanese Birth Control League (Nihon Sanji Chôsetsu Renmei), while Katô Shizue and Kitaoka Juitsu formed the Birth Control Popularization Association (Sanji Seige Fukkyûkai) (Ôta 1976: 360–1). In 1948, faced with problems of rationing, especially in the public distribution of matches of poor lighting quality, Oku Mumeo mobilized housewives, and this movement developed into the Housewives’ Confederation (Shufu Rengôkai, in short, Shufuren). This movement was later to become one of the largest interest groups of housewives, channelling problems from everyday life to the forefront of national politics by sending representatives to the governmental advisory councils (Shufu Rengôkai 1998: 29–32). Furthermore, attempts at improving people’s everyday lives were carried out by SCAP. The Life Improvement Movement (Seikatsu Gôrika Undô), promoted by GHQ, appointed life-improvement instructors in various regions across Japan, and by organizing local housewives, transmitted knowledge and skills related to housework such as cooking, hygiene and childcare. It was especially concerned with old-fashioned Japanese cooking stoves, and encouraged people to replace these outmoded relics of the feudal era with modern kitchen systems. Also, with the cooperation of the CIE Section of the GHQ, the movement held regional meetings to show films that introduced Japanese people to images
of modern and affluent American families (Asahi Shinbun Gakugeibu 1995: 7–34). In this sense, policies to enlighten women corresponding to the maternal cause, which were very similar to the prewar policies in terms of their content, were again implemented in the postwar period, partly in cooperation with women activists who had played prominent roles in the prewar period. This suggests that women’s socio-political reproduction as mothers still remained a central part of women’s life in the postwar period, which was in a way similar to the prewar period, though women’s political competence was now formally and legally admitted, with women emerging as autonomous and competent agents under the law.

Summary: continuity, discontinuity and advancement

In this chapter, the trajectory of policy in the three reproductive dimensions of biological reproduction, economic reproduction and socio-political reproduction, as evidenced in the population policy, social policy and women’s organizations respectively during the Fifteen-Year War and Occupation period, has been examined. During the time of total war, the population policy was officially incorporated into the political system: political institutions and players specializing in the population policy emerged, and policies that directly dealt with the population issues, such as the GEPP and the National Eugenics Law, were established. Governmental concerns about the population were intensified by demands for ‘good’ human resources in order to implement total war, and hence the government aimed for the improvement of both the quantity and quality of the Japanese population. Despite an apparent change in direction of the population policy, from pursuing an increase to pursuing a decrease in the size of the population, Japan’s defeat in the Fifteen-Year War did not dramatically affect population policy-making. In circumstances where the ‘surplus population’ was perceived by policy-makers to threaten the whole nation-state, the Japanese government started to implement measures to reduce the number of births, and, hence, abortion was legalized. In the early postwar period, the population problem remained as a crucial item on the governmental agenda, and indeed, regulations on the ‘qualitative’ aspect of the population were enhanced through the establishment of the Eugenics Protection Law in 1948. Also, the prewar bureaucrats continued to engage in population policy-making, along with prewar birth control activists, in postwar ‘democratized’ Japan.

Continuity can be also found in both social policy and women’s organizations. The production power theory in the studies on social policy that were formed during the total war period considered social policy to be a tool for maintaining the economic process by contributing to the reproduction of human resources. This theory provided the intellectual backbone for the framework of postwar social policies, and linked everyday life with the national economy and the nation-state. On the other hand, maternal causes
offered women political resources in order to participate in the public sphere during the time of the war when women were legally excluded from the political arena. And even in the postwar period, in which women obtained ‘full’ political rights as autonomous and competent political agents, the maternal cause was a resource for women’s political activities, as seen in the example of the Housewives’ Confederation and the Life Improvement Movement led by the SCAP/GHQ.

In short, the above discussion has shown both the continuity and discontinuity during the total war period and the postwar period governmental interventions through policies aiming to govern the tripartite reproductive processes of the people. Continuity and discontinuity can also be seen in women’s responses to these policies. Moreover, a certain advancement can be observed in the trajectories from the prewar to the postwar period. First, governmental interventions became more systematic with agents specializing in the policy areas concerned. Second, sophisticated knowledge was mobilized for the policy-making process in cooperation with academics and large businesses. Thirdly and most importantly, the development from the 1930s to 1940s certainly expanded and deepened the involvement of women in the nation-state. While elite women channelled themselves towards the central part of national politics, grassroots activities, for example the National Defence Women’s Association, the Life Improvement Movement initiated by SCAP/GHQ and the Housewives’ Confederation, offered women in other social strata opportunities to open up spaces in which they could act politically. This was also, however, a form of incorporation of women in the nation-state.

In the next chapter, we will analyze reproduction in the postwar period. This was constructed on the basis of continuity from the prewar period to the postwar period, with the addition of new elements added through the total war period and the Occupation.
Introduction: ‘the postwar’

The term ‘postwar’ in English generally refers to something simply ‘after a war’. Hence, neither does the word itself specify any particular war (e.g. the First World War, the Second World War, the Gulf War or even the Cold War), nor a single experience after a war. As Gluck writes,

not only was the postwar not the same as the cold war but there were multiple postwars in different countries and even within a single society. Each national history inscribed its postwar in a distinctive fashion, whether as national liberation, social experiment, economic growth, or the like.¹

(Gluck 1997: 3)

As Gluck’s comment here suggests, the Japanese equivalent of the word postwar, ‘sengo’, has different connotations from the English usage of postwar. In the next section of her article, Gluck herself explains this difference as follows:

The word postwar (sengo) [original emphasis] in Japanese is a noun, which gives it the substance to stand alone, as it does in ‘fifty years of the postwar’ (sengo 50nen), the term used to denote the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the war in 1995. As an adjective attached to Japan, it is the most common term for present-day Japan and has been so since 1945. ‘Postwar Japan’ is not therefore the chronological equivalent of the Nachkriegszeit in German, but rather of ‘contemporary Germany’ taken as a whole. The extension of the ‘postwar’ over five decades of Japanese history derives not from some peculiarity of language but from the particularity of historical consciousness in the period since the war. And because the term is so common, it is overdetermined, inhabited by many meanings.

(Gluck 1997: 3–4)

Following this, Gluck schematically points out the five items that jointly constitute the nature of the hybrid Japanese ‘postwar’. Firstly, ‘postwar’ is...
recognized to be the ‘mythistoric’ time or ‘the postwar as a new beginning’. In spite of numerous signs of continuity from the prewar to postwar periods, especially in terms of institutions and personnel, most Japanese people tend to believe that ‘absolute discontinuity’ occurred at the time of Japan’s unconditional surrender and the re-birth of Japan through the Occupation period with a new national ideology, namely ideology of peace and democracy. Secondly, as a result of the first element, the postwar is posited as the ‘inversion of the prewar’. In this framework, the postwar period is imagined to be a ‘good’ political and social regime, resulting from democratization through the Occupation period. Such understanding of the postwar period is endorsed by the general perception of the prewar period as backward and feudal, a perception which is proved by Japan’s commitment to the total war. Thirdly, the postwar period for Japan was and still is the ‘cold-war postwar’ period. In this sense, postwar means Japan ‘in the American imperium’. This element has resulted in narrowing the Japanese scope on international relations to predominance of the bilateral relationship with the US, which the mainstream of Japanese conservative politics has maintained and supported throughout the postwar period. Fourthly, however, there has been the ‘progressive postwar’ represented by so-called ‘progressive intellectuals’ as a counterpart of the third element of the postwar. Progressive intellectuals have been posing left-wing liberal visions of Japanese society, and these have stayed as the ‘quintessential vision – and conscience – of the postwar’. Finally, at the level of everyday life, ‘postwar’ is the ‘middle-class postwar’, which once dominated the popular image of Japan, namely ‘the social enunciation of sameness, middleness, homogeneity that lay at the core of postwar Japan democracy’. The idea of democracy here is recognized as ‘“co-equality” in access to material and social goods’, and, in this sense, it emphasized the fulfillment of a private life that is based on a certain model of family with a certain gender norm (Gluck 1997: 4–9).

Building on the discussion of previous chapters over the prewar trajectories, the next three chapters discuss the tri-dimensional reproductive processes and in so doing, attempt to untangle the Japanese postwar period – a period which, as Gluck’s analysis above schematically shows, has been ‘mythistorically’ recognized and imagined. This chapter deals with the period up until the mid-1970s, while the next chapter (Chapter 5) examines a case study of the period, and the period after the mid-1970s will be discussed in Chapter 6. The reason why the mid-1970s can be regarded as a disjunctive point is twofold. Firstly, as will be also discussed in detail in the next chapter, the mid-1970s was marked by a series of changes in political, economic and social structures. Secondly, the changes in the mid-1970s appeared to be the destabilization of the nature of the postwar system characterized through five elements of the ‘postwar’ discussed by Gluck. In other words, this chapter will examine how the three reproductive processes functioned in order to conceive, construct and consolidate postwar Japan as generally represented by the image of domestic homogeneity and
miraculous economic success – two significant elements of postwar Japan that are popularly envisaged as the two sides of one coin. The next chapter will provide some concrete pictures to the discussion laid in this chapter, and Chapter 6 will identify how the postwar reproductive system changed in response to other transitions. However, before starting the main discussion, the core of the postwar popular imagination of domestic homogeneity, namely the ‘postwar family’, needs to be clarified as an analytical concept. In the next section, therefore, we will analyze this myth of the postwar Japanese family.

The postwar family system

Despite a common-sense belief that ‘no two families are the same’, there is a clear and popular belief that something called ‘the family’ or ‘the nuclear family’ does exist. When asked, people are often puzzled as to why anyone should ask the question because the answer is ‘so obvious’. The majority will, if pressed, present an image surprisingly like sociological definitions of ‘the nuclear family’. Despite enormous real world variation and diversity, a common and popular image of ‘the nuclear family’ portrays a young, similarly-aged, White, married heterosexual couple with a small number of healthy children living in an adequate home. There is a clear division of responsibilities in which the male is primarily the full-time breadwinner and the female primarily the caregiver and perhaps a part-time or occasional income earner.

(Bernardes 1997: 2–3)

A Japanese sociologist, Ochiai, points out that there is the same kind of belief about ‘the family’ – in Bernardes’ words, ‘a clear and popular belief that something called “the family” or “the nuclear family” does exist’ – in Japan, too. Furthermore, she demonstrates that belief in ‘the family’ statistically claims a substantial presence in postwar Japanese society, and names this particular form of ‘the family’ as the ‘postwar family system’.

According to Ochiai, the ‘postwar family system’ has the following three distinctive statistical characteristics (Ochiai 1997a: 98–101):

- the shift to the role of housewife for women;
- reproductive egalitarianism;
- the effects of demographic transition.

The first of the three, ‘the shift to the role of housewife for women’, refers to the statistical fact that the working rate of women who were born in the postwar period was relatively lower in the twenty to thirty-five age group compared to other generations. The working rate of women in Japan generally forms a so-called ‘M-letter shape’ in graphs, as women tend to withdraw from the labour market during their prime childcare years, and then return to...
work after children reach an age where their intensive care is no longer required.\textsuperscript{2} The depth of the bottom of the M-shape, therefore, indicates the proportion of housewives. Interestingly, in contrast to the popular belief regarding the postwar expansion of women’s social participation, in Ochiai’s words, ‘more women became housewives in the postwar period’ (Ochiai 1997a: 14–21, the quote is from 18). The housewife is, as the well-known definition by Oakley clarifies, someone who is responsible for domestic work (but not being a servant) and whose work is excluded from market exchange. In other words, the work conducted by a housewife does not produce any economic value, and consequently the work required is ‘unpaid’. This naturally requires that the presence of a housewife is ‘costly’, and in fact, the emergence of the housewife generally coincided with industrialization and the consequent rise of the middle class in Western Europe and North America, who could afford the presence of housewives (Oakley 1976: 1). The Japanese situation followed this pattern with some time gaps. It was families of the ‘new middle class’ which emerged in the early twentieth century that demonstrated the sexual division of labour in which the presence of a housewife was requisite and necessary in order to run a household. Yet, the number of middle-class households, and hence the number of housewives, remained insignificant until the transition in the industrial structure took place in the postwar period. Throughout the period of high economic growth, the number of employees working for companies showed a substantial increase, while the population engaging in agriculture, fishery, forestry or small-business, where women’s labour was traditionally indispensable for each industry, rapidly declined. (Yuzawa 1995: 52–3; Ōsawa 2002b: 256–7).

Accordingly, an increase in the number of housewives was brought about as a logical consequence of the industrial transition. Indeed, the number of full-time housewives was recorded as 5 million in 1955 and 11 million in 1980. It more than doubled in twenty-five years (Ōsawa 2002b: 259).

The second characteristic, ‘reproductive egalitarianism’, contains elements of two demographic phenomena. Firstly, it refers to the number of children per household, which became predominantly two to three in the postwar period. Statistically, the birth rate drastically fell after 1949 when the postwar ‘baby boom’ calmed down (see Appendix B). The total fertility rate scored over four before 1949, then started to drop and reached 2.04 in 1957 (Yuzawa 1995: 114–15; Ochiai 1997a: 51–4).\textsuperscript{3} Secondly, this demographic transition was attained by a decrease in the number of children per household, but not by an increase either in the number of childless couples or single people. Traditionally, in Europe, North America and Japan, one of the most common ways of limiting the birth rate has been to delay the age of marriage or limit the marital relationship. But during the time when the birth rate dropped sharply in postwar Japan, the number of marriages or the marriage rate did not show any significant change (Yuzawa 1995: 90–1). Also, the number of childless couples did not increase, and people who expressed the ideal number of children as zero remained in the minority.
during the same period (Kokuritsu Shakai Hoshō Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūjo 2002). In other words, postwar Japanese people still married in order to form a family and have children, but they generally started to limit the number of children in their individual households (Ochiai 1997a: 70–6).

The third item of the three, the effects of demographic transition, refers to the increase in the numbers of a particular form of family, namely the nuclear family in the postwar period. Ochiai attributes this to a particular demographic condition in postwar Japan. According to her, the generation who formed the nuclear family on an unprecedented scale was born in the period of demographic transition from the high-birth and high-death rate to the low-birth and low-death rate. This implies that this generation had a relatively higher number of siblings than other generations due to the high-birth and low-death rate, which typically occurred in the transition period. This demographic condition, therefore, inevitably brought about a multiplication of the number of nuclear families while retaining the presence of the extended family. That is to say, the first child (commonly the first son in early postwar Japan) stayed with the parental generation after forming his own family, while the other children formed their own nuclear families respectively.

Therefore, the popularization of the nuclear family in postwar Japan had some peculiarity compared to the transition model of forms of family in the course of modernization that the sociology of family traditionally posited, as the newly-formed nuclear families neither denied or refused the extended family system, nor consciously formed a particular form of family; but simply happened to do so because of specific demographic conditions (Ochiai 1996: 29). This peculiarity is demonstrated by the popularity of the image of the extended family in the mass media and the intimate relationships which remained between siblings compared to less-developed relationships in the neighbourhood in the early postwar period (Ochiai 1997a: 78–96).

Importantly, the Japanese ‘postwar family system’ containing the above three elements generally corresponds to a model of the ‘modern family’, albeit with some remnants from the pre-modern ‘extended family’. Although there are clear discrepancies remaining between Japanese researchers on the family, especially on the issue of the definition of the ‘modern family’ and the timing of its emergence in the Japanese historical context, as the so-called ‘Modern Family Definition Debates’ in the early 1990s show, it is undeniable that this particular form of family was popularized in postwar Japan by being prescribed by the particular demographic condition of the time. Furthermore, it dominated popular images relating to the idea of a family as well as being recognized as the definition of the family on which social and political institutions and systems were grounded. In sum, the ‘postwar family system’ as the ‘modern family’ appeared to be a hegemonic model of the family in postwar Japan through the period of high economic growth.

The ‘postwar family system’ posited by Ochiai is a useful concept to analyze families in postwar Japan. First, it demonstrates the demographic
substance of the homogeneous and dominant image of the family in the postwar period. Secondly, it also provides an analytical framework relating to the modern family, a concept that can be used to analyze families all across the world. Nonetheless, since Ochiai mainly pays attention to the transition in the form of the family and demographic changes, the problem of why the ‘postwar family system’ could popularize itself and dominate both popular and administrative understanding of the family is still unclear except for the demographic aspects of the situation. Putting this question another way, the emergence and popularization of the ‘postwar family system’ at one stage of postwar Japan implies the consolidation of a certain pattern of ‘reproduction’ which has been affected by not only demographic but also social and political conditions. Below, three areas of policy, concerning the three dimensions of reproduction, population policy, social policy, and women’s labour policy respectively, are examined. In so doing, this chapter offers a more solid background for a discussion of the consolidation of the ‘postwar family system’. In addition to this, the ‘housewife debates’ from the 1950s to 1970s will be discussed at the end in order to clarify how women coped with the postwar reproductive process.

Population policy: birth control, family planning and the creation of human resources

As discussed in the previous chapter, the Eugenic Protection Law, which was established for motherhood protection and the prevention of problematic genetic inheritance, legalized abortion under a set of certain conditions. This law twice underwent revision in 1949 and 1952, just a few years after the legislation. The following three points are crucial in our discussion of the revisions.

Firstly, the requirements and conditions for abortion were loosened. The most significant change here is the addition in the 1949 revision of the so-called ‘economic reason’ that allowed women to have abortions due to economic hardship and difficulty. According to Ōta, this was the first realization in the world of the need for abortion for economic reasons (Ōta 1967: 175). This change made abortion more accessible than it had been under the original law. Furthermore, the inspection system for the practice of abortion by the Regional Eugenics Screening Committee was abolished with the 1952 revision. With this revision, the operation of abortion virtually became a matter of a medical decision made by a doctor, as specified according to the provision of the law (Ōta 1967: 177). In fact, the relaxation of the law relating to abortion appeared to be directly correlated with the rapid increase in the number of abortions, especially after the 1952 revision. The pinnacle of operations came in 1955 when the reported number of abortions reached 1,170,143. From 1953 to 1961, more than one million abortions were carried out every year, although the number began to fall after 1962 (Tsuge, Ichinokawa and Katō 1996: 386–90). From 1948 until the
Korean War broke out in 1950, the Japanese economy experienced severe depression due to the ‘Dodge line’, which demanded that the Japanese government curtail spending and introduce a balanced fiscal policy. This economic situation directly influenced Japanese people: economic hardships such as redundancy, unemployment, lack of food and goods, and price-rises in public services pressurized everyday life, and ‘the media began devoting attention to suicides among small businessmen’ (Gotō, Uchida and Ishikawa 1982/1994a: 53–83; Dower 1999: 541). The provision of abortion for ‘economic’ reasons was implemented in such a way that the legal provision could be associated with people’s experience of everyday life. In fact, three months after Dodge came to Japan, an American demography and eugenics expert, Warren Thompson, also visited Japan. Interestingly, Thompson appealed to both the Japanese government and people for the urgent necessity of the introduction of birth control for the purpose of population control (Kitaoka 1956: 72).

Secondly, the relaxation of abortion controls coincided with a further intensification of the eugenics provisions of the law. Under the 1952 revision, the condition of sterilization was extended to one whose spouse suffered from ‘mental illness and mental deficiency’. Moreover, the operation for eugenic purposes targeting any one with ‘non-hereditary [my emphasis] mental illness and mental deficiency’ became feasible with the consent of her or his legally specified guardian and screening by the concerned Eugenic Protection Screening Committee in each administrative division (Article 12). Referring to a speech at the Diet by Taniguchi Yasaburō, Matsubara points out that this extension of eugenic provision was realized in order to compensate for the anxiety of the ‘adverse selection’ that the popularization of birth control triggered by the relaxation of abortion was believed to cause. Taniguchi insisted in his speech on the need to broaden the condition of sterilization, especially targeting ‘mental illness and mental deficiency’, because ‘birth control tends to permeate and succeed in attaining its goal among strata with better intellectual ability, and consequently there is a risk of “adverse selection” ’ (Matsubara 2000: 189–90). The intensification of eugenics provision can be observed statistically. The number of operations for eugenics purposes from 1952 to 1962 totals 10,017, while the number of eugenics operations under the National Eugenics Law (from 1941 to 1947, in total seven years) is 538. This plainly demonstrates that far more eugenics operations were carried out during the period of high economic growth under the Eugenics Protection Law, which was enacted in postwar ‘democratic’ Japan, than under the National Eugenics Law implemented in the totalitarian-militarist regime (Tsuge, Ichinokawa and Katō 1996: 379–86).

Thirdly, faced with the increase of abortion and its side-effects, namely accidents and deaths caused by abortion (especially illegal abortions), the provision for birth control (Article 15) was included in the 1952 revision. This revision was directly derived from a cabinet decision concerning ‘the
proliferation of birth control’ by the Yoshida administration in the previous year, in which the Japanese government clearly stated its commitment to the proliferation of birth control in order to eliminate the negative effects caused by the rapid and large increase in abortion (Ôta 1976: 188–93).13

Around the same time that the revision of the Eugenics Protection Law was underway, that is, around 1950, the population policy of the Japanese government shifted in a way that targeted limiting its population within the economic capability (Matsubara 1998: 120). Through this process, birth control was promoted not only by activists such as Katō Shizue, Ôta Tenrei and Majima Yutaka, who had been engaged in the prewar birth control movement, but also by the Japanese government, though concerns still remained over the question of ‘adverse selection’ (Ôta 1976: 188–93; Tama 1996: 160–1).14 This change in policy direction had already been recommended by the Proposal for the Basic Policy of New Population Policies in 1946, which proposed the legitimization of birth control for tackling the ‘surplus population problem’, as discussed in the previous chapter. In 1949, political activities concerning population policy were institutionally organized. Firstly, the House of Representatives passed a motion concerning the population problems recommending: (1) national economic development for obtaining enough capability for sustaining the population; (2) popularization of birth control; and (3) the promotion of immigration (Kobayashi 1976: 343–4). As a result, the Japanese government established national institutions specially set up for discussing population problems. The Population Problem Advisory Council was first established as a consultative organization to the cabinet in 1949. Although this was soon abolished, it was re-established for the Ministry of Health and Welfare as a regular institution in 1953 (Kobayashi 1976: 344–58). Corresponding to the re-establishment of the Population Problem Advisory Council at the Ministry of Health and Welfare, the APP formed a special committee for discussing population problems in order to prepare a draft for the Council. The list of committee members at the APP included Nagai Tōru (the chief director of the APP), Kitaoka Juitsu (a prewar member of the IPP and contributor to Shakai Seisaku Jihō), Koya Yoshio (a prewar member of the IPP and Director of the National Institution of Public Hygiene), Tachi Minoru (prewar and postwar member of the APP or IPP), Minoguchi Tokijirō, Nasu Hiroshi (both former members of the IPP), Nagai Hisomu (Eugenics), Katō Shizue, Kawasaki Natsu (both birth control movement activists), Ōkouchi Kazuo (social policy and former member of the Cooperation Association and a main contributor to Shakai Seisaku Jihō), Tokonami Tokuji (a politician), Nadao Kōkichi (a politician) and Taniguchi Yasaburō (politician, a key player in the legislation of the Eugenics Protection Law) (Shinozaki 1983: 80–2).

In terms of practices and implementation of policy, in 1950 the National Institution of Public Hygiene (Kokuritsu Kōshū Eisei In), led by Koya Yoshio (see Appendix A), initiated empirical research on birth control, specifying
three rural villages (agriculture, fishery and forestry) as model districts. After receiving cabinet consent, the Ministry of Health and Welfare began drawing up guidelines for the popularization of birth control (Jinkō Mondai Kenkyū vol. 8 no. 2 1952: 103–7), and obtained a budget in excess of twenty million yen for birth control purposes. The budget was preferably to be spent on free or discounted birth control services, targeting households which were receiving income support or suffering from economic hardship. On the other hand, voluntary birth control services, provided through public health centres across Japan, were financed by municipal governments (Kobayashi 1976: 363–7; Tama 1996: 162). In 1958, the responsibility for implementing the administration of birth control services was transferred from the prefectural government to municipal offices (cities, towns and villages), and a plan to establish the ‘Mothers and Children Health Centre’ (Boshi Kenkō Sentā) in each area was arranged. Through this administrative change, birth control became more incorporated into pre- and post-natal guidance, which had been conducted as a part of public health policy for mothers and children.

In the course of birth control becoming a component of Japanese public health administration, birth control was re-conceptualized as ‘family planning’ (kazoku keikaku). The term ‘family planning’ implied not only attempts to restrict the number of children, but also endeavours to bear and raise healthy children with certain well-organized plans and insights. In other words, this new concept even included fertility treatment, as long as the pregnancy concerned was planned in advance, happened with appropriate spacing of children, and fell within the bounds of an appropriate number of children (Kitaoka 1956: 123; Koya 1961: 64; Muramatsu 1970: 29). Contraceptive efforts were recommended under the assumption that they were supposed to help people to organize everyday life in a ‘rational’ way. In this sense, abortion driven by unplanned pregnancy was considered to be as negative as having more children than allowed by the financial capability of the household and frequent pregnancies without an appropriate interval between children. Family planning, as such, could be rephrased as ‘a rational attitude concerning everyday life’ (Okazaki 1976: 117).

Already in 1949, ‘family planning’ had been discussed in the recommendations published by the Population Problem Advisory Council of the Cabinet. The primary concern of the recommendation concerning ‘family planning’ was to seek solutions to the population problems of the time, which included excessive pressures on the national economy due to the surplus population, by controlling the size of the national population. For this purpose, the recommendation proposed that the number of children that each married couple needed would have to be thoroughly controlled by introducing birth control into everyday life. Birth control, the recommendation added, should be practised according to the ‘ideology of family planning’. More specifically, birth control needed to be ‘freely and autonomously’ implemented as a part of everyday life planning by each couple in order to realize a ‘healthy and cultural life’. Hence, the ideology of
family planning, as set out in the 1949 recommendation, appeared to bridge the gap between the demands of the home economy and the requirements of the national economy (*Jinkō Mondai Kenkyū* vol. 6 no. 2 1950: 7–16).

Although the 1949 recommendation was not really taken up by the government and the Council itself was abolished the following year, family planning was promoted through close cooperation with international movements. In 1952, the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), supported by American big business such as the Rockefeller Foundation, the Ford Foundation and Shell, was established as an international organization for family planning. Margaret Sanger was appointed the first president of the federation. The establishment of the IPPF inspired a multitude of Japanese activists working for birth control movements, and drove them to form a national organization. The movements in Japan were also encouraged to host an international convention of the IPPF in Japan. For this purpose, the Japanese Planned Parenthood Federation (JPPF) was established in 1954 through the efforts of such long-term birth control activists as Katō Shizue, Kitaoka Juitsu, Nagai Tōru, Tachi Minoru, Koya Yoshio and Majima Yutaka, who became senior members of the Federation after its establishment (Kitaoka 1956: 277–9; Fujime 1997: 366–7).

The establishment of the JPPF was given qualified endorsement by the government. The Population Problem Advisory Council of the Ministry of Health and Welfare published a motion concerning ‘control over the quantity of the population’ in 1954, which proposed that population policy should encourage a ‘paradigm shift’ from birth control to family planning. Through this transition, population policy was expected to advance from a mere measure targeting the protection of mothers and children to a comprehensive population policy established on a broader foundation and closely linked to culture, economics and education within society. The motion also required the government to take the following nine measures in order to control the quantity of the population (Kitaoka 1956: 106–7; *Jinkō Mondai Kenkyū* vol. 60 1995: 110–12; Kobayashi 1976: 347–9). It aimed to:

- establish a specialized department or section on birth control inside the administrative system in order to encourage the cooperation of private organizations;
- provide support for the activities of birth control instructors;
- organize appropriate measures for the proliferation of birth control methods in health insurance and social insurance schemes;
- popularize birth control among those who most needed to practise it, and to provide birth control methods free or at a discounted price for those in economic difficulty;
- encourage welfare offices and departments of factories, mines and other business establishments to teach the practice of birth control;
- avoid policies relating to pay or tax which risked encouraging too many births in each household;
• conduct research on the quantity and quality of the population for the promotion of family planning that was grounded on a comprehensive population policy;
• provide training concerning family planning and related knowledge in the process of medical education, and to promote and support research in family planning techniques;
• establish rules for medical doctors conducting abortions so that they would be obliged to provide knowledge concerning family planning in order to avoid multiple abortions.

The JPPF hosted the fifth International Convention on Family Planning in Japan in 1955, which the Japanese government and large corporations provided strong support in order to run. Besides Katō, feminist activists such as Oku Mumeo (though her substitute actually attended the convention) and Kōra Tomi contributed to the convention. In order to attend the convention, international proponents of birth control and eugenics, including Sanger and Thompson, came to Japan, and spoke to the audience in Japan and the world about the importance of family planning and eugenic causes (Kitaoka 1956: 277–9; Fujime 1997: 366–70). The convention was enthusiastically reported in the mass media, and, as Fujime concludes, the convention was a good opportunity for advertising the neo-Malthusian cause (Fujime 1997: 368).

Family planning, therefore, gradually succeeded in obtaining the endorsement and support of the Japanese government and large corporations, in the course of which the Japanese nation-state made a comeback into international society. In the early 1950s, the Japanese state regained its independence as a nation-state, but at the same time, its international relations were severely constrained by the Cold War, and closely tied to the United States since the early 1950s (Hook, Gilson, Hughes and Dobson 2001: 29–32). During this period, the Japanese economy started taking the path to economic recovery, preparing for the coming of high economic growth. The economic recovery also brought with it the redemption of Japanese conservative politics. Along with the changing Occupation policy of the United States due to mounting tensions caused by the Cold War, various policies of ‘democratization’ laid down by SCAP in the earlier period were ‘reversed’. In Dower’s explanation:

Driven by Cold War considerations, the Americans began to jettison many of the original ideals of ‘demilitarization and democratization’ that had seemed so unexpected and inspiring to a defeated populace in 1945. In the process, they aligned themselves more and more openly with the conservative and even right-wing elements in Japanese society, including individuals who had been closely identified with the lost war. Charges were dropped against prominent figures who had been arrested for war crimes. The economy was turned back over to big capitalists and
state bureaucrats. Politicians and other wartime leaders who had been prohibited from holding public office were gradually ‘depurged,’ while on the other side of the coin the radical left was subjected to the ‘Red purges’. The notion of a genuinely democratic revolution – from above, below, or anywhere else – seemed more and more, as the cliché had it, a dream within a dream. Before the occupation ended, the Japanese media had dubbed this dramatic turn of policy the ‘reverse course’.

(Dower 1999: 525–6)

The national context in which family planning was incorporated into Japanese public health administration and population policy was, therefore, marked by the revival of conservative forces in Japanese politics and the Cold War. In fact, family planning was promoted in close relationship with the conservative forces in Japan, as the example of Kitaoka Juitsu demonstrates. Kitaoka organized a re-armament movement with Ashida Hitoshi, and deeply committed himself to the anti-communist campaign while simultaneously playing a key role in the family planning movement, the population policy-making process, and teaching social policy at a private university (Kitaoka 1976: 196–215). Interestingly, he pressed the cause of family planning by advocating that family planning was the key for the Japanese nation-state to become and remain a ‘democratic and peaceful’ state, though he simultaneously engaged in the re-armament movement. Referring to Warren Thompson, Kitaoka argues that the prewar ‘surplus population’ drove the Japanese nation-state to take the path of military aggression to expand its territory (Kitaoka 1956: 58–62). Hence, according to him, family planning was a prerequisite for Japan in order to govern the ‘civilized and democratized’ Japanese nation-state and to avoid the prewar mistake by expanding the size of the population: ‘As a Swedish population expert, Myrdal, said, “the population problem is the largest element in determining the destiny of democracy, being more significant than war and peace”‘ (Kitaoka 1948: 1).20 Kitaoka was not alone in discussing the point, which relates population control to the construction of a ‘democratic and peaceful’ nation-state, and others have made a similar observation regarding the link between the construction of democracy and population policy (Tsurumi 1984/1991: 244–6). In this respect, family planning was certainly within the scope of Japanese political, economic and security policies, in which the national government and large businesses shared common concerns.

As such, being backed by the Japanese government and big corporations, the idea of family planning steadily infiltrated Japanese everyday lives during the 1950s. Statistically, contraception exceeded the abortion rate by 1960 (Inoue and Ehara 1991: 60–1).

In 1959, the office responsible for family planning was formally transferred from the Public Hygiene Bureau to the Children’s Bureau (the Department of Mother and Child Hygiene). The postwar public health administration for
mothers and children started by dealing with street children, ‘mixed children’ between Japanese women and the soldiers of the Occupation forces, and women who had become widowed just after the war (Murakami 1987: 101–29). Hence, its original intention was to provide social welfare support and aid for those who needed it in order to stabilize their lives. Yet, in the 1950s, these social problems relating to poverty settled down for the most part, and instead of them, health administration became the main task of mother and child public health policies. The maternity health record book, which was originally started in the prewar period, was thoroughly revised in 1953, and the public system of health checks for mothers and children was organized. After family planning was integrated into this emerging administrative system for the public health of mother and child, ‘classes for newlyweds’, which were held in order to instruct the newly-married and other interested parties about marriage and how to practise birth control and family planning, were initiated in each district covered by the Eugenics Protection Consultation Centre (Kobayashi 1976: 365–6). Finally, the Mother and Child Health Law that comprehensively regulated the policy area of public health administration for mothers and children was promulgated in 1965. Although the term ‘family planning’ itself did not appear in the text of the law, the official notice by the director of the concerned bureau that was circulated the following year specified ‘instruction in family planning’ as one of the items that should be carried out according to the law. According to Kobayashi, the notice defined family planning as ‘a practice for achieving happiness [my emphasis] in each home with full consideration of economic conditions and the environment of the home, and the health conditions of the mother’. The main objective of family planning was the birth and healthy development of children as well as the protection of mothers’ bodies for healthy pregnancy and childbirth, and in order to attain these, the notice recommended that family planning advice on planned pregnancies, the appropriate age for first and last pregnancies and the appropriate frequency of childbirths should be given before marriage and pregnancy happened (Kobayashi 1976: 365–7).

Through the administrative changes concerning family planning, the focus of policy clearly shifted from mere control over the population to a more comprehensive set of guidelines for everyday life that suggested even a certain kind of lifestyle. This transition was grounded on an administrative motion concerning ‘improvement in the quality of the population’ that was presented by the Population Problem Advisory Council (the Ministry of Health and Welfare) in 1962.

The policy targeting economic growth is a measure to realize the welfare state where the Japanese people have healthy and cultural lives. But it is human beings who carry out economic activities, and without excellent human beings in physical, intellectual and psychological aspects, the policy for economic growth cannot achieve its objective.

(Jinkō Mondai Kenkyū no. 86 1962: 66)
Beginning with the above statement, a resolution concerning ‘improve-
ment in the quality of the population’ proposed that the Japanese
government needed to implement a population policy whose scope extended
to including economic growth and technical innovation. It proposed the
following eight objectives in order to improve the quality of the Japanese
population and to attain a balanced population structure with a low propor-
tion of unfit people, so that the ability of the population could be
thoroughly developed.22

1 Promotion and improvement of health and physical strength, including
emotional and mental strength.
2 Healthy growth of the young population.23
3 Improvement in the ‘gene pool quality’ of the national population.
4 Introduction of policies for the support and development of people
with mental and physical disabilities.
5 Improvement of life and the labour environment.
6 Establishment of child benefit and improvement of other social security
benefits.
7 Improvement of public health and welfare.
8 Improvement of survey and research.

(Jinkō Mondai Kenkyū no. 86 1962: 66–9)

As this suggests, the primary objective of the motion was to point out the
need for a comprehensive policy which encompassed the whole of human
life, including such items as family planning, guidance on public health,
education and labour, so as to raise the quality of human resources, as
viewed mainly from the economic perspective. In other words, the resolution
evidently linked biological reproduction closely to economic reproduction,
and because of this, biological reproduction appeared to become a matter of
concern for the national administrative system.

Besides the administrative concern in attaining a high quality of
economic reproduction, the motion included a clear eugenic proposal, as it
requested long-term policies that would lead to prosperity and the excellent
quality of the race and eliminate the inheritance of poor quality by the
parents’ descendants. The eugenics policy had already changed direction in
1951 when the Ministry of Health and Welfare granted financial support for
research on ‘prevention of the incidence of mental and physical disorders’.
In 1953, the Basic Guidelines for Dealing with Children with Mental
Deficiency’ (Seishin Hakujakuji Taisaku Kihon Yōkō) were drawn up in
order to establish the means for ‘early discovery and early treatment’ (sōki
hakken, sōki chiryō). Yet, the motion clearly stated the necessity of the
‘prevention of incidences’ (hassei yōbō), and in this sense implied that the
eugenic policy had already included not only ‘early discovery and early
treatment’ but had also even prevented the birth of lives that were supposed
Along with the advancement of the public health administrative system for mothers and children from the late 1950s and early 1960s, the motion demonstrated concern for ‘prevention of incidences’ on the side of politics, which later developed into the policy for the ‘Prevention of the Birth of “Unhappy Children”’ (Fukōna Kodomo no Umarenai Shisaku), carried out by sub-national governments across Japan from the late 1960s.24 The term ‘unhappy children’ in this phrase refers to a child who is born with some kind of problem (mental or physical) in her or his health. In an interview, Sugawa Yutaka, who played the main role in policy-making and implementation, rephrased the term rather crudely as ‘an abnormal child’ (Sugawa 1967: 46). A more concrete definition of ‘unhappy children’ is given through the guideline entitled ‘the Science of Happiness’ (Kōfuku no Kagaku), which was published by the Department of Hygiene of the Hyōgo Prefectural Office, a ‘pioneer’ of the policy.25

1 A child whose birth itself is ‘unhappy’, for example, a child who inherits mental illness.
2 A child whom nobody wishes to be born, for example an unborn child who was aborted.
3 A child who becomes handicapped during the embryonic or foetal period through its mother’s illness or ignorance, for example through viruses, contagious diseases, toxoplasmosis, venereal diseases, diabetes, toxaemia of pregnancy, disorders caused by medicine or nourishment, radiation hazards.
4 A child who will have to spend the rest of her or his life with an unhappy destiny because of lack of treatment soon after birth, for example in cases of obstacles to delivery, premature birth, or incompatible blood reactions.
5 An unhappy child due to lack of treatment during early childhood, for example, a child who is mentally deficient due to congenital metabolic disorder, congenital dislocation or heart disease.

(Matsubara 2000: 209–10)

The policy was intended to prevent the birth of children with problems such as those specified above, as part of the national and sub-national administrative system.

From the perspective on which the policy-making and its implementation were grounded, these children were destined to have unhappy lives that necessarily affected their family lives. They were also believed to create burdens not only for themselves and their families, but also for the nation-state and society, as their lives inevitably required expenditure by the state social welfare system. Moreover, the increase in the number of ‘abnormal children’, which seemed to happen due to the progress of medicine, reduced racial quality, and was consequently believed to cause a great danger not only for the race but also for the whole of humankind (Sugawa 1967: 46).
For these reasons, the birth of ‘unhappy children’ needed to be prevented, and this prevention contributed to: (1) the development of a new hygienic administration for mothers and children; (2) improvement in the racial quality of the Japanese population; and (3) creation of a better social security system (Sugawa 1967: 48).

The transition in the focus of population policy, in terms of both quantity and quality, was based on contemporary national economic policy. The Ikeda cabinet established in July 1960 employed the ‘Income-Doubling Policy’ (Shotoku Baizō Seisaku) as its main economic policy, and the term ‘income-doubling’ became a phrase that summed up the Ikeda cabinet. The ‘income-doubling’ plan literally attempted to ‘double’ the real Gross National Product (GNP) by achieving economic growth of 7.2 percent per year. For this purpose, it proposed ‘improvement in the human ability and promotion of scientific technology’ as one of its five main policies. In order to achieve the economic growth specified by the ‘income-doubling’ plan, which was posited as a measure to improve the quality of the everyday life of the Japanese people, the state needed to be managed with policies aimed at the adequate promotion of the ability of the agents of economic growth – in other words, the human resources for a developed economy with advanced technologies (namely, workers and caretakers for biological, economic and socio-political reproduction). It was based on this perception that the Ikeda cabinet discussed the quality of the Japanese people, that is, Japan’s human resources, as a political issue that lay at the centre of postwar ‘nation-building’. In 1962, Ikeda’s private study group, the ‘Round-Table Conference for Promotion of Human Beings’, (Hitozukuri Kondankai) was organized for the discussion of educational issues. Subsequently, the Ikeda cabinet asked the Economic Advisory Council (Keizai Shingikai) to submit recommendations regarding ‘the basic principles of the policy for human ability as a part of the promotion of human beings’. The council submitted its report entitled ‘Themes and Measures for Human Capacity Development for Economic Growth’ (Keizai Hatten niokeru Jinteki Noryoku Kaihatsu no Kadai to Taisaku), which emphasized the benefits of meritocracy, in 1963 (Hisatake, Kainō, Wakao and Yoshida 1997: 63–8).

As such, in the 1960s, the comprehensive development of human beings appeared as a crucial part of the government’s agenda. Corresponding to this political climate, the transition in the focus of population policy, which was represented by the resolution concerning ‘improvement of the quality of the population’ presented by the Population Problem Advisory Council (the Ministry of Health and Welfare) in 1962, was brought about.

The report by the Economic Advisory Council was further developed by the Central Educational Advisory Council (Chūō Kyōiku Shingikai) in order to clarify the desired profile for future people in Japan as a guideline of the school education, and as a result of a series of discussions, another report entitled ‘A Profile of Desirable Human Beings’ (Kitaisareru Ningenzō) was published. In the introduction, this report outlined ‘the present problems
for the Japanese people’ as being: (1) the requirement for the development of human ability corresponding to the period of technological innovation; (2) an awareness of the Japanese ‘spiritual climate’ (seishinteki fūdo); and (3) the establishment of sound democracy by establishing a sense of self-identity. It then further developed each theme in the main discussion, and described ‘a profile of desirable human beings’ that encompassed four different facets of a person’s everyday life, namely the various roles of ‘individual’, ‘member of family’, ‘member of society’ and ‘member of the nation-state’.

Summarizing the discussion, the profile of human beings presented by the ‘Profile of Desirable Human Beings’ report contained the following three elements. Firstly, it emphasized the human ability that was supposed to be adequate for the period of technological innovation. For instance, it described a ‘positive person’ as one who could be enthusiastically devoted to one’s job. In this sense, from the pragmatic perspective of the report, a person’s most important quality is usefulness in industrial society. Around the same time the ‘Profile of Desirable Human Beings’ report was published, the Secondary Education Advisory Council published a report entitled the ‘Improvement in the Later Stages of Secondary Education’ (Kōki Chūtō Kyōiku no Kakujū Seibi) that emphasized the importance of occupational education and teaching industrial skills. Along with the Secondary Education report, the ‘Profile of Desirable Human Beings’ report promoted economic values in the process of reproduction at home and in schools.

Secondly, the ‘Profile of Desirable Human Beings’ report also emphasized ‘nationalism’ with such terms as ‘genuine Japanese’, ‘beautiful Japanese tradition’ and ‘admiration for the Emperor who is the symbol of the Japanese State’. The nationalism that the report sought to promote was not ‘a narrow-minded nationalism’ but ‘a sound nationalism’. However, it proposed that both ‘self-awareness as a Japanese’ and ‘a sound patriotism’ were indispensable for being a good person in contemporary Japan.32

Finally, the ‘home’ was also stressed as important in the ‘Profile of Desirable Human Beings’ report, which defined the ‘home’ as a place of love, recreation, relaxation and wholesome education where people could be revitalized and children could grow up healthily. The ‘home’ could thus contribute to improving the productivity of society and the nation-state, making the individual and her or his family happy, regaining a nationally defined humanity as a Japanese and developing the self. In other words, the ‘home’ in the report was the site of the tri-dimensional reproduction processes in the period of high economic growth, and in this very sense, it was re-channeled to the nation-state.33

In summary, the postwar population policy shifted focus from mere control over the population in terms of both quantity and quality to a more comprehensive strategy for promotion of adequate human resources for industries in the period of high economic growth via the concept of ‘family planning’. Throughout this process, however, eugenic concerns remained at the core of the policy, though the focus of policy implementation also
shifted from sterilization to ‘prevention of birth of “unhappy children”’, along with the development of medical technology and the inclusiveness of the population policy. Under such circumstances, the trend of childbirth showed a kind of conversion. According to the ‘Family Planning Survey’, conducted on three thousand women across Japan by the Cabinet Secretary Public Relations Office in 1965, 75 percent of respondents answered that they were practising or had practised birth control, and 41 percent answered that they had practised abortion. In response to the question asking about the respondent’s ideal number of children, 45 percent of the interviewees answered two and 35 percent answered three. In fact, 73 percent of the interviewees who had two children at the time answered that they did not wish to have any more children (Naikaku Sōri Daijin Kanbō Kōhōshitsu 1965: 6–12). As these results demonstrate, by the mid-1960s women had started to practise family planning at home in order to limit the number of children, resulting in a change in the Japanese family. That is to say, the statistical facts that Ochiai reports show that a reproductive egalitarianism emerged through the postwar population policy which stressed family planning in terms of quantity and quality, thereby creating a ‘happy home’.

Through the process by which family planning extended the scope of the government’s population policy, the boundary between policy areas became increasingly blurred. As previously discussed in the case of the policy for ‘promotion for human beings’, in order to attain its objectives, the population policy was required to function in direct relation to other policies such as economic or education policies.

There are also other policy areas that were closely related to the functions of population policies, such as social policy and women’s labour policy, in other words those policies related to economic and socio-political reproductions. These will be discussed in the next section.

**Social policy and labour policy for women: the hidden capital of the Japanese postwar economy**

The postwar Japanese constitution contains an independent provision for the right to ‘social welfare’. Article 25 states:

All people shall have the right to maintain the minimum standards of wholesome and cultured living.

In all spheres of life, the State shall use its endeavours for the promotion and extension of social welfare and security, and of public health.

Nonetheless, this provision cannot be said to have been fully adopted for a long time after the constitution was promulgated. The ‘Asahi case’ is probably the most well-known example of the postwar situation of social welfare. The case, started by Asahi Shigeru, is an example of administrative litigation over the meaning of ‘minimum standards of wholesome and cultured living’.

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Asahi had been hospitalized for a long time because of pulmonary tuberculosis and was on welfare support (free medical care at hospital plus financial support of six hundred yen per month for daily necessities). However, in 1956 his welfare support was partly cancelled when his brother started to make a financial contribution of one thousand five hundred yen per month towards his medical care. The sub-national welfare office changed its policy and requested Asahi to pay nine hundred yen for medical expenses out of the money sent by his brother, while also cancelling all the financial support. Asahi objected to this decision, and he sought to keep at least one thousand yen as his daily expense. His appeal was not accepted by the sub-national governor concerned and the Minister of Health and Welfare, so he brought the case to the courts by maintaining that welfare support of six hundred yen per month was not sufficient for the constitutional provision of ‘the minimum standards of wholesome and cultured living’ (Abe and Ikeda 1983: 47–8; Hisatake, Kainō, Wakao and Yoshida 1997: 57).

The Asahi case posed a question for the Japanese social welfare system in terms of whether his social right had been secured as a part of his human rights. Yet, the Daily Life Security Law (Seikatsu Hogo Hō), which regulates the public support administration, is designed to work on the principle of ‘complementary support’. This means that public support shall be given only after a claimant exhausts all the means to maintain her or his life (e.g. property, personal ability and support through any human relationships), and when that public support is considered the only way to survive (Ōsawa 1993a: 187). Also, as Toshitani points out, the support standard itself was from the very beginning set at a low level (Toshitani 1975: 116). In this sense, the social welfare system in the early postwar period was only programmed to ameliorate desperate situations, being a far cry from a universal social security system.

According to Toshitani, in 1951 the Social Security System Advisory Council (Shakai Hoshō Seido Shingikai) recommended that the government establish a comprehensive Beveridge-type social security system that included social insurance, public support, social welfare and public hygiene. It was nevertheless ignored by the government, which had higher priorities on its political agenda, namely the reconstruction of the Japanese economy and re-armament. Indeed, as the second plan for economic reconstruction drawn up in 1949 by the Economic Reconstruction Committee (Keizai Fukkō Iinkai) maintained, ‘there was a vital need to consider accumulating as much capital as possible by slowing down the rise in living standards. The accumulation of capital was vital for a while even though it was expected to cause hardships in people’s everyday life’. This evidently demonstrates that governmental interests lay in economic development, not welfare. In Toshitani’s phrase, the economy and security policy as well as the social policy confronted each other, as in the well-known trade-off between ‘guns or butter’ (Toshitani 1975: 117–19).

The high economic growth that was realized by marginalizing improvements in the social security system, however, ironically resulted in the
necessity for improvement in the social security system. High growth had destabilized the social units through mobilization of population caused by the transformation in the industrial structure that had, in place of the public purse, been providing support for those in need, namely families and communities. As a result of this transition, the nation-state was required to compensate for functions that families and communities normally played. After the Kishi cabinet was formed in 1957, the Economic Advisory Council established the National Daily Life Group (Kokumin Seikatsu Bukai) in order to discuss ways of ‘enriching and improving the national life’. Later, the group published its recommendations, which called firstly for improvements in the security of life of a national minimum standard of welfare, and secondly, for prevention of poverty by actively promoting various social security policies, especially policies for those who needed support and those on low incomes. For this purpose, the group advised the following four measures (Toshitani 1976: 131–3):

- public support as the main focus of the national policy that ensures the minimum standard of life;
- national insurance;
- establishment of a national pension system;
- family planning.

The national pension system and the national insurance system that the National Life Group recommended were, in fact, achieved in 1954 and 1961 respectively. However, with both elements, the recommendations kept the previous policy attitude towards social policy in the following two senses. Firstly, both were still rooted in the philanthropic approach to poverty, namely provision to the needy as a mercy, and thus they were limited to being focused on the elderly, the disabled and widowed who were excluded from the fruits of high economic growth. Secondly, the economy was again prioritized: social policy appeared as an important item on the agenda only because of its possible contribution to economic growth. As discussed in the previous chapter, Japanese postwar thoughts on social policy were deeply grounded in the ‘production power theory’. According to this theory, social policy is a measure to reproduce ‘tomorrow’s labour power’, and insofar as it contributes to the maintenance of the economic cycle, it is considered as a part of economic theory. In postwar practices of social welfare, the production power theory had significant relevance: social policy was resorted to in order to stabilize economic and social situations and to pursue a path to the status of economic giant by maintaining the ‘minimum standard for the needy’, but not for the social welfare of the Japanese people.

These two crucial elements of social policy remained throughout the postwar period. Commenting on the development in social policy after the period of high economic growth, Harada summarizes:
Originally, the improvement in social security during the period of Japanese high economic growth was supposed to be a necessary cost for dealing with the transformation in families and communities due to economic growth and maintaining further growth. The cost was supposed to be repaid by expansion of the scale of finance by economic growth, and this way of thinking did not change.

(Harada 1991: 45–6)

In other words, postwar social policy only existed through subordination to economic policy. But how was this possible? Poverty and other human and social problems are always present in Japan, like anywhere else, and they were in particular acute problems in the early postwar period. So how did Japanese social policy stay within such a limited scope, especially before the fruits of high economic growth actually started to reach people’s everyday lives?

The ‘family’ is one of the answers to the above question, as has been pointed out by many Japanese scholars of social policy, family policy and feminism (Toshitani 1976: 119–23; Harada 1988: 308–16; Harada 1991: 42–7; Ōsawa 1993a: 198–201; Shinotsuka 1995: 170–6; Itō 1996: 4–7). For instance, Harada, whose work on the function of the family in the Japanese social security system is often referred to by other researchers, discusses the impact of the ‘family’s dual structure’ created by the discrepancy in the profile of the family between the constitution and the civil code. According to him, the discrepancy resulted in bringing about advantages for postwar high economic growth. As detailed in the previous chapter, the constitution was grounded on the ideology of the modern ‘nuclear’ family, while the civil code remained a provision of obligation of care between direct blood relatives that was a remnant carried over from the prewar ‘ie’ system. Harada discusses that the image of the modern ‘nuclear family’ in the constitution contributed to the mobilization of the population through the creation of new small families, mostly by people who were part of the well-educated labour force. The care obligation between direct blood relatives ameliorated various problems concerning care needs, which had been caused by the pursuit of high economic growth (Harada 1988: 319–20). In this sense, ideas from the prewar family system were utilized through remodelling them in appropriate ways for the period of high economic growth, and functioned as a substitute for a public social security system, which was given only secondary importance behind economic policy.

Moreover, the dual structure of the family was maintained not only by the images and functions of the family presented by the constitution and the civil code, but also by women’s labour policy. As mentioned in the previous chapter, more women joined the labour market during total war. In terms of the legal environment, the postwar Basic Labour Law laid down equality between men and women as workers. Hence, in theory, there were certain conditions in postwar Japan in which women’s participation could further expand.
Nonetheless, Japan’s historical trajectory did not demonstrate so simple a
process rather implying a linear increase in the participation of female
workers in the labour market. Firstly, there was also a provision for ‘matern-
ity protection’ (*Bosei Hogo*) in the Labour Standards Law, which restricted
working hours, late-night working and dangerous work as well as pre- and
post-natal holiday, time off for childcare, and so forth. These provisions
fundamentally marked women as ‘protected workers’ who had to carry out
different work under different conditions from male workers, although they
were certainly a channel through which women could access the labour
protection they might need (Molony 1993: 137–42). Consequently,
according to Shinotsuka, the provisions resulted in women workers being
driven to the periphery of the mainstream Japanese labour market. The core
workforce in Japanese large corporations, which is generally composed of
male, white-collar workers, were protected by Japanese labour practices,
namely the life-time employment system, the seniority-based pay system,
and the corporate union system. Compared to their male counterparts,
women workers were so deeply marked by the ‘maternal provision’, and in
fact were so restricted in their actions because of the protective provisions
for their reproductive functions in the Labour Standard Law that they could
not act according to the dominant practice as male workers did. This
resulted in the industry’s impression that female workers were an ‘unreliable’
part of the labour force. The inflexibility of the women’s labour force,
brought about by the regulations of the Labour Standard Law, not only
resulted in additional burdens on the personnel management, but also
confirmed that women had to bear the reproductive responsibility that
would necessarily create a break in their career development, which
appeared for the employers to be incalculable risks. In other words, women
were profoundly labelled in the labour market (Shinotsuka 1995: 205–20).

Secondly, throughout the postwar period, the Japanese government main-
tained a labour policy for women that treated women as a ‘buffer’ in the
labour market. Already in 1945, the Minister of Health and Welfare’s notes
for a cabinet meeting had included a proposal to provide repatriated soldiers
with jobs by making women return to their homes. Also, during the severe
depression period after the Dodge Line was implemented from 1949 to 1950
and again in 1952, the number of women workers decreased considerably
(Asakura 1976: 295). Yet, in the periods marked by lack of labour, for
example from 1963 to 1964, women were again called upon as an ‘undevel-
oped labour force’.

In this sense, the 1963 report ‘Themes and Measures for Human Ability
Development for Economic Development’, which was discussed in the
previous section, is a concrete manifestation of the agenda of the govern-
ment regarding women’s labour as an integral part of the Japanese political
economy. On the one hand, although it emphasized the importance of ‘meri-
tocracy’, which marginalized the female workforce in other sections of the
text, the report also clearly recommended the utilization of the female co-op
as an essential element of the economy. On the other hand, it specified the ‘female workforce’ as ‘women who are married, have finished the early stages of child-rearing and come back to work’. The working style thus recommended in the report was the ‘M-letter shaped labour pattern’. Moreover, women were expected to return (after quitting their first job, in most cases a better job than the later one, when they had gotten married or had had a child) to the labour market as a non-regular worker (part-timers, temporary employees, etc.). In this sense, the female labour force was only regarded as a marginal labour force, which could be utilized outside of women’s reproductive duties. The latter point was actually complemented by a report regarding ‘child care issues’ that the Central Child Welfare Advisory Council (Chūō Jidō Fukushi Shingikai) published in the same year as ‘Themes and Measures for Human Ability Development for Economic Development’. The report stressed the importance of home education, the obligation of childcare for mothers, and the obligation of cooperation for fathers. This implied that young children of nursery age should be taken care of at home primarily by mothers – in short, maintaining the norm of sexual division of labour at home, in which women primarily played the role of carer (for children or for the elderly). In other words, women were generally not expected to work outside the home during their ‘childcare’ period, but where this was not the case, they were required not to work to the extent of causing problems or inconveniences (in childcare and demands for nursery for example) in running the household.

Summarizing the above, postwar social policy during the period of high economic growth was continually put aside as secondary to the main agenda, i.e. it came after economic policy. Thus the government’s attitude was supported by the practices of each family, in which the principle of the sexual division of labour was firmly sustained, not only by people’s perception regarding the family, but also by the social and political environment shaped by the constitution, the civil code and the female labour policy. In fact, two of the characteristics of the ‘postwar family system’, a term that Ochiai coined, are the shift to the housewife role for women and the nuclear family with the ethos of the extended family, which correspond to the governmental policy. Ósawa points out that this postwar situation of social policy and its close and deep link with the postwar family system contained a severe problem. She succinctly criticizes the fact that ‘postwar social policy has been grounded on the patriarchal relationship’, in which ‘the difference in sex composes the basic structure of the system, and women’s economic independence is only considered as an abnormal situation’ (Ósawa 1993b: 199–200).

The government’s policy on the social security system showed some signs of transition from the late 1960s to the early 1970s. With the second biggest economy in the world, the government achieved such a position as to be able to afford an increase in the national budget for social security, while public opinion demanded ‘welfare’ before the ‘economic growth’ that appeared to
be booming. In 1973, the government presented a plan for a significant expansion of the social security system, and named 1973 as ‘the first year of welfare’ (fukushi gannen) (Harada 1988: 305–16). Yet, the ‘oil shocks’ and their consequence, the economic downturn and low economic growth, curtailed these attempts. Already in 1975, ‘welfare’ had become an object of revision as it pressurized the national budget in the period of low economic growth. The revision resulted in the ‘Japanese Type of Welfare Society’, presented by a study group of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and later incorporated into the social welfare administration. This ‘Japanese Type of Welfare Society’ was unique to Japan in the sense that it called for ‘the family unique to Japan’ as ‘an agent of social security’ or ‘a supporter for curtailing the state’s social security’, but not for ‘an object of social security’. The Welfare White Paper in 1978 even described the high rate of three-generation cohabitation as ‘hidden capital’ for welfare (Harada 1988: 366–78).

Considering the postwar’s highly ‘gendered’ course of social policy and its relationship with economic policy, the ‘hidden capital of welfare’ can be said to be a synonym for the ‘hidden capital of the economy’. Moreover, what it genuinely refers to is women, not the family; women who played the role of care provider, ‘housewife’, as the majority of men were playing the role of breadwinner. But how did women think and interpret the fact that they were considered to be ‘hidden capital’, especially during the period of the economic miracle? Interestingly, ‘being a housewife’ is an issue that was widely discussed from the mid-1950s to the early 1970s. In the next section, we will look into a series of discussions in the mass media regarding ‘being housewives’, a subject which was addressed by social critics, academics and family members themselves, men and women alike.

The Housewife Debates

Then, why are housewives not allowed to request their share in price for value added by housewives’ labour, in the case where the commodity concerned happened to be the labour force of their husbands?

(Isono 1960:11)

The term ‘Housewife Debates’ refers to discourses that were intermittently exchanged in three different periods from 1955 to 1972. The debate was initiated by an article entitled ‘On the Second Job Called Housewife’ (Shufu to iu Daini no Shokugyo-ron), written by Ishigaki Ayako in 1955. Then in 1960, Isono Fujiko posed a question about the value of a housewife’s labour. Finally, in 1972, inspired by the second wave of feminism, Takeda Kyōko argued that the housewife presents an alternative lifestyle. All three discourses, made by three women at three different times, stirred up a great deal of controversy, and numerous contributors, including Hiratsuka Raichō, Umesao Tadao, Tanaka Sumiko and Tsuru Shigeto, to name but a
few, discussed such themes as ‘what is a housewife?’, ‘what is a housewife for?’ and ‘what kind of value does housework create?’ As many Japanese researchers point out, the housewife debate stands as a unique case in terms of its early appearance and high standard of discussion, considering that it was only in 1963 that Betty Friedan wrote *Feminine Mystique*, which looked into the anxiety and identity problems of the middle-class housewife in the US suburbs, and in 1974 that Ann Oakley’s *The Sociology of Housework* was published (Ueno 1982a: 2–3; Ochiai 1997a: 32–6). The period in which the housewife debate blossomed corresponds to the period of high economic growth in which women became housewives at an unprecedented rate. In these circumstances, light was shed on the role of the housewife.

The first housewife debate was about housewives’ participation in the labour market. Ishigaki, who initiated the whole debate, maintained that women should engage in social activities through joining the labour market, and that being a housewife should be a ‘second job’ after the social job in the economic sphere (Ishigaki 1955a: 11–14). For Ishigaki, the burdens of housework were increasingly disappearing due to technological innovation, especially through mechanization, and also due to the commodification of housework (for example, the popularization of ready-made clothes). In Ishigaki’s view, therefore, contemporary housewives seemed to be living without any purpose, and wasting their time. Hence, Ishigaki maintained that housewives should take jobs in order to utilize their abilities and in order to contribute to society (Ishigaki 1955a: 12–13). In response to Ishigaki’s opinion, a number of critiques were written over the next two years. The responses to Ishigaki’s article can be summarized under the following two standpoints. Firstly, the importance of domestic responsibility was stressed by such contributors as Sakanishi Shio and Fukuda Tsuneari (Sakanishi 1955: 15–22; Fukuda 1955: 48–60). This standpoint, as Ueno explains, also admits the sexual division of labour by celebrating housework at home (Ueno 1982c: 254). Secondly, there was also a different view presented by such contributors as Shimizu Keiko and Hiratsuka Raichō, which valued the significance of social activities and movements organized mainly by housewives. In her article entitled ‘The age of the housewife has started’ (*Shufu no Jidai wa Hajimatta*), Shimizu insisted that housewives deploy their ‘social’ activities in order to improve society to create a better life while men or working women cannot engage in such activities (Shimizu 1955: 32).

The second housewife debate concentrated on the discussion over the value of housework using Marxist economic terms. It was Isono who started the debate by arguing that the housewife’s labour was not valued because of her status as a housewife. Housework was unpaid work, since it was not valued by capitalists, but that did not mean that the housework was valueless (Isono 1960: 2–22). Responding to Isono, Mizuta maintained that housewives had a right to receive their own pension for their contribution through housework, which might possibly lead them to a kind of economic independence (Mizuta 1960: 23–43).
Influenced by the rise of the women’s liberation movements, which raised the question of women’s identity, the third debate was started by Takeda’s 1972 article, which was entitled, rather provocatively, ‘the Housewife is a Genuinely Liberated Human Being’ (Shufu koso Kaihōsareta Ningenzō). According to Takeda, the ‘full-time’ housewife (sengyō shufu) was more liberated than those who were involved in the labour market, namely men or working women (single/married, full-time/part-time). Compared to those who were engaging in the production process, the full-time housewife deployed her multiple activities (from hobbies to civil movements) in everyday life, and as a consequence, could present an alternative lifestyle and values that were not dominated by the logic of the industrial society. In Takeda’s expression, ‘the housewives are human beings who are ahead of the time in living in the life-to-come, post-industrial society in which the expected affluence and leisure time would be achieved, and information and knowledge would play a main role in everyday life’ (Takeda 1972: 147–9).

The debates in three different periods, therefore, posited different issues regarding the ‘housewife’ yet overlapped at the same time. Although numerous good scholarly analyzes of the debates have already been published (Kanda 1974; Komano 1976; Ueno 1982b; Ueno 1982c; Nishikawa 1997; Bardsley 1999), the following three points need to be made in specific relation to the tri-dimensional reproduction.

Firstly, as a constant theme throughout the debates spanning seventeen years, being a housewife seems to require ‘something extra’. More concretely, being just a housewife does not excuse one for being a housewife: even from a perspective that endorsed the importance of housework such as Sakanishi, being a housewife plays a significant role as it requires a great deal of responsibility and effort. Thus, the idea of being an absent-minded or poorly-skilled housewife in terms of housewifely norms is summarily dismissed, and in this sense, Sakanishi’s discussion shares a common element with Ishigaki, who argued that the housewife should take a job in the labour market besides shouldering domestic responsibility, or Shimizu who pointed out the importance of women’s participation in social movements as well as maintaining the household. In the second debate, Isono argued for the value of housework through saying that the housewife who lived easily on her husband’s pay without doing any socially valued work was a circumstance in which the burdens of housework were disappearing (Isono 1961: 95). In the third debate, the housewife was illustrated as an existence engaging in multiple activities besides those of the housewife. In this sense, it can be said that throughout the debate, being a housewife is posited as something that requires effort. The full-time housewife should be, in this sense, professional in being a housewife (Hendry 1993).

Secondly, as a consequence of the first point, the housewife is recommended to engage in some kind of activity, and as a consequence of this, social activities, especially social and local movements (or later civil movements), were focused upon suitable activities for housewives. This issue was raised by

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Shimizu, who was a prominent organizer of housewives’ protests over anti-nuclear proliferation in 1955 (Bardsley 1999: 12). The theme of social activities remained in the debate until the publication of Takeda’s article. In fact, through the 1950s to the 1970s, numerous housewives’ movements, for example the Mother’s Convention, the Housewives’ Confederation, various cooperative organizations, anti-nuclear movements and peace movements, to name but a few, actively developed their activities, and displayed political and social influence.

Thirdly, there seems to have been a consensus among the contributors that the home is the place of reproduction, especially reproduction of the labour force of breadwinner (usually husband) and reproduction of the next generation, and through these reproductive activities, the home makes some kind of contribution to society and the economic process. However, problems occurred because the contributions of women through reproductive activities at home were not valued in the marketplace, being located as a shadow in the economic system. Therefore, women’s contributions to the economy, society and nation-state were ignored, and this fact created frustration among women.

Summarizing the above three points, the housewife debate was an attempt to define the idea of ‘housewife’, which started to claim its presence in society around this time. Women actively joined this process. They questioned the nature and purpose of housework, which had been considered as ‘valuable’ but economically ‘valueless’, and put pen to paper to explain their frustration, problems and desires to the world, and in so doing, attempted to provide extra significance for the state of being a housewife. As unpaid work is still a vital issue in contemporary feminist debates, the housewife debate did not reach any concrete conclusions, and issues still remain as open questions. However, it certainly laid the theoretical constellation for discussion over the presence and role of the housewife already present in the 1950s, namely ‘economic participation’ versus ‘contribution through domestic responsibility’ versus ‘contribution through social activities’. This scheme of discussion has been utilized again and again by Japanese feminists up to the present day. Furthermore, the housewife debates also demonstrated actual women’s ideas and feelings about being housewives, or, more specifically, their discontent and pride derived from being housewives. Throughout the seventeen-year debate, on the one hand, women requested an evaluation and recognition of their real contribution to social, economic and political processes. Yet on the other hand, their social, economic and political contributions were considered as legitimate grounds for the endorsement of the state of being a housewife, a state of producing non-economic values in the high economic growth period. In this sense, the claim of housewives’ contribution through their domestic role functioned to legitimize the sexual division of labour, on which, as has been discussed, the Japanese postwar economic, social and even political system was constructed.

As Bardsley rightly points out, contributors to the housewife debate were by no means ‘typical’ housewives in any sense. Ishigaki was a well-known
social critic who engaged in the anti-militarist movement in the US in the prewar period, and Sakanishi, who stressed the importance of domestic duties, actually held a PhD in aesthetics from the University of Michigan and headed the Asian Section at the Library of Congress in the 1930s and 1940s (Bardsley 1999: 11–12). However, the debate certainly provided a guiding model for the housewife in the postwar period, and interestingly, the model of the housewife corresponds to the requirements for the housewife in the postwar economic, social and political system, namely that she be an efficient and competent care-taker at home who can be responsible for reproducing tomorrow’s labour force. As seen in the claims of the housewife’s contributions through gender roles, especially through social and local activities and claims of professionalism, the model embraced by the housewife debates offered a road to empowerment. But simultaneously, the debate, in claiming the value of domestic responsibility, also caused the sexual division of labour to remain unquestioned. In this sense, the housewife debate can be said to be a postwar successor of maternal politics, which had been a site of negotiation between constraints and empowerment of women.

Summary: rationality for the family

This chapter has discussed the development of policies concerning the processes of tri-dimensional reproduction in three different policy areas: population policy, social policy and women’s labour policy. In population policy, the government’s attempts to intervene in people’s reproductive practices can be identified throughout the postwar period. The interventions were carried out in order to control both the quantity and quality of the population, and the reproductive attitude that restricted the number of children to two or three, and demanded that limited number of children be raised well, increasingly infiltrated the Japanese family, especially women. Also, through the concept of family planning, the population policy became inclusive in terms of its scope. On the other hand, social policy remained very limited, depending on women’s contributions as caretakers at home, and women’s labour policy, which stressed domestic responsibility for women and drove women to the M-letter shaped labour pattern, supported this policy trend with other policies such as the constitution or civil code.

Through the process of policy development, a particular form of family, which Ochiai termed the ‘postwar family system’, became dominant, both statistically and ideologically, among the Japanese people. Considering the trends of the postwar reproductive policies discussed above, the postwar family system, which is a nuclear family composed of a couple and their two children, with a strict sexual division of labour and close relationships with direct relatives, is a family form that was favoured in a policy environment that attempted to maximize the rationality of the three reproduction processes: biological reproduction, economic reproduction, and socio-political reproduction. In other words, the postwar family system embodied
rationality for people in the postwar political and social context. Conversely, people would face various difficulties if their families did not fall into the scheme of the postwar family system. For instance, in a situation where someone had too many children, chose to be a single mother, refused to have an abortion despite genetic problems and decided to live with a disabled child, that person would be likely to face negative sanctions, for example the marginalization of women workers or the lack of social security provisions, since the policies were designed to exclude such situations. Of course, these situations are not preferable from the governing perspective, since they are bound to create uncertain variables and become another cost to pay. In this sense, the postwar family system is a political unit that ensures rational reproduction for the people and the government, in the three dimensions of biological, economical and socio-political reproduction, by avoiding social risks and maintaining economic rationality.

Of course, there is a big gap existing between the presence of certain policies and their actual influence on the social and political process. This chapter has examined the housewife debate and identified some women’s attempts to redefine the situation of being a housewife in a more autonomous way by exploring possible social activities at the discursive level. In the next chapter, we will further discuss interactions between the national policies and the people by examining a social movement, which was an offspring of the national population policy, as a concrete case study.
Introduction: constraints and empowerment: family, company and nation-state

A British journalist, for whom I was acting as interpreter, was interviewing a group of Japanese university students in the mid-1970s. The journalist asked the students whether they felt oppressed by the economic power exercised by huge conglomerate groupings such as the Mitsubishi and Sumitomo groups. Did not they feel like rebelling? A student replied to the effect that since so many items of everyday equipment – from pencils to cars – were manufactured by such firms, it was best to accept them and make the best of the system that created them.

(Stockwin 1999: 24–5)

Japanese companies, especially the large corporations belonging to the ‘huge conglomerate groupings’, are one of the crucial stabilizers of the Japanese social and political system and their tentacles reach deep into everyday life. This is not only because they produce the material goods necessary for everyday life, but also because they, in cooperation with the government, act as providers of social welfare services from pensions and health insurance to housing and recreation activities. In the employment practice known as the lifetime employment system, employees are generally hired in their early twenties, trained by the particular company they work for, seek promotions within company organizations, and stay in the company throughout their working life. This working environment creates a tendency for employees to make comprehensive commitments to their companies, and these commitments more often than not encompass their family life. Dore’s classic work which compares working practices in Japanese and British factories in the 1960s points out that Japanese companies exist as *Gemeinschaft* rather than *Gesellschaft* – *Gemeinschaft* to which even the family members of employees belong, though they are situated on the periphery. Companies are involved in familial matters such as the birth of children, the death of family members, and the welfare of the widows of employees. At the same time, in recompense, the cooperation of family members is expected by the company (Dore 1973: 209–14).

5 A case study

The New Life Movement
Related to this point, a Japanese economist, Okumura, employed the term ‘corporate capitalism’ (hōjin shihonshugi) in order to describe the particularity of the Japanese economy. According to Okumura, capitalism in Japan needs to be distinguished from capitalism in the US or Britain insofar as corporations in Japan monopolize positions as major shareholders of large companies with individual investors only comprising a small fraction of overall ownership. This means that companies belong to other companies and as such are free from the individual circumstances and arbitrary intentions of any major individual ‘human’ investor. Consequently, long-term strategies for rational management can be more easily employed in order to provide companies with a stable basis for management in Japan (Okumura 1992: 2–10). On the other hand, ‘corporate capitalism’ tends to be grounded in ‘company first-ism’ (kaisha hon'i shugi) in which both managerial personnel and other employees ‘loyally and enthusiastically’ work for a particular company in order to increase the profits of the company. In this system, employees are required to be fully committed to their work and trained not only technically, but also morally, according to the policies of a particular company. Dividends reaped from work are linked to promotion inside the company organization, so employees are motivated to work hard for their companies for both professional and personal rewards, and harsh competition between company workers often necessitates additional commitments from their family members. Corporate unions generally cooperate with this system, as they receive a share of the increasing profits reaped by the organization pursuing economic growth (Okumura 1992: 78–111).

Postwar Japanese politics, which has located economic growth at the centre of the political agenda, has also favoured this system; bureaucrats, LDP politicians and influential businessmen making up three corners of the iron triangle, the tripartite system that had been governing the Japanese postwar state until the long-term economic setback de-stabilized the economic, social and political structure in the 1990s, with the 1993 collapse of single-handed LDP rule the clearest manifestation of this change (Curtis 1999: 54). In this respect, Japanese companies function as an essential political agent – an agent that pursues its own interests in the political system while functioning as a medium apparatus between families and the state by integrating the interests of company employees and their families into those of the company. It is significant that during this process people tend to experience a mix of constraint and empowerment: companies construct a delimiting framework of life for their employees and their families, but in so doing, they also provide the means for securing their employees’ and their families’ welfare. Therefore, to quote again Stockwin’s compliant student: ‘it was best to accept them [large corporations] and make the best of the system that created them’ rather than rebel against the status quo.

The political functions of companies as a medium apparatus between political institutions and everyday life in postwar Japan, which reproduce
this constraint and empowerment, are crucial to an analysis of the New Life Movement (Shinseikatsu Undō) and the postwar reproductive system across its three dimensions of biological, economic and socio-political reproduction, discussed in the previous chapter. The New Life Movement was a semi-governmental movement aiming at the improvement of ordinary people’s lives, in which the state (bureaucrats, politicians and regional governments), the economic sector (large corporations) and housewives were involved. Although it is now largely forgotten, the New Life Movement was recognized nationally, endorsed as it was by Prime Minister Hatoyama Ichirō, and operated during the period when the postwar reproductive system was being consolidated. This chapter examines the New Life Movement in detail; its organizations, activities, objectives and political functions and implications. In so doing, this chapter seeks to provide insights into the postwar tri-dimensional reproductive system (discussed in the previous chapter) in terms of implementations and practices – the concrete manifestation of its realization. In particular, this dualism of constraint and empowerment, observed in the Japanese company system as well as in the New Life Movement, will be the focus of attention.3

Origins

As elaborated in earlier chapters, there had been a number of movements whose aim had been an improvement in the quality of everyday life before the arrival of the New Life Movement. In the 1920s, the Everyday Life Improvement Movement, again a semi-governmental movement, organized housewives in order to introduce more modern techniques of housekeeping, while it also held public lectures and exhibitions more often than not concerning the rationalization and westernization of everyday life. The aim of the Movement was to enlighten Japanese people about ‘better lifestyles’ (Chapter 2). During the Fifteen-Year War, the grassroots women’s organizations also worked for the rationalization of everyday life in the total mobilization regime (Chapter 3). The SCAP/GHQ then committed itself to arranging activities intended to improve everyday life, and promoted the contemporary, affluent American lifestyle within Japanese society (Chapter 3).

The New Life Movement was, hence, not the first nation-wide life-improvement movement practised across Japan, but it was a movement born out of previous experiences of organizing semi-governmental movements. In fact, before the New Life Movement started to take shape, the Japanese government tried to resort to a life-improvement movement in order to rebuild and stabilize people’s everyday lives, blighted as they were by the destruction and economic misery that had resulted from defeat in the war. In 1947, the Katayama cabinet,4 the only socialist cabinet before the Murayama coalition cabinet of 1994, set out a ‘Guideline for a National Movement for Building a New Japan’ (Shin Nihon Kensetsu Kokumin Undō Yōryō). This proposal urged a swift development of a ‘new national
movement’ that was aimed at ‘designing a new life for the Japanese population where people could maintain their hopes despite their hardships and could feel the joy of rebuilding [the nation] through their labour’ (Tokyo-to Shinseikatsu Undō Kyōkai 1973: 110–13).\(^5\) As the Katayama cabinet maintained power for only eight months, the guideline was never actually implemented. Yet a number of groups across Japan involved in similar activities to those that the New Life Movement would be involved in – such as ones concerning the improvement and rationalization of everyday life – arose (Tokyo-to Shinseikatsu Undō Kyōkai 1973: 3–5).

The New Life Movement was initiated in 1952 as a result of a discussion between the labour personnel of Nihon Kökan (presently NKK, a major steelmaking company) and the bureaucrats of the IPP, Shinozaki Nobuo and Aoki Hisao. The official story of its origins provides a rationale for Nihon Kökan’s commitment to the New Life Movement. According to an anecdote narrated in a number of official documents, the head of the Labour Management Department of Nihon Kökan realized that the scope of the company’s welfare policy needed to expand to include employees’ private lives (Shinseikatsu Undō Kyōkai 1958: 94–100; Ajia Kazoku Keikaku Fukyū Kyōkai 1959: 15–17; Tokyo Denryoku Kabushi Kaisha 1959: 101–3). One day, we are told, the department head visited a hospital to see a highly skilled veteran employee who had suffered an accident at work. The employee, the story goes, had been kept awake one night by a sick daughter and the following day, suffering from exhaustion, the man had sustained a severe injury. The sorry fate of this employee made the head of the Labour Management Department reflect upon other labour accidents, most of which were, the head surmised, a result of fatigue and anxiety originating from problems within the employees’ domestic sphere of life. How could these accidents be prevented? His answer was ‘home management’. One brochure, specially edited for distribution among ‘people actively engaging in the New Life Movement’, lays out the position with unambiguous clarity:

> The entirety of everyday life at home is a ‘power station’ for the reproduction of tomorrow’s labour force. Therefore, how employees spend their everyday lives at home affects tomorrow’s production enormously. Moreover, this is not only a matter of the productive efficiency of the factory, but is a matter of survival.

(Shinseikatsu Undō Kyōkai 1958: 95)

Based on this rationale, the department head decided to expand the company’s welfare policy to include employees’ private lives, devising strategies for promoting birth control and the rationalization of everyday life (for instance, in budgeting, cooking and nutrition). In so doing, the company could help employees to improve their everyday lives and build ‘happy homes’; quid pro quo, the company would benefit in terms of improvements
in production resulting from a reduction in the number of accidents and instances of unnecessary absenteeism.

It is difficult to establish the veracity of the official story, but it would not be unreasonable to retain at least a modicum of scepticism towards it, given that the story according to the IPP is a little different. Shinozaki explained in a 1980s interview with the Japanese sociologist, Ōbayashi Michiko, that the New Life Movement was initiated as a part of company personnel management policy, as ‘it would become burdensome for companies to pay a dependant’s allowance for children under eighteen-years old if employees have five or six children’. The unions were generally agreeable if the financial benefits created by a decrease in the dependants’ allowance were spent on the activities of the New Life Movement (Ōbayashi 1989: 210). In another document, Shinozaki also mentioned another reason for the establishment of the New Life Movement. According to him, the welfare-related offices of the companies had generally been seeking to forge a work identity or specialization, because their primary responsibility during and just after the war was to secure material goods and distribute them among employees, and these tasks were increasingly unnecessary as the postwar Japanese economy recovered. Hence, in order to avoid being axed, the welfare-related departments of private companies had to find new duties for themselves, and the idea of developing a life-improvement movement inside the company offered an attractive prospect for them in their struggle to survive in these new conditions (Shinozaki 1983: 110–11). Whatever the reason or combinations of reasons, there is no doubt that Nihon Kōkan, in close cooperation with Shinozaki, Aoki, and the APP led by Nagai Tōru (see Appendix A), embarked on designing the New Life Movement with an initial emphasis on family planning.

In 1954, the APP set up the Special Committee for Guidance in a New Life (Shinseikatsu Shidō Iinkai) inside its organization with members including people related to population policy and family planning (Nagai Tōru, Katō Shizue, Kitaoka Juitsu, Koya Yoshio, Tachi Minoru, Majima Yutaka, Kunii Chōjirō, Honda Tatsuo, Okazaki Fuminori, Nasu Hiroshi, Shinozaki Nobuo), feminist activists (Oku Mumeo, Yamataka Shigeri) and specialists on women’s labour (Tanino Setsu, Takahashi Nobuko, both directors of the Bureau for Women and Juveniles of the Ministry of Labour). High-ranked businessmen from such companies as Nihon Denshin Denwa Kōsha (telecommunications), Mitsui Kōzan (mining), Nissan and Toyota (automobiles), Nihon Kōkan (steelmaking) and Toshiba (electrical appliances) were also involved in this committee (Shinozaki 1983: 112–14).

The start of the New Life Movement was endorsed by the then government of the day. Responding to a report submitted by the Social Education Advisory Council (Shakai Kyōiku Shingikai), the Hatoyama cabinet (1954–6) agreed to give moral and financial support to the New Life Movement. In August 1955, Hatoyama invited 150 people to the Prime Minister’s official residence and asked for cooperation in the promotion of
the Movement.\textsuperscript{8} After warm backing from contemporary politicians, the New Life Movement Association was established as an incorporated foundation,\textsuperscript{9} and the Movement started full-scale development by absorbing various grassroots movements across Japan whose aims included the improvement of everyday life (Tokyo-to Shinseikatsu Undō Kyōkai 1973: 5–6). Also in 1955, the New Life Movement received its first financial support from the national government (fifty million yen) for its activities (Satō 1956: 18), and government funding continued to support the Movement until 1979 (Garon 1997: 168).\textsuperscript{10} As Katayama Tetsu’s commitment to the Movement suggests, the progressive party (Japan Socialist Party) did not oppose the conservative government’s support of the New Life Movement. Matsumura Kenzō, the Minister of Education in the Hatoyama cabinet later reflected in a round-table meeting with former Prime Minister Katayama Tetsu and Nagai Tōru, held in 1957, that the idea of promoting the New Life Movement nation-wide was shared with the JSP.\textsuperscript{11}

Objectives and agenda

The New Life Movement, therefore, started life as a nation-wide life-improvement movement organized in the early 1950s, initially within corporations, with government support and specifically in close cooperation with central administrative institutions related to population policy. These initial circumstances determined the fundamental objectives of the Movement. In 1958, the Special Committee for the New Life Movement of the APP set out a basic guideline which clearly explained the objectives and agenda of the Movement. According to the guideline, the Movement intended to contribute to the construction of a ‘new Japan’ as well as to the resolution of population problems. Here ‘new Japan’ meant ‘a democratic welfare state with an autonomous economy’. This would only be attained by settling population problems, and according to the document, the new Japan could only be achieved by instituting a ‘moral, rational and planned everyday life’ at both home and work. The document laid out an agenda in the following five key areas:

1 Family planning
   • popularization of the ideology of family planning
   • popularization of birth control and prevention of abortion
2 Life planning
   • proliferation of a ‘budgeted’ life
   • promotion of rationalization in everyday life
   • promotion and reinforcement of saving
3 Construction of a healthy home
   • improvement in home hygiene
   • ‘scientific’ childcare of babies and young children
4 Reconstruction of order at home
   • establishment of a new home morality
   • prevention of juvenile delinquency

5 Promotion of social morality
   • promotion of a work morality, public morality and traffic morality\textsuperscript{12}
   • establishment of a system of responsible cooperation.

In order to put the agenda into practice, companies, the core of the national economy, were chosen as sites for conducting instruction in New Life Movement initiatives. Courses were held for senior company members so that they might reconsider existing labour and welfare management policies in the light of the New Life Movement agenda. In so doing, the Movement attempted to unify management at home and work. That is to say, through improving the standard of living and quality of life – life here connoting both ‘way of living’ and, in a eugenic sense, ‘the biological person’ or family member – the Movement attempted to achieve a better productive efficiency and develop a basis for industrial safety and rationality. Through this process, the Movement would grow, and the effect of the Movement’s activities would run the gamut from home to work and from work to the whole of society (Ajia Kazoku Keikaku Fukyū Kyōkai 1959: 23).

Of the five agenda items, the first item, family planning, was the primary focus in the initial stages of the Movement, and in fact, the emphasis on family planning functions as a symbolic mark to distinguish the New Life Movement from earlier life-improvement movements. For example, Nagai Tōru maintained that what the term ‘new life’ in the New Life Movement referred to was the new life planned as the basis for a new, democratic and culturally advanced Japan; and family planning was both the starting point and at the core of this planning of everyday living. According to Nagai, by controlling the number of children in each household through the practice of family planning, housewives would be freed from the burdens of childcare and be able to spare more energy to raise their smaller number of children in a better way than before. Also, the reduction in the number of children would result in an improvement in the standard of living of each household (Nagai 1960: 13). On the foundations erected by family planning, each household would endeavour to build in other ‘planning’ areas such as savings, home improvement and child-education, set routines in everyday life, and indeed develop an overall ‘life-plan’. These new household practices would benefit, first and foremost, companies, since they would not only improve the productive efficiency of employees but also, through the increments in savings, increase national capital and hence create a capital base for further economic growth. The raison d’être of all this was that by contributing to economic development, the practices of planning at home, starting with family planning, would in the end redound to the benefit of the Japanese nation-state (Nagai 1960: 14–5).
At the time when the New Life Movement took up family planning, the main aim of the population policy was to decrease the size of the population through family planning; hence the above guideline set by the APP suggests a strong governmental influence, which resulted from the make-up of politics at that time. As previously discussed, the IPP and APP were involved in the policy-making process in cooperation with the JPFF, and the Special Committee for the New Life Movement of the APP contained many members of these organizations. Therefore, it was natural that the New Life Movement was exploited in order to promote the agenda of the then population policy. Secondly, the activities of the Movement were clearly meant to contribute to the ongoing economic growth, which was the primary objective of Japanese politics. The Movement was designed to support economic growth, not only by compensating for labour management policies inside companies, but also by encouraging people to make savings and provide financial resources for industry through these savings. In this respect, the initial stage of the Movement was strongly enveloped, directed and prescribed by contemporary politics.

As regards the connection with the contemporary population policy, the New Life Movement’s concern with the qualitative aspect of the population, which brought the eugenics agenda into the Movement by the back door, so to speak, demands special attention. The family planning discussed in the New Life Movement included, quite overtly, the qualitative element of reproduction. In a New Life Movement publication, Tachi Minoru, another main actor in the prewar and postwar population policy-making process as well as the New Life Movement, stated that both the quantitative and qualitative aspect of human reproduction were contained within the concept of family planning (Tachi 1960: 152). The concern with the qualitative aspect of the population was expressed in the discourse that linked ‘good quality’ with ‘happiness at home’. The Movement often emphasized the importance of raising ‘good and healthy’ children for those who aspired to create ‘a happy home’, in other words, ‘children of good quality’ brought about by ‘high quality’ genetic reproduction, good childcare and sensible household management. For example, in a panel discussion entitled ‘home and society’ in one training course for leaders of the New Life Movement, two panellists, one a senior journalist working for the Mainichi Shinbun (Mainichi Newspaper) and the other an assistant professor of Senshū University, a well-known private university in Tokyo, were highly critical of the idea of housewives taking jobs outside the home, as housewives’ absence from home, they surmised, appeared to be an obstacle to children’s healthy development (Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūkai 1964a: 152–70). More directly, an invitation to a family planning meeting issued by Nihon Tsūn, a transportation delivery company, encouraged housewives to come to the meeting ‘in order to maintain the health of the mother’s body, raise good children and build happy homes’ (Ajia Kazoku Keikaku Fukyū Kyōkai 1959: 131). The implication was that ‘happiness at home’ could only be attained when
children were raised in an ‘appropriate’ way by mothers. The other side of
the coin was, of course, that children with ‘physical and mental problems’
were described as ‘unhappy’. For example, according to one doctor who was
invited to lecture at a training course held by the APP, premature babies
suffer from a higher rate of cerebral palsy which, besides leading to a disap-
pointing life for the unfortunate child left ‘mentally handicapped’, also
causes a great burden for society (Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūkai 1960: 132).
Another doctor, who was a professor of one of Japan’s preeminent depart-
ments of medicine, the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Tokyo, said
in the same training course that it was desirable to increase the number of
eugenic operations for sterilization purposes as people with hereditary
diseases were a great trouble for society as were the future babies containing
the diseased genes (Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūkai 1960: 128). Hence, a child with
any kind of disability would create ‘an unhappy home’, not the normatively
valued ‘happy and prosperous home’. At a time when the establishment of a
social welfare system existed only as a future agenda item for the Japanese
government, there is no denying the practical appeal this eugenic-based
dichotomous framework of understanding ‘happy’ and ‘unhappy’ homes
had for Japanese housewives.

The course of the Movement changed in the late 1960s as the Japanese
economy strode further forward along the path of economic growth and the
social and political system took the form of the advanced industrial state —
that is, a state in which an affluent lifestyle was realized for the majority of
the population and economic growth was no longer the most crucial element
of the social and political agenda.15 It was, rather, the ‘negative effects’ of
economic growth that emerged as central social and political concerns.

Agenda items such as the rationalization of everyday life or family plan-
ning lost urgency and significance in an affluent Japan, while economic
growth brought about new problems in everyday life such as the disintegrat-
ion of communities and deterioration in the quality of life resulting from
the negative effects of economic growth (e.g. population fluidity, pollution
and environmental destruction). In 1964, as an article written by a senior
member of the New Life Movement outlines, the New Life Movement
Association shifted its focus to community activities and ‘residents’ partici-
pation’ (jūmin sanka) in community planning and administration. Around
the same time, it started to support the organization of ‘Everyday Life
Schools’ (Seikatsu Gakkō) across Japan, in which housewives discussed and
dealt with consumer issues, community issues and even social problems
(Ono 1976: 4–16). The new activities of the New Life Movement were gener-
ally carried out from the perspective of ‘everyday life protection’, which
often appeared to be counter to the policies of the national and sub-national
governments and companies. For instance, product reliability and company
waste disposal were typically contentious issues frequently raised by the
Movement. In addition, regional groups of the New Life Movement dealt
with issues such as food safety, emergency medical treatment, improvement
in school and nursery services for children, and road safety on a regional basis. On these issues, the Movement negotiated with the administrative authority, company or other organization concerned in order to improve the local environment and the conditions of everyday life (Ono 1976: 10). In this sense, the New Life Movement in the 1960s moved in a direction corresponding to the contemporary ‘civil movements’ and ‘residents’ movements’. The Japanese civil movements surged in the 1960s, triggered by protests against the US–Japan Security Treaty, in which students, academics and housewives, in other words people who were excluded from the major political organizations and movements of the day, actively joined. While the labour movement was more inclined towards the corporatist strategy,16 the ‘civil movement’ distanced itself from political parties and political ideology, and organized an alternative type of political movement grounded in the needs of everyday life. The residents’ movements, meanwhile, sprung up in various regions across Japan. They were opposed to intervention in everyday life by the national and sub-national governments and by private companies. The residents’ movements tended to be one-issue protest groups, focusing their attention on a particular concrete objective which threatened the local environment (for instance, the building of a nuclear power station or airport). The aim was to protect a particular regional or local environment in which the everyday life of residents was rooted (Kurihara 1984: 153–5). These new types of social movements often negotiated with administrative authorities and companies directly, and attempted to take initiatives in policy-making, especially within the arena of local politics. Significantly, housewives played the main part in these civil movements across Japan, as in most cases, especially in the cities, housewives were left to take care of issues in their communities as an extension of their domestic duties: their working husbands, more often than not, were routinely absent from home and community as their lives were bound up with their companies.

In sum, the New Life Movement, though begun as an essentially government-led movement, developed in line with the transitional trends of political movements, and evolved, if not into a fully-fledged civil movement, into a movement whose direction shifted into one running parallel with the civil movements.17 This transition, which illuminates the two polar aspects of the New Life Movement, i.e. constraint and empowerment, did not happen spontaneously in relation to contemporary changes in political trends and the social environment: rather the intellectual background and institutional supports influenced this transition. This we will examine in subsequent sections.

**Masterminds of the movement**

As mentioned above, the initiation of the New Life Movement was triggered by a discussion between bureaucrats of the IPP and the welfare personnel from a large corporation. It was Shinozaki Nobuo and Aoki Hisao who
consulted the personnel from Nihon Kōkan and helped to connect the company to the other organizations related to population policies. Shinozaki and Aoki were members of the Family Planning Study Committee, which was based on the Japan Planned Parenthood Association led by Kunii Chōjirō. This committee, which started around the time when the International Convention on Family Planning was held in Japan in 1955, was composed of relatively young bureaucrats and researchers (in their thirties and forties at the time), who gathered on a voluntary basis to discuss concepts and practices of family planning (Ōbayashi 1989: 213–19). In the way they conceptualized family planning, some members of the study committee distanced themselves from the previous generation of family planning activists who had been engaged in the birth control movement since the prewar period, namely Katō Shizue, Majima Yutaka, Koya Yoshio, Kitaoka Juitsu and Nagai Tōru. While the previous generation had grounded family planning in population control, the new generation sought something extra, and for this purpose they promoted ‘motherhood protection’ and ‘happiness at home’. In an interview conducted by Ōbayashi, one of the key members, Hinoue, said:

When I was invited to a meeting of some local welfare commissioners (minsei iin), someone yelled at me: ‘What are you really thinking by telling us “not to have children and not to increase the population” now, though it was you [the bureaucracy] that promoted the campaign of “have more babies, multiply” during the wartime’. Also, when I joined a meeting of housewives with my colleague, Ogino [Hiroshi] and I was reproached: ‘Aren’t you the spy sent by Nijūbashi who once gave a hypocritical speech about ‘happiness at home’. So, I was really convinced that we desperately needed to establish an ideology. (Ōbayashi 1989: 214)

Faced with such angry reactions, the members were driven to design an ideology to promote birth control on different grounds from those of the prewar population policy, and chose a direction of situating birth control in the broader context of motherhood protection. According to study committee members, the older generation of population policy-makers expressed unease about the direction in which the new generation was hoping to go. Hinoue also said that he was informed by other bureaucrats of the Ministry of Health and Welfare that, despite being impressed by their efforts, Nagai, Kitaoka and Koya wished to change the new generation’s policies, because family planning grounded on ‘happiness at home’ would take too long to exert an effect (Ōbayashi 1989: 217).

Though the New Life Movement Association consisted of the IPP, the APP, the JPPF, the Japan Planned Parenthood Association, the Housewives’ Confederation and other interested organizations, it was the APP that took a central part in the planning and implementation of the
Movement. And it was still true to say that in the APP, as in most of the groups that made up the New Life Movement, the older generation still maintained a strong influence. Every year, the APP hosted a training course for instructors (jecchi shidōin) who tutored small groups involved in the activities of the New Life Movement across Japan. There were two categories of instructors. The instructors who specialized in family planning and consultation of other issues relating to health, known as ‘family planning instructors’ (kazoku keikaku shidōin), were recruited from local midwives and public nurses and retrained by the APP. Besides them, there were the ‘life-planning instructors’ (seikatsu sekkei shidōin), who consulted housewives on such issues as home accounts, the rationalization of lifestyle, children’s education and other matters in everyday life. The life-planning instructors were generally recruited from one of two groups: ones with qualifications in social welfare (in some cases students of social welfare) or ones recommended by companies. The latter often consisted of housewives who took a leading role in small local groups (Ajia Kazoku Keikaku Fuyū Kyōkai 1959: 113; Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūkai 1963b: 1–2). In these training courses, many lecturers applied the specific ideologies, objectives or methodologies of the New Life Movement to general topics such as the family in contemporary society and social morality. The training course lecturers were as varied as were the themes and topics covered. The lecturers included specialists on population policy, birth control and the family planning movement, both from the old (Nagai Tōru, Tachi Minoru, Koya Yoshio, Katō Shizue) and new (Shinozaki Nobuo, Aoki Hisao) generations. They also included experts related to the Saving Promotion Movement conducted by the Ministry of Finance and the Bank of Japan, businessmen (from Hitachi Zōen, Nihon Kōkan and Toshiba, to name but a few), feminists (Tanino Setsu, a women’s labour policy expert and Oku Mumeo, an activist), academics (for example Kawashima Takeyoshi, an expert on Japanese Family Law) and journalists from the major newspapers. Besides these training courses, the APP hosted a series of public lectures to promote family planning and improvements in everyday life. In addition to those mentioned above, academics and (ex-)bureaucrats such as Ōkouchi Kazuo, Shimomura Hiroshi and Nasu Hiroshi and politicians such as Hashimoto Ryūgo were invited to give lectures. Yet, despite the variety of speakers, little diversity of message can be identified. The central and repeated assertion was quite simply and forcefully put: the New Life Movement existed in order to promote ‘happiness at home’; this happiness was dependent on careful family planning, and careful family planning, along with all its repercussions in the domestic and work arenas, would help create economic prosperity on familial, company and national levels. And despite the apparent diversity of speakers, the message was delivered mostly by male academics (and a few female professionals) to midwives, public nurses, company personnel and housewives, i.e. to a largely female audience. So although it could be said that the lectures balanced the
perspectives of the old and new generations of family planners-cum-population policy-makers, a significant gender imbalance between lecturers and trainees is plain to see.

The training courses ceased in 1971 when the APP withdrew from the New Life Movement (Shinozaki 1983: 118). This institutional change was the result of a number of factors. Firstly, as will be discussed in detail in the next chapter, by 1970, Japan's population trends had turned in a direction that caused anxiety over the future population structure due to a decrease in the number of live births. Hence, by the time of the APP's withdrawal, family planning that was aimed at decreasing the number of children had been sidelined as a political agenda inside the Ministry of Health and Welfare. Secondly, the APP itself had been sidelined in the population policy-making mechanism by 1970. In a publication edited by Shinozaki, it is stated that the APP played a core role in population policy-making until around 1970: it conducted basic research for discussion at the Population Problems Advisory Council, and also composed a draft for recommendations and motions submitted to the government by the Advisory Council. However, around 1970 the APP was dropped from this system, and the IPP took over the research responsibility. Thirdly, around the same time, two long-standing central actors of population policy-making and the New Life Movement passed away in 1971 and 1972 respectively (Shinozaki 1983: 82). Both Nagai and Tachi had contributed to population policy and birth control, and had been engaged in activities of the APP and the IPP since the prewar period. As a result of their deaths, the APP faced an institutional transition. Fourthly and finally, as mentioned above, the New Life Movement also underwent a change around 1970: it shifted from being a life-improvement movement aligned to company welfare policy and centred on birth control to a movement encouraging community activity.

Yet, even after the departure of the APP in the 1970s, the New Life Movement retained a structure in which academics and governmental administrative institutions, in close cooperation with companies, played an advisory role in relation to activities conducted by regional groups whose key purpose was to encourage housewives' local activities. For instance, academics and administrative institutions were core actors in the Everyday Life School, which dominated the activities of the New Life Movement in the 1970s (Ono 1976: 11). The academics and administrative institutions were expected to suggest solutions to everyday life problems raised by housewives, the main participants of the Everyday Life School. Furthermore, the Everyday Life School often organized study groups revolving around the particular problems that the School tackled, inviting professionals, academics and administrators as speakers and lecturers. In this sense, the ‘top-down’ decision-making of the Movement, in which housewives were led, enlightened and instructed by male academics and administrators, remained as a quintessential part.
Participants: constraints and empowerment for housewives

Despite the strong influence exerted by the government and academics, however, the official discourse of the Movement continuously asserted that the New Life Movement was a grassroots movement in which activists, the main players of the Movement, were autonomously involved. And in the case of the New Life Movement, the majority of activists were housewives who ran households and were involved in local community groups while their husbands were absent due to work commitments.

Right from the start the New Life Movement targeted housewives. As a life-improvement movement, the main tasks that the New Life Movement set, namely family planning and life-planning, including household management and the building up of savings, could not be implemented without the cooperation of housewives. Housewives learnt about family planning techniques from instructors trained in the courses the APP organized. They also gained additional knowledge of household management, in particular via the housekeeping books provided by the Movement, which facilitated the regulated ordering of finances and daily domestic life. Through the process of learning, housewives became competent and skilful enough to run the ‘new family system’ in which a housewife was a cultivated educator of children and the household manager. Such housewives would control the relationship with their husbands and maintain order at home (Nagai 1962: 20). Also, large housewives’ organizations, such as the Housewives’ Confederation (the Shufuren) led by Oku Mumeo and the NFRWO led by Yamataka Shigeri, took an active part in the New Life Movement and mobilized their respective members.

The emphasis on housewives’ participation remained after the New Life Movement shifted its focus of activities from life-improvement centred on family planning to community activities. The Everyday Life School clearly stated that it was a movement consisting of and run by housewives. More importantly, however, the Everyday Life School specifically restricted its participants to ‘housewives’ who were defined as ‘life-beings’ (seikatsu-sha). The School raised problems in everyday life and in local communities, and tackled those problems in cooperation with academics, administrative institutions and companies. Hence, by allowing institutional participation in society and the reclamation of initiatives as ‘life beings’ within the social and political system, the School offered housewives a path towards empowerment (Ono 1976: 10).

There were two routes of mobilization for housewives. One was a route through local women’s organizations or community groups. This was a traditional route for the life-improvement movement, and the mobilization was conducted as part of the social education programmes run by regional authorities. The other route was through large corporations mostly organized by the APP: this was the dominant route during the first half of the Movement’s life. Official documents of the New Life Movement confirm that the list of companies that joined or planned to join the New Life
Movement amounted to eighty-two in 1958 (Ajia Kazoku Keikaku Fukyū Kyōkai 1959: 249), and a hundred and seventeen in 1961 (Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūkai 1961b: hashigaki), and included such large corporations as Nihon Kōkan, Sumitomo Kinzoku Kōgyō, Sumitomo Kagaku, Kansai Denryoku, Tokyo Denryoku, Toshiba Denki, Nihon Kōkū, Ishikawajima Jūkōgyō, Hitachi Zōsen, Toyota Jidōsha, Asahi Kasei, Nihon Tsūun, Tōbu Tetsudō and so on (see Appendix C for the complete list).

The list of companies engaged with the New Life Movement makes interesting reading. The companies had three characteristics in common. Firstly, many of the listed companies were and are well-known large corporations – they were very ‘typical’ large corporations, indeed, what people generally think of as the archetypal Japanese corporations. These companies were the main players in the Japanese and world economies and have had a substantial and continuing influence on the Japanese social and political system. Secondly, most of them were in the heavy-industry sector and were the driving force behind the high economic growth of the late 1950s and 1960s. This was, in no small part, due to the companies developing international reputations in the world market. As a result of the huge revenues reaped by their international position, these companies had the financial resources to develop internal company social welfare services for their employees. Because Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) were not able to develop comparable services, better social welfare for employees added to the appeal of large corporations for potential recruits. Thirdly, these companies belonged to ‘dangerous and hazardous’ industries in which labour accidents often occurred and in which the prevention of accidents was naturally a focus for personnel management.

The New Life Movement was employed by those companies as a part of human resource management policy. By organizing the housewives of employees and instructing them in birth control methods as well as other modern housekeeping methods from health and hygiene to book-keeping and household saving, the Movement sought to turn housewives into competent, rational agents who could manage the households of company employees and create ‘happy homes’ in the fast-growing economy. Both family planning and life-planning instructors visited each employee’s home, organized small groups of housewives and provided the devices and drugs necessary for birth control; these, more often than not, subsidized by companies. They also helped housewives to arrange classes on cooking, cleaning, knitting, flower arranging and even neighbourhood etiquette (to help maintain good neighbourly relations) and provided basic medical, hygiene and childcare information, as well as instructional housekeeping manuals and books on the management of the household economy (Ajia Kazoku Keikaku Fukyū Kyōkai 1959: 138–75). In the long term, all this would benefit companies, as ‘happy homes’ stabilized employees’ everyday lives: happy employees, untroubled by financial, sexual, psychological, organizational or childcare problems at home, would be better workers.
Consequently, the Movement contributed to eliminating accidents and problems in the production system, and improved productive efficiency. In other words, by mobilizing housewives, the New Life Movement functioned as a cornerstone of the Japanese company system, and therefore a cornerstone of the Japanese nation-state in its headlong pursuit of economic development.

In this respect, the New Life Movement was a device that channelled housewives, who were in theory located outside of the production and political system, from the private domestic arena into the Japanese political economy. However, this was not the whole story. As discussed in the previous chapter, one strand of the first housewife debates in 1955 (Chapter 4), which coincided with the rise of the New Life Movement, argued the importance and value of the social participation of housewives, and the New Life Movement offered housewives the chance to develop various social and political skills in order to practise ‘social participation’ through their activities. It was housewives who organized group meetings, planned activities, identified problems in the community and sought solutions in the New Life Movement. In this process of empowerment, housewives acquired an ‘autonomous attitude’ towards everyday life and developed a sense of identity as a ‘housewife’ who had the ‘crucial’ responsibility of running a household and local community. For instance, a housewife representative from Hitachi Zōsen who participated in the training course for group leaders of the Movement at large corporations illustrates this process of empowerment:

When I first became a secretary of the group, my husband often told me off saying I was so silly to take the role since I was too incompetent to deal with such business in front of people. But he has changed, as these days he gives me some kind words like ‘what are you going to wear?’ or ‘which shoes are you going to wear?’ when I go out. I myself have been trying hard in difficult circumstances. I am really thankful for the activities of the New Life Movement. Fortunately, the company’s personnel helped us in many ways, so housewives do receive a lot of benefits without so many burdens. It has been seven years since the New Life Movement was launched, and I am very thankful for our privileged situation in which the company has been giving advice on problems that we need to tackle. However, at the same time, we think that we should not have relied on the company for such a long time. In order to make our homes a better and sound place where we can enjoy a happy everyday life, and in order to construct a future ‘bright and enjoyable in a common society’, I am making every endeavour to develop the movement further despite my poor ability.

(Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūkai 1962a: 99)

What this discourse implies is the active and positive attitude of housewives, who fully accepted their domestic role as housewives. Moreover, the
positive attitude extended to include the social and political sphere in the area of their activities. In other words, participants of the New Life Movement, housewives, consciously exploited the role of housewife as a device for social participation, even though the housewife’s role in theory belongs purely to the domestic sphere. More directly expressing her ambition for social participation as a housewife, in the same training course, a housewife representative from Tokyo Shibaura Denki (Toshiba) encapsulates these sentiments:

By receiving useful instructions and trying hard to learn, [through the activities of the New Life Movement] even housewives who used to tend to withdraw themselves into their shells are trying to build a ‘better’ home: they plan their childbirth according to their own economic and domestic situations, and provide a fewer number of children than they would have had before with an affluent life and sufficient education, and create money to spare for themselves in order to acquire culture and skills, for example, handicrafts, flower arrangement and calligraphy. … Anyway, the most precious thing is that housewives have acquired such things as awareness, autonomous spirits and minds with the ability to plan. This could be a driving force of change, not only for themselves, but also for homes, for society and at last for the nation-state. I am so delighted when I think of the possibility that this development could happen.

(Jinkô Mondai Kenkyûkai 1962a: 114–15)

To summarize, the New Life Movement was bi-directional in terms of its relationship with its participants. On the one hand, the Movement functioned as a device that channelled housewives into the Japanese political economy by transferring and proliferating certain kinds of knowledge and skills regarding housekeeping. Through the activities of the Movement, companies could extend their human resource management of employees into their everyday lives at home, and hence increase productive efficiency, and so contribute to economic growth, the primary objective of the Japanese nation-state. In this sense, housewives could be regarded as the unpaid lackeys of the Japanese nation-state, ignorant dupes of the system. On the other hand, women who joined in the activities of the New Life Movement obtained skills and knowledge as a result, and developed a sense of identity and confidence as housewives, which led them to envisage social participation and a contribution to society and politics through their very role as housewives. In this sense, they were already stepping out of the private and into the public arena, taking the first faltering steps towards social and political empowerment, albeit in a role that was externally defined and circumscribed as ‘private’, not ‘public’. Rephrasing this double-edged situation from the perspective of the housewife, as Tama points out, the New Life Movement contributed to building a self-awareness among women
of the importance of the role of housewife and mother, and, while realizing
the proliferation of the sexual division of labour in postwar families as the
normative regime of the family, it also provided opportunities for women for

The duality of constraint and empowerment remained in the activities of
the Everyday Life School, the centre of the late stage of the New Life
Movement. The Everyday Life School was deployed in local communities,
not in companies. In 1973 one senior activist of the Everyday Life School in
Suginami, Tokyo said in a round-table talk that ‘this Movement has an
ambivalent aspect, that is, being a housewife is a resource of activities as
well as a brake thereon’ (Tokyo-to Shinseikatsu Undō Kyōkai 1973: 88).

As such, the power dynamics between the various agents of the New Life
Movement, i.e. the masterminds of the Movement, the national and sub-
national governments, companies and participants did not work in a
uniform way, but rather in multiple and interactive ways. In order to discuss
the political significance of the New Life Movement further, the section
below introduces examples of activities of the Movement in detail, and
describes the power relations between the agents involved. Examples can be
roughly divided into two categories. One example is taken from the activities
of the New Life Movement at Nihon Kōkan and the other from activities
based in two local communities, of which one is an example from Tokyo and
the other from a relatively rural area, Yamaguchi prefecture.24

Activities

Activities at companies: Nihon Kōkan

As discussed above, Nihon Kōkan25 was involved in the New Life Movement
from its inception. In 1954 and 1955, the Minister of Education, Matsumura
Kenzō and the Minister of Health and Welfare, Kawasaki Shūji, attended the
general meetings of the New Life Movement at Nihon Kōkan, and their atten-
dance signalled the national development of the New Life Movement
supported by the national government (Shinozaki 1983: 115). The activities at
Nihon Kōkan have been discussed in the literature on the New Life Movement
(Ajia Kazoku Keikaku Fukyū Kyōkai 1959; Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūkai 1960:
206–12; Shinozaki 1983: 115–16). In fact the New Life Movement Association
themselves published a detailed report on the activities carried out at the Nihon
Kōkan. This was written by Kanda Michinori, who was a journalist working
for a major newspaper as well as a member of the board of directors of the

It was a keen concern with human resources management that drove
Nihon Kōkan to engage in the New Life Movement. According to a
company document, the New Life Movement took a different approach
from traditional labour management that only paid attention to employees
and ignored their homes. In order to build an effective labour force for
tomorrow’s production, the company needed to provide employees with ‘warm hands’ (atatakai te), though it would be inappropriate to use the expression of ‘intervening in employees’ everyday lives’. Everyday life at home significantly affected tomorrow’s labour in terms of safety, hygiene, efficiency and production. Hence, it became essential for the company to include the housewives of employees in their human resources management policy. As a result, housewives would acquire all the knowledge and necessary skills to enable them to ‘rationalize’ (gōrika) everyday life, and construct ‘bright and enjoyable homes’ (Shinozaki 1983: 115–16).

In terms of specifics, the New Life Movement at Nihon Kōkan dealt with the following items. First and foremost, it placed the issue of ‘family planning’ at the centre of the agenda. According to its policy, it was an ‘individual freedom’ to have any number of children. But if an individual had more children than her or his ability to cope with, then that would impede the children from having a good education, and also cause more problems at home, for example, arguments between couples that would destroy their happiness and reduce the quality of their home life. Hence, the planners of the New Life Movement at Nihon Kōkan, that is, the personnel of the Welfare Department, situated family planning at the heart of its activities, and the IPP, APP, and even Nagai Tōru himself, cooperated with Nihon Kōkan’s enterprise (Shinseikatsu Undō Kyōkai 1958b: 97–100).

Actual activities targeting family planning were initiated by a survey on employees’ birth control practices. Eight hundred households in the company’s residences were chosen to be questioned about their everyday practices of birth control. According to a document published by the New Life Movement Association, the survey clearly showed the following four points. Firstly, housewives were generally worried about the number of children they had, in particular in households with more than three children. Secondly, women often resorted to abortions to deal with unwanted pregnancies. Thirdly, the survey showed that a high proportion of housewives expressed anxiety over the possibility of pregnancy, and also suffered from physical disorders caused by pregnancy. Fourthly, the problems relating to pregnancy and childbirth mentioned above were largely derived from a lack of knowledge concerning contraception, or from unreliable contraceptive methods that were dependent on the actions of the male partner. Summarizing these results, the document maintains that the survey demonstrated the necessity of focusing upon family planning among housewives, and that the New Life Movement was never ‘imposed’, but rather ‘eagerly demanded’ by the participants (Shinseikatsu Undō Kyōkai 1958b: 100–3).

Based on the survey, the company initiated enlightenment activities by distributing newsletters among housewives, in which cartoons on family planning were printed with other kinds of information regarding life improvement. Also, small groups were created in order to carry out the different activities of the movement. One caretaker was chosen for every five households, and female instructors (midwives re-trained in the courses
organized by the APP for the New Life Movement) visited the groups or individual households to train their audiences in the methods and techniques of family planning. The instructors consulted each housewife in order to provide the right information about pregnancy and childbirth and distributed devices and medicine for birth control. As a result of these enthusiastic efforts, within two years of the initiation of the Movement, the rate of family planning practices among employees’ households rose sharply, and consequently, the number of abortions dropped due to an increase in the successful use of contraception (Shinseikatsu Undō Kyōkai 1958: 195–8; Ajia Kazoku Keikaku Fukyū Kyōkai 1959: 154 and 199–201).

Besides family planning, the New Life Movement at Nihon Kōkan also engaged in activities that transferred knowledge and skills to housewives regarding housekeeping: from practical skills such as flower arranging, cooking or sewing to a more general knowledge of budgeting, saving, health, hygiene and training and educating children. Each small group autonomously planned its own activities, chose tutors and lecturers for its meetings, and organized meetings to improve housekeeping skills. Significantly, these activities included areas of social education which advocated certain social morals and values. For example, ‘rationalization’, which referred to eliminating old-fashioned practices, such as the ritual exchanges of gifts, and introducing the ‘scientific’ methodology of hygiene and nutrition, was one of the most heavily emphasized objectives of the New Life Movement as the basis for a ‘happy’ home. ‘The family’, especially being good, kind mothers and fathers, and cooperation inside the family, was also promoted, as a good home was the foundation stone of a good society, and indispensable for raising good children. As a part of the promotion of the family, small groups of housewives went on tours of Nihon Kōkan’s factories in order to learn about their husbands’ work and workplace. These were welcomed by employees as ‘due to the visit, services provided by wives at home improved’ (Shinseikatsu Undō Kyōkai 1958: 130). In this sense, it could be said that the New Life Movement provided the agenda and guidelines for a reorganization of the postwar nuclear family of employees.

Finally, the New Life Movement at Nihon Kōkan established ‘Life Consultation Centres’ where female lawyers and counsellors appointed by the company, along with ‘life-consultants’ who were also trained in the courses organized by the APP, provided housewives with professional advice on problems in everyday life. The life consultants also made regular visits to employees’ households in order to prevent problems from becoming too serious by identifying difficulties at an early stage (Ajia Kazoku Keikaku Fukyū Kyōkai 1959: 155–6).

In these activities, housewives were not only the main participants but were also given a chance to join in decision-making at higher levels of the Movement with the welfare personnel of the company. In the organizational structure, although the company trained instructors for the Movement and established the secretariat of the New Life Movement inside its organiza-
tion, composed of the personnel of the company welfare office, many housewives were appointed as leaders of regional groups or members of steering committees at both regional and central levels, including four vice chairpersons of the central committee. While the members of the central committee held meetings with representatives from the company, the APP, the IPP and other interested parties such as company hospitals, leaders of each activity group organized meetings and activities of the New Life Movement autonomously. They also held neighbourhood leaders’ meetings once a month, and regional ones several times a year. All the meetings were linked, with housewives as the participants of the meetings. This implies a mechanism that channelled the requests and needs of the grassroots membership, namely housewives, to the central committee, where, as already stated, they also had a physical presence. (See Figure 5.1 for the organizational structure of the New Life Movement at the Nihon Kōkan.)

With the enthusiasm of the company, backing from the APP and the IPP and a well-designed organization, the New Life Movement at Nihon Kōkan was a great success, and this was officially recognized by the Minister of Health and Welfare in 1955 at the International Convention on Family Planning. Through the practices of the Movement, the number of births

Figure 5.1 The organizational structure
halved between 1954 and 1957, and the number of abortions fell by one-fifth during the same period (Shinseikatsu Undō Kyōkai 1958: 135–6). At the same time industrial accidents decreased, the number of absences and late arrivals fell, and the savings of employees’ households increased enormously. In general, the management of employees’ everyday lives at home became ‘better’ after the introduction of the New Life Movement, and this resulted in a ‘better’ company performance. This success, clearly demonstrated in the New Life Movement’s statistics, led to the Movement’s introduction into other sites of Nihon Kōkan across Japan under the supervision of company headquarters, and the Movement developed its activities, according to an official document of the New Life Movement Association, not only at one site of one company but also in each regional community (Shinseikatsu Undō Kyōkai 1958b: 136). The experience of Nihon Kōkan was also replicated in other large corporations, for example Hitachi Zōsen, Tokyo Denryoku and Toyota, as an innovative way of managing employees (Tokyo Denryoku Kabushiki Kaisha 1959: 101–6).

**Activities in local communities**

**Yamaguchi prefecture**

The New Life Movement in Yamaguchi prefecture, which is located in the southwest end of Honshū island, was initiated under the leadership of the prefectural authority. In a radio broadcast given in 1954, the deputy governor encouraged farmers to create ‘new villages’ through the ‘new-born movement’. The governor then published his memorandum to mayors and village chiefs stating that the prefectural authority was committed to the ‘creation of new villages’ as a foundation of prefectural agriculture policy and would utilize the ‘new-born movement’ in order to promote the policy (Nakahara 1992: 83).

Japanese agricultural villages were in crisis around that time. Although the postwar land reform had been implemented in order to modernize the industrial structure, agriculture was marginalized in the policy system of a national government that was aimed at economic recovery and development, which of course necessitated the allocation of major resources to key industries, such as coal and steel-making. Under this policy, the rice price was artificially suppressed, with a resultant loss in income for farmers, and consequently, households in agricultural villages faced the necessity for a reorganization of everyday life and the community environment. This led some villages in Yamaguchi prefecture to organize the ‘new-born movement’, which, encouraged by the local authority and triggered by the national politics of the time, gradually integrated into the New Life Movement (Nakahara 1992: 83).

This background of the initiation of the New Life Movement influenced actual practices of the Movement in Yamaguchi. Although the Yamaguchi
Movement was concerned with issues central to the wider Movement, namely family planning, public hygiene, improvement in nutrition and health conditions and the rationalization of old-fashioned customs, the revival of communities through the reorganization of agricultural production was particularly focused upon in the early stages. For example, in one district, young farmers cooperated in attempting to change their productive structure by transforming traditional paddy fields into citrus orchards. This kind of enterprise was carried out in cooperation with local authorities (relating to agriculture and social education), life-improvement instructors (the New Life Movement) and agriculture improvement promoters authorized by the administration. And it was young village leaders, normally young men, rather than housewives, who played the central role on the community’s side.32

It was the Everyday Life School organized in the mid-1960s that brought housewives to the center stage of the New Life Movement in Yamaguchi. As with the Everyday Life Schools in other areas, the housewives were considered as central to the School’s activities, and the local authorities, administrative organizations, professionals and private companies made some commitments as ‘professional’ members to supplement and support the activities of the housewives. In the case of Yamaguchi, the Everyday Life School paid attention not only to ‘life’ but also to production, as most of the participants were housewives of households engaging in agriculture, and in this sense, they were ‘producers’ as well as ‘consumers’.33 Yet, this unique approach in Yamaguchi was never developed fully before the New Life Movement ceased its activities. After the dissolution of the New Life Movement, however, some activities of the Everyday Life School were developed into the cooperative (co-op) movement, which continues to tackle issues such as consumption, public services and product liability in Yamaguchi (Nakahara 1992: 87).34

The Tokyo metropolitan area

The New Life Movement in the Tokyo metropolitan area was born soon after the Hatoyama cabinet endorsed the Movement in 1955. The Board of Education in Tokyo asked the Social Education Committee for advice regarding the implementation of the New Life Movement in Tokyo, and organized cross-departmental meetings among sections and departments relating to the New Life Movement inside the Tokyo Metropolitan Office. As a result the Tokyo New Life Movement Council was established in order to promote and support the implementation of the Movement.35 The objective of the Movement was to make Tokyo a bright and comfortable place to live by improving the quality of life of its residents. For this purpose, the New Life Movement in Tokyo set an agenda to promote scientification, rationalization, the renewal of the everyday life environment, the promotion of public morals and, most importantly, the democratization of everyday
life. In practice, in its early stages, the Movement dealt with the issue of keeping the city clean, especially around the time of the Olympic Games held in Tokyo in 1964. From the mid-1960s to the 1970s, some Everyday Life Schools were formed in Tokyo and tackled consumer issues and pollution problems (Tokyo-to Shinseikatsu Undō Kyōkai 1973: 3–22).

One significant example of New Life Movement activities was the cooperation of a league of seven Everyday Life Schools in Suginami ward that tackled problems caused by the smog, a predominant issue in late 1960s and 1970s Japan. Everyday Life Schools in Suginami had a wealth of experience in engaging in investigations of problems relating to garbage disposal in the region. The smog was taken up as the next issue. With the benefit of the previous experience and support of professionals (journalists or scientists), housewives in Suginami ward conducted detailed examinations of the smog situation in their region by collecting data, and even made an urgent request to the Environment Agency to take effective measures against the air pollution, based on their data (Tokyo-to Shinseikatsu Undō Kyōkai 1973: 31–9).

Compared to issues concerning the environment surrounding everyday life, family planning was marginalized in the activities of the New Life Movement in Tokyo. This was in no small part due to the idiosyncratic nature of the New Life Movement in Tokyo. The traditional New Life Movement attempted to rationalize and modernize everyday life. In this sense, the New Life Movement was essentially an enlightenment facilitator for regions that had been ‘left behind’ in the modernization, technological and cultural ‘advancement’ process. Family planning was something that demonstrated this situation. As the statistics traditionally showed, the practice of family planning was more common among people in cities who had access to greater financial and intellectual resources than people in rural regions. Therefore, the New Life Movement’s focus on the rationalization of everyday life, especially through family planning, did not suit the situation and demands in Tokyo. However, as the New Life Movement shifted its agenda, and Everyday Life Schools, which typically dealt with issues concerning the environment and consumption, became the core part of the Movement, the New Life Movement in Tokyo found a new direction for its activities, namely the ‘creation of community’. This required the autonomous participation of residents in solving issues in everyday life, such as those relating to the environment, medical services, or product liability. In this respect, as academics in a round-table organized by the Tokyo New Life Movement Association pointed out, the New Life Movement in Tokyo converged with the residents’ movements, which arose spontaneously as a reaction to the negative effects of economic development in the late 1960s.

**Summary: the New Life Movement as medium apparatus**

In sum, the New Life Movement was initially a movement in which housewives, companies and policy-making agents (on a national and sub-
national level) worked hand-in-hand to create ‘good subjects’ of the newly emerging postwar Japanese nation-state. It was aimed at improvements in and the rationalization of everyday life, with a special emphasis on family planning, and the concern with family planning brought the eugenic agenda into the Movement surreptitiously.

In this sense, the New Life Movement was a ‘medium apparatus’ in governmentality, which helped realize the postwar reproductive system discussed in the previous chapter. In the postwar reproductive system, a certain form of family, constituted by a couple in the sexual division of labour with two children, appeared to be predominant. It was certainly favoured by the population policy which attempted to control the quantity and quality of the next generation, and the social policy and women’s labour policy which appeared to prevent women’s participation in the labour market in a form other than that of part-time workers dependent on male breadwinners. We might add that this reproductive system reinforces the tripartite analytical framework of biological reproduction, economic reproduction and socio-political reproduction, as it minimized social risks and maintained economic rationality, and in doing so, contributed to the realization of the ideal of postwar socio-political reproduction, that is, Japan becoming an economic superpower in the world. The New Life Movement softened the environment in which this reproductive system functioned through encouraging the creation of the postwar family system. It provided housewives with concrete knowledge and skills that were quintessential in the creation of a ‘good postwar family’ through ‘good’ biological and economic reproduction; and this process was mediated by private companies or regional and local organizations. Hence the New Life Movement contributed to the socio-political reproduction of Japan within an emerging high-growth political economy. In sum, through the New Life Movement, the postwar reproductive system had been consolidated as a part of people’s everyday life.

However, the Movement shifted the direction of its activities in its later stage by developing the Everyday Life Schools in the 1970s. In cooperation with local authorities, it started to pay more attention to local and community activities which, although always a current of the movement, had never been the central one for the New Life Movement in its early stages when it was dominated by corporations. The Everyday Life Schools provided opportunities for housewives to engage in social activities, often giving them the chance to negotiate everyday life issues with local authorities. Although the New Life Movement officially ended in the early 1980s, these local activities of the New Life Movement were taken over by various residents’ movements or consumer movements which were in time prepared to show their presence and flex their muscles in the political arena.

The New Life Movement consolidated the postwar reproductive system and the trajectory of the Movement demonstrates the dualism of constraint and empowerment alluded to earlier: the movement imposed a certain
behaviour pattern on people’s everyday life whilst simultaneously facilitating a form of empowerment via the proliferating of the multitude of skills and techniques needed to develop social movements. In the concluding chapter we will discuss further the tri-dimensional reproductive system from this perspective of the dualism of constraint and empowerment. Before that, the next chapter examines the situation from the mid-1970s to the present, during which the once-consolidated postwar reproductive system appears to be destabilized due to the transition of the political, economic and social structure.
6 Reproduction in the period of economic stagnation

Introduction: crises, risks and self-responsibility

In 1978, the Japanese translation of John K. Galbraith’s *Age of Uncertainty* (1977) was listed as a best-selling title, and sold more than 500,000 copies in six months. As a result, the Japanese term for ‘Age of Uncertainty’, *fukakujitsusei no jidai*, became a buzz term of the year. Explaining the background to this popularity, an article in the *Yomiuri Shinbun* that looks back on postwar best-selling books points out that Galbraith’s book won the hearts of ‘Japanese businessmen and other adults’ as a useful handbook in a period in which export industries had suffered a blow from the rising yen and the bankruptcy of many SMEs: that is to say, the future was perceived to be uncertain for many people (*Yomiuri Shinbun* Evening Edition 27 February 1996).

A decade earlier, in 1968, Japan had consolidated its position as the world economic power, recording the second biggest GNP per capita after the US. However, by the early 1970s, the negative effects of rapid economic development, for example pollution, over-development and over-crowding in cities, became visible, and started to affect people’s lives directly. Following this, the success of the Japanese economy experienced an interruption, due to the oil crisis of 1973, which also affected other industrially developed countries. Combined with a series of rises in the value of the yen initiated by the Nixon shock and souring trade conflicts, the oil crisis worsened inflation, and rapid rises in consumer prices strengthened the popular feeling of uncertainty over the future (Ishikawa 1995: 129–31). Furthermore, as a well-known picture of housewives rushing to supermarkets to get rolls of toilet paper implies, the oil crisis in 1973 was experienced at the level of everyday life in the context of the shortage of necessary commodities, as was the case after the Second World War. All in all, the oil crises in the mid-1970s appeared to be a disjunctive point. If the first half of the postwar period is symbolized by the rising economic power of the Japanese state, the second half, starting in the mid-1970s, is marked by a series of troubles and economic setbacks that brought about confusion and uncertainty to the Japanese state, economy and everyday life, and the oil crises appeared to
mark a turning point. Within a decade, from 1968 to 1978, via oil shocks, the popular mood of Japanese society turned from optimism to perplexity and anxiety, leading many people to seek inspiration from Galbraith’s book in order to cope with the uncertainty.

Yet, compared to its North American and Western European counterparts, the Japanese economy survived the crises in the mid-1970s relatively well, and returned to a more moderate growth path within a few years. Indeed, through the 1980s and early 1990s, the Japanese presence in the international political economy expanded to the extent that it appeared to be a challenge to the existing hegemonic structure. Vogel, in retrospect prematurely, declared an approaching *Pax Nipponica* in the twenty-first century (Vogel 1986; Hook, Gilson, Hughes and Dobson 2001). The Japanese populace also enjoyed a rise in economic power via the expansion of consumer spending. Consumerism in Japan reached maturity in the mid-1980s, and the bubble economy in the late 1980s and early 1990s that resulted from rocketing prices of land and shares certainly contributed to luxury spending for some strata, though not all, in Japanese society.

In the mid-1990s, however, there was another twist, and the requirement for further transitions overwhelmed the Japanese political economy. The bubble economy finally burst in the early 1990s, and the Japanese economy has since been stuck in serious stagnation. Many large corporations that had previously represented the momentum of the Japanese economy abroad collapsed, and major banks and key economic institutions were crippled by non-performing loans created during the bubble economy. Simultaneously, the process of globalization started to have a visible impact on the economy, and the idea of ‘global standard’ was used to pose some questions regarding conventional economic ideas and practices. The problems and transitions in the performance of the Japanese economy resulted in the downsizing of companies (in Japanese ‘risutorakucharingu’ (restructuring) or ‘risutora’ in short), pushing the unemployment rate to its highest level in the postwar period. The downsizing also generated anxieties over everyday life. On top of this, the sense of uncertainty was further intensified by two unpredictable incidents, more precisely one natural disaster and one human act – namely the Kobe earthquake and the sarin attacks by the religious cult Aum from 1994 to 1995. National politics, however, did not respond effectively to such a critical situation. After the LDP’s one-party dominance collapsed in 1993, a number of coalition governments, as well as new political parties, were organized. Nonetheless, while splits and alignments of political parties and politicians generated public attention, the LDP remained the core power in the coalition governments to follow, with the exception of the period from 1993 to 1995. Compared to the persistence of the LDP, the opposition parties had been struggling to establish their profiles in the political system. Prior to the 2003 general election, the Conservative Party, led by ex-LDP politicians, merged into the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), which many ex-JSP politicians had joined in. Furthermore, the bureaucracy which
formerly symbolized the efficient Japanese system was undermined by the exposure of a series of political scandals involving multiple powerful ministries such as the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to name but a few. At both domestic and international levels, they lost their credibility. In the meantime, no political measure to ameliorate the economic situation was effectively implemented. While John Dunn describes Japanese politics of this period as ‘political paralysis’ (Dunn 2002), the ‘lost decade’, a popularized phrase referring to this period, has become widely accepted both inside and outside Japan. In a sense, the Japanese state and society faced another ‘age of uncertainty’, twenty years later, and indeed, the term fukakujitsusei no jidai has had a revival in the mass media.

As Lupton rightly indicates through a discussion of various contemporary social theories, the transition from modernity to late- or post-modernity increased the sense of uncertainty by destabilizing and challenging existing ideas, norms, values and practices, and this tendency contributed to a proliferation of the concept and language of ‘risk’ in popular and expert discourse. Originally, the modern concept of ‘risk’ could be differentiated from that of ‘uncertainty’. While ‘risk, in its purely technical meaning, came to rely upon conditions in which the probability estimates of an event are able to be known or knowable’, uncertainty ‘was used as an alternative term when these probabilities are inestimable or unknown’ (Lupton 1999: 7). Yet by the end of the twentieth century, the distinction between risk and uncertainty had been lost, along with the other distinction between ‘good risk’ and ‘bad risk’, and today risk merely ‘denotes a phenomenon that has the potential to deliver substantial harm, whether or not the probability of this harm eventuating is estimable’ (Lupton 1999: 9). Therefore, ‘attempts to tame uncertainty’ characteristic of late modernity result in increasing apprehension of risk in industrially developed societies.

The overall sense of uncertainty in Japan from the late 1970s onwards, in particular from the 1990s onwards, suggests that Japanese society shares the experience of the proliferation of risk discussed in contemporary social theories. Indeed, the notion of risk has been incorporated into expert and everyday vocabularies, in an attempt to articulate dangers and problems which individuals encounter in the process of constructing their own lives in an uncertain and changing society. Importantly, through these negotiations of the meaning of risk in contemporary Japanese society, the postwar family, based as it was on the postwar reproductive system, previously a unit of security, now appears to be a major risk in everyday life. For instance, in referring to Giddens’ discussion on the transformation of intimacy in high modernity (1992), Yamada Masahiro, a family sociologist, maintains that forming a family has become a risky business in contemporary Japan in the following two senses. Firstly, the family has become a financial risk, in the sense that the financial burdens and dangers of forming a family are increasing. On the one hand, the economic foundation for everyday life has weakened, as the economic stagnation has made pay rises slow, and employment has become
more unstable. On the other hand, the social cost of taking care of dependents, namely children and the elderly, has increased substantially. Given these circumstances, forming a family signifies for each individual taking a risk that might be expected to lower the standard of living and potentially threaten their survival. Secondly, along with other industrially developed countries, the family is no longer a stable unit to which individuals are required to belong throughout their lives. The greater the significance of the emotional bond that ties members of the family together is emphasized, ironically, the more the family reveals its nature as a voluntary and emotional unit, which could also be voluntarily dissolved when the affection between family members disappears (Yamada 2001: 23–6).

As discussed in the previous chapters, the postwar family system formed the basis for reproducing not only each family, but also the national economy and state, by contributing to the maintenance of security and stability for each person. Now, this premise appears to be jeopardized in a new situation in which even the family is considered as a risk factor within individuals’ lives. Responding to this transition in the meaning of risk, it is indeed individuals, not the family or the welfare state, who are now posited as agents for coping with various risks in everyday lives through the rhetoric of ‘self-responsibility’ (jiko sekinin). On many different occasions, from buying financial packages to choosing pension schemes, and from deciding medical treatment to organizing education for children, contemporary Japanese are required to make autonomous choices as capable agents by resorting to necessary knowledge and calculating risks (M. Kaneko 1999: 32–44; Ōsawa 2002a: 167–73).

This chapter examines how the transition to late-modernity in Japan from the mid-1970s onwards has influenced the way that the tri-dimensional reproductive system, as discussed in previous chapters, functions. More concretely, it will discuss whether the postwar reproductive system has changed in response to shifts in the political, economic and social conditions and the increased sense of uncertainty and risk caused by them, and if so, how it has changed or not changed. In this analysis, the whole period from the mid-1970s onwards will be considered, though the focus will be placed on the period of the ‘lost decade’.

**The individualization of the family**

A TV drama, *Kishibe no Arubamu* (‘An Album on a Riverbank’), broadcast in 1977, is often mentioned as a turning point in the way that the family is conceived in popular imagination in postwar Japan. The story concerned a ‘typical’ family in the sense of what Ochiai calls the postwar family system (Chapter 4), which consisted of a father working for a large trading firm, a full-time housewife mother, a university student daughter, and a son who goes to a prep school (yobikō). As the drama developed, viewers learnt through the son’s eyes that each family member had a hidden face that the
others did not even imagine, and a family that seemed to be an example of a happy nuclear family in postwar Japan was, in reality, on the verge of collapse. For example, the salaried father was assigned to a job involving the trafficking of women from Southeast Asian countries to work in Japanese bars at his trading company, while the mother started an affair with a stranger, and a foreigner raped the daughter. The drama ended with a symbolic scene in which the family’s home was swept away by wild river water caused by a typhoon. According to my-homeism (mai hōmu shugi), prevalent in the 1960s and early 1970s, while building a family home had been a dream that many Japanese postwar families were driven to achieve, a demolished family home in a typhoon represented a collapsed family, vulnerable to accidents. In this respect, there was a stark difference between the drama Kishibe no Arubamu and the so-called ‘home drama’, which won popularity among the Japanese in the 1960s and the early 1970s. The main theme of the home drama was, as some critics have shown, the harmonious relationships and emotional ties within the family (Hirahara 1991: 258–60; Sakamoto 1997: 205–7). As Sakamoto points out, the home drama served to propagate a homogeneous narrative of the family, in particular among women, in a period when more people were driven to form their own middle-class nuclear families and more women were led to become competent housewives (Sakamoto 1997: 355–79). Some years later, Kishibe no Arubamu put forward a completely different picture of the family; this time a nuclear one that was fragmented and individualized, and this served as a declaration of the end of the golden age of the postwar family system. Indeed, from the late 1970s onwards, the themes of TV family dramas as well as other forms of popular representations (comics, novels, films etc.) shifted to extra-marital affairs, divorce, the delinquent behaviour of children, and conflicts and the lack of communication between family members.

The transition in the popular representation of the family corresponds to shifts of popular recognition regarding the reality surrounding Japanese families. Firstly, family-related statistics started to change around the 1970s. For example, according to a document entitled ‘Basic Ideas for a Society with Fewer Children’, issued by the Population Problem Advisory Council, in 1995 the total fertility rate started to decline from 2.1 in 1970 to 1.42, and the number of childbirths went down from over two million to 1.2 million. Correspondingly, the national population began to age more rapidly. The population of over sixty-fives was 7 percent around 1970, but became 15 percent in 1995 (Jinkō Mondai Shingikai 1997). Moreover, while the marriage rate started to decline rapidly, from approximately 10 percent in 1970 to 5.7 percent in 1995, the divorce rate gradually increased from just below 1 percent in 1970 to 1.78 percent (Inoue and Ehara 1999: 10–17). Referring to the discussion over the second demographic change that took place in European countries, Ochiai sees the Japanese case as sharing common demographic characteristics with European countries, namely the fall in marriage rates and birth rates as well as the increase in divorce rates.
Unlike in Britain, the US and Scandinavian countries, however, birth rates out of wedlock in Japan remained roughly the same – approximately 1 percent – as they had been in the 1950s (Kōseishō 1998). Notwithstanding the exception, the statistical changes from the 1970s onwards certainly demonstrate that the form of the Japanese family has diversified, as happened in European and North American countries. In other words, the postwar homogeneous pattern of the Japanese family, i.e. the postwar family system discussed in the previous chapter, has clearly been destabilized (Ochiai 1997a: 230–44).

Secondly, problematic and conflictual relationships within the ‘ordinary’ family were disclosed through violent incidents reported in the mass media, and the popular presupposition that the family was a harmonious and happy unit was severely challenged from the late 1970s onwards. The increase in violent acts perpetrated by children against their parents raised particular public awareness after a number of murder cases, especially in 1977 and 1980, along with the abuse case at a private educational institution for children with ‘deviant behaviour’.¹ In 1980, the then Prime Minister’s Office commissioned a national survey of 1,051 cases of domestic violence (Hisatake, Kainō, Wakao and Yoshida 1997: 136). Its focus on violent acts of children at home did not, however, mean that the vulnerability of the family was only expressed through ‘problematic behaviour’ on the part of children. Rather, a series of problems concerning the family and children came into the public arena through post-1970s mass-media discourse. Vocabulary terms describing the pathology of the family, for example ‘illness originated in mother’ (bogenbyō),² the mother complex, the spread of school bullying, school absenteeism/refusal (tōkō kyohi) and child-rearing-anxiety (ikuji fuan) were introduced into everyday conversation. This trend was further intensified from the 1990s to the present, where demographic changes that indicated the decline of the postwar family system became apparent. As words such as ‘self-confined youth in one’s room’ (hikikomori), domestic violence (between couples),³ child abuse (jidō gyakutai), juvenile prostitution (shōjo baishun), ‘extra-marital affairs boom’ (furin bùmu) and delayed marriage (bankonka), to name but a few, became regarded as hot topics, so the vulnerability of the postwar family was revealed to the public eye.

Thirdly, ideological challenges to the postwar family system were again launched in the early 1970s. From the late 1960s to the early 1970s, the second wave of feminist movements, more popularly known as ‘women’s liberation movements’, blossomed across industrially developed countries, and Japan was no exception to this worldwide trend. As with movements elsewhere, the Japanese women’s liberation movements (in Japanese, ūman ribu) raised questions as to the conventional patterns, ideas and practices of women’s lives and femininity. In particular, the family became the focus of this ideological challenge, since the fundamental cause of women’s disadvantaged positions in society, economy and state was attributed to the familial roles of women, namely that of mothers and wives. Women’s familial roles...
established a normative framework for women’s personal and social lives. On this understanding, women’s liberation movements confronted the ideas of the sexual division of labour, motherhood, family, sexuality and femininity itself, while claiming reproductive rights, which will be discussed in the next section. It would, however, be misleading to describe the Japanese women’s liberation movement merely as being imported from other industrially advanced countries, in particular from the US (Buckley 1994: 172–3). As Ueno rightly points out, by the time the women’s liberation movement was organized in Japan, the sense of frustration towards the regulatory framework of the postwar family system and femininity was already being shared by many Japanese women, old and young, and therefore there was a basis for the women’s liberation movement developing as a mass movement (1994: 235–6). For example, as a main player of the movement writes in 1996, one current of the Japanese women’s liberation movement was borne out of student contestation in the late 1960s, questioning the sexual division of labour within the student movement. As could be also observed in the US case, within the organizations of the student movement, creative and mainstream work such as writing, addressing and organizing was generally undertaken by male students and ‘exceptional’ female students, and care work, i.e. making meals, washing, and even taking the role of a sexual partner, was usually assigned to female students. Some Japanese female students eventually started to challenge such practices, and their experience in the student protest movements formed the basis for sympathy with women’s liberation movements (Mori 1996: 164–71). Women’s personal experience from their own families also provided common ground for collective action. Women in different generations and circumstances expressed their empathy with an oft-cited phrase written on a placard in a mass demonstration, which read ‘mother, does marriage offer happiness?’ This, however, resulted in a twist in the Japanese women’s liberation movement. As Ochiai observes, the term ‘family’, insofar as it was challenged by the Japanese women’s liberation movement, subsumed both the characteristics of the modern family and remnants of the traditional model of the family. Accordingly, the notion of romantic love, an object of rigorous scrutiny and deconstruction in the second wave of feminism in the US and Western Europe as a central component of the modern family, was pursued somewhat actively in Japan in order to oppose traditional elements of the postwar family, namely women’s subordinate positions in the extended family and the other remaining morals of the traditional ‘ie’ model of the family (Ochiai 1997a: 140).

As such, the women’s liberation movement in the early 1970s publicly displayed opposition to the conventional family and to women’s life patterns. They scrutinized the myths of postwar nuclear families, motherhood and romantic love; quintessential elements of the postwar family system. The collective activities to support women who committed infanticide, as well as lone parents, and the attempts to form child-bearing
communes, were just some examples of the concrete manifestation of the political agenda of deconstructing the family through women’s movements. The women’s liberation movement in the 1970s, nonetheless, settled down after the World Conference on Women in Mexico in 1975, which many activists of the women’s liberation movement attended, but women’s grass-roots movements and the academic efforts of developing ‘women’s studies’ in Japan were fashioned upon such experiences.

However, the influence of the women’s liberation movement on the popular patterns of forming families in Japan appeared to be rather obscure. Around the same time, the Japanese mass media hailed the emergence of a new type of family, the so-called ‘New Family’ (nyū famirī). The ‘New Family’ supposedly presented a new lifestyle for a nuclear family, and it was the generation which had experienced the student protests and women’s liberation movement that formed the New Family. According to Ochiai, the New Family demonstrates the following discontinuity from the previous model of the family. Firstly, the relationship between a couple in the New Family was displayed as being entirely emotional and romantic in nature. As compared to the conventional idea of marriage in Japan that was often arranged by negotiations between two families, the New Family couples married for love, and married life was based on a romantic relationship. Secondly, the relationship between husband and wife also appeared to be more equal and democratic than that of the married couple in the previous periods. New Family couples often began their relationships at school and work, with the result that the age gap between the couples became narrower, and the relationships of the New Family couples remained somewhat friend-like. Equality was also applied to the areas of financial and domestic responsibility. Many wives of the New Family kept their jobs after marriage until their first child was born, while domestic work was said to be shared between couples. Thirdly, the New Family was represented mainly through a particular lifestyle, defined by consumer behaviour. To put it more precisely, the New Family was a term used for the marketing of luxurious and stylish consumer goods and lifestyle, for example wine, jeans, dining tables and eating out on a regular basis. In contrast to the previous generations that had to strive to attain everyday necessities, the New Family emerged in an affluent society where consumption had become an expression of taste and lifestyle, rather than a measure of survival (Ochiai 1997a: 142–7).

All in all, the New Family was a type of nuclear family unit in which each member was tied to the other through emotional bonds, formed an intimate and comfortable space separate from other families and enjoyed tasteful consumption. In this respect, as Ochiai concludes, the New Family resembles the model of the modern family. The presentation of the New Family was clearly antithetical to the traditional ‘ie’ model of the family, but the problems of the modern family raised by the women’s liberation movements in the US and Western Europe remained intact throughout the emergence of the New Family. In fact, the New Family quickly disappeared from the
public scene, as the arrival of children drove them away from the expensive lifestyle of the New Family into eventual absorption by the model of the postwar family system (Ochiai 1997a: 151–6).

Interestingly, the wives of the New Family started to show clear antipathy towards the postwar family system in the 1980s, distancing themselves from their families. On the one hand, the 1980s were called the ‘age of women’ (onna no jidai), in which housewives’ participation in social and economic areas became more apparent. While from 1975 onwards the number of working married women started to become more than half of all working women, the number of housewives stopped increasing in the early 1980s, and the ratio of the joint-income household recorded about 50 percent of married couples in the age group thirty to fifty (Inoue and Ehara 1999: 92–3). Furthermore, many women started to take initiatives in social activities in communities, and local movements such as cooperative and consumer movements and local preservation movements expanded significantly. On the other hand, the antipathy towards the postwar family system was also displayed through social and psychological ‘problems’ regarding the family. Terms such as ‘housewife blues’ (tsuma-tachi no shishunki) and ‘domestic divorce’ (kateinai rikon) were coined to describe a multitude of problems within families that resulted from frustration and discontentment among housewives, often displayed through alcoholism and sexual problems. Ueno maintains that these terms exposed the reality of Japanese families, which kept a high degree of institutional stability in terms of low divorce rates and birth rates out of wedlock, but which were in effect being eroded from within (Ueno 1994: 225). Indeed, extra-marital affairs (furin in Japanese, literally meaning ‘non-moral’) became a buzzword in the Japan of the 1980s, triggered by a popular TV series based around the love affairs of housewives outside/inside of marriage. Whether housewives actually had extra-marital affairs or not, this popular attention to extra-marital relationships in the 1980s implies, at least, psychological demands for individualization, i.e. escaping from the family, on the part of women.

The tendency towards individualization was reinforced by the younger generations, in particular young women, in the late 1980s and early 1990s. This generation of women was named the ‘Hanako’ generation by sociologists and marketers after a popular consumer information magazine targeted women in their twenties in the Tokyo metropolitan area. The Hanako generation appeared to be unique in the following two respects. Firstly, the Hanako generation collectively emerged as the main drive of consumer culture since the 1980s with their relatively high disposable income. The improved spending ability of this generation of young women compared to that of other groups of people is, as Ueno analyzes it, a product of manifold conditions. First and foremost, this generation of women generally joins in the labour market before marriage and childbirth, and therefore have their own income, over which they have total control. Yet their large disposable income is secured only by conditions that allow them...
to spend their pay entirely on themselves – namely that in order to spare a substantial part of their income for consumption, these women need to be single, living in their parents’ houses with little or no contribution towards rent, and little or no requirement to build up savings for the future. This could, furthermore, only be realized in a situation in which parents have enough income to support their families without relying on their daughters’ income, and in which there is no worry about their future due to the prospect that their future husbands will have enough income to support the family without the need for any secondary income (Ueno 2003: 256).

In the 1990s, a sociologist, Yamada Masahiro, coined the term ‘parasite singles’ (parasaito singuru) to refer to a group of young Japanese who stay single and enjoy affluent lifestyles by relying on their parents for living expenses (Yamada 1999). Although the term ‘parasite single’ subsumes both men and women, as Yamada points out, there is a general tendency for the term to be used in criticism of the consumer behaviour of young unmarried women, internationally known for their luxurious spending. Yamada argues that this notion that equates parasite singles with young women is grounded in statistics. Approximately 80 percent of unmarried women live with their parents, while the figure for unmarried men is about 60 percent (Yamada 2001: 82). In other words, the Hanako generation is, as the second point of its unique nature, part of a drive for the ongoing tendency of the so-called ‘delayed marriage’ (bankonka) phenomenon that became statistically visible in the late 1980s. From the 1980s to 1990s, both the age of first marriage and the ratio of the unmarried population to that of the married population significantly increased. In the latest survey by the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research (Kokuritsu Shakai Hoshō Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūjo, hereafter IPSS), the first age for marrying is 28.5 for men and 26.8 for women, while in 1987 the figure for men was 28.3 and 25.3 for women (Kokuritsu Shakai Hoshō Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūjo 2002). At the same time, as has been mentioned earlier, the marriage rate itself dropped. As many studies have already demonstrated, however, it would be misleading to read these statistical changes of declining marriage as suggesting that the Hanako generation was refusing marriage itself. The book ‘May-Not-Get-Married Syndrome’ (Kekkonshinai-kamo-shirenai Shōkōgun) was widely and sympathetically read in 1990, but the decline of marriage by no means resulted from active decision-making or any clear refusal of marriage on the part of women. Rather, these women were willing to get married insofar as they could find an ‘appropriate’ partner, and were merely delaying their decision until they could be convinced of finding a partner who, in their judgement, was ‘right’ for them. In this sense, the present statistical phenomenon of the decline of marriage, indeed, needs to be described as ‘delayed’ marriage, but it does not imply that ‘marriage’ itself had lost its institutional significance.

With her survey on women’s attitudes towards marriage, a feminist psychologist, Ogura Chikako, provides a more detailed account of the
‘delayed marriage’ phenomenon (Ueno and Ogura 2002: 28–50; Ogura 2003: 30–9). By introducing class as an explanatory parameter, Ogura points out the ‘mismatch’ between the demand and supply for women and men in different classes in the marriage market. She subdivides her interviewees into three groups according to their academic background, income level, and their parents’ academic background and income level. As some research demonstrates (Sato 2000; Kaneko and Ōsawa 2002: 211–13), academic background is a main indicator of class in contemporary Japan. Academic background strongly correlates with income level, and moreover, the academic background of the children’s generation correlates with that of the parents’ generation and, in a system of academic credentialism, occupations. By taking such a contemporary class structure in Japanese society into account, Ogura explains that these three groups of young women have different objectives and hopes for marriage. For the first group, with a relatively lower academic background (high school graduates), Ogura concludes that marriage is a means of ‘survival’. Since their parents also tend to suffer from a relatively lower standard of income, sometimes being lone parents, these women are required to earn sufficient income to support themselves. However, due to their low expectations in the labour market because of their low academic background and employment practices that severely disadvantage women, they develop a wish to run a small shop or business in order to survive in capitalist society, and hence wish to get married to men who have the skills and finance to be a partner in such enterprises. Such wishes, however, are not realistic, since most men in the skilled labour market do not have sufficient financial ability to meet women’s hopes in their twenties. In the end, therefore, women cannot find appropriate partners.

As for the second group of women, graduates of junior colleges or non-elite universities, Ogura sees marriage in terms of ‘dependency’. Broadly speaking, these women hope to be full-time housewives, concentrating on child-rearing, and therefore wish to marry someone who has sufficient financial stability to sustain a household without secondary income, i.e. a man who has graduated from an elite university and has a good stable job with good pay. On top of this, they also wish their husbands to be cooperative with the housework, and when their children start school, again with the cooperation of their husbands, they wish to engage in ‘nice work’ that does not require too much responsibility. Ogura describes this as ‘hobby-ish work’. Yet, as Ogura indicates, a man who has enough income to meet the wishes of the women of the second group is very unlikely to be able to have any time to be ‘cooperative with housework’, due to job requirements, and in the end, women tend to stay single, hoping to meet a man who can be the right partner.

Finally, in the case of upper-class women who are generally graduates of elite universities or who hold postgraduate degrees, marriage is a means of ‘self-preservation’. An ideal husband for the women in this third group, who in many cases have professional and well-paid jobs, is a man who
understands their commitment to and enthusiasm for work, and who can cooperate by doing half of the housework. As long as a man has such qualities, these women tend to say that they do not pay particular regard to his academic background or occupation (or the level of pay), but according to Ogura, there is simply no such man (Ueno and Ogura 2002: 48). Interestingly, in discussing inter-racial marriages between Japanese women and white men, Kelsky points out that some of the women that can be categorized in the upper class by Ogura’s discussion frequently form relationships with white men in North America and Western Europe. For these women, marriage with white men living in industrially advanced countries is a means of meeting their expectations in life and maintaining their chosen lifestyles. In this sense, the self-preservation of elite Japanese women has a momentum which transgresses national borders (Kelsky 2001: 142–74).

The women in the three different classes will all wait for their particular ideal husbands. But their wishes may not match the needs of men, and thus more women and men stay single in contemporary Japanese society. The latest survey on popular attitudes towards marriage and childbirth as held by unmarried men and women from eighteen years old to thirty-four years old, conducted by IPSS in 2002, has endorsed Ogura’s discussion on women’s marital attitudes. Moreover, it demonstrates that men show similar tendencies in terms of delaying marriage until the arrival of an ideal partner. Approximately 87 percent of men and 88 percent of women answered that they would get married in the future, while the figures of respondents that answered that they would never get married for men and women were 5.4 and 5.0 percent respectively. In addition, more than 50 percent of both men and women agree that there is no problem in postponing marriage until they meet an ideal partner. Yet, it can be also observed in the survey that marriage itself is increasingly losing its positive implications in the life cycle of the younger generations of Japanese people. 33.1 percent of male respondents and 26.3 percent of female respondents say that they do not think that there is any benefit in getting married (Kokuritsu Shakai Hoshō Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūjo 2002). Interestingly, as Suzuki points out, with reference to the 1999 survey on the ‘child-less’ phenomenon conducted by the then Cabinet Office (presently the Prime Minister’s Office), there is a clear difference in the negative attitudes towards marriage between genders. While more women, both married and unmarried, generally feel that marriage is a burden for a variety of reasons, nearly 70 percent of male respondents agree with the view that regards marriage as a heavy economic responsibility (Suzuki 2000: 39–41).

What the transitions in popular attitudes towards the family from the mid-1970s onward suggest is the ambivalent nature of such attitudes. On the one hand, demographic changes, an exposure to vulnerability and risk of the family and transitions in popular attitudes towards the family imply a definite shift in the practices of forming families in contemporary Japan, and
the individualization of the family is an undeniable trend. More young Japanese, in particular young women today, prioritize their desires, preferences, pleasure and feelings over those of others or their families, and consequently, are less inclined to start forming their own families. On the other hand, there is a certain continuity, or more precisely ‘enhanced’ continuity, from the postwar family system, which has ironically resulted in a two-fold shift. Firstly, the romantic relationship between a couple has been continuously emphasized as an essential component of the family since the time of the women’s liberation movement through the New Family to the present generation of delayed marriage. The more the romantic relationship is emphasized, the more that forming the family appears to be an emotional project for both women and men as agents. Yet, as Giddens has indicated, such a ‘reflexible’ relationship is fundamentally unstable, since it is the object of constant scrutiny of each other’s emotions to assure confirmation of the relationship (Giddens 1991; Giddens 1992). In other words, forming a family is a risky project that requires commitment but might fail, and may end with affairs or divorce. Accordingly, marriage is a high-stakes practice, the result of careful deliberation, and in this sense, a delayed marriage is a rational choice. Secondly, children still appear to be central in the marital relationship. Given the significantly low rate of childbirth outside of marriage, marriage in Japan predominantly signifies an arrangement for having children. Yet, having children also means, for women and men, extra commitment and responsibility. A survey on motherhood conducted by a group of sociologists in the mid-1990s informs us that many women, in particular housewives with a good educational background, still think that they have to make the maximum effort to raise children well (Yamada 2000: 72–81), while more women wish their partners to be ‘cooperative’ with childcare in order to create a ‘happy home’ (Funabashi 2000: 62).10 Considering the reality of work commitments required for mainstream workers, as well as both domestic and national economic setbacks in contemporary Japan, such demands for the commitment to child-rearing tend only to thrust women and men into a double-binding situation between financial demands, job requirements and domestic responsibilities. Consequently, again, delaying or avoiding childbirth appears to be a rational choice.

Summarizing the above points, some characteristics of the postwar family system, for example the emphasis on the romantic relationship, the need to create a ‘happy home’ and the tendency to emphasize child-rearing within the family life, are still evident in popular attitudes towards the family in contemporary Japan. More importantly, these function, ironically, to erode the prevalence of the postwar family system, which can be observed through symptoms articulated in statistics and social incidents. In the meantime, the Japanese birth rate has continued to fall, to the extent that the national government has defined it as a national crisis. The next section will discuss in detail this birth rate problem, residing as it does at the heart of the contemporary trend of the individualization of the family.
The population policy: from the Eugenics Protection Law to the Mother’s Body Protection Law

It was the so-called ‘1.57 shock’ that turned the total fertility rate into a major issue, discussed in both the arena of national politics and the mass media. A report declaring that the total fertility rate had recorded its lowest figure of 1.57 in 1989 became an alert to the possible decline of the national population as well as changes in people’s, in particular women’s, lifestyles. Well-known politicians and businessmen swiftly reacted to it. This incident is now called the ‘1.57 shock’, generally perceived as presaging the ever-falling birth rate ‘problem’ that led national governments in the 1990s to implement policies to bump up the birth rate. The total fertility rate continued to decline from the 1990s to today, despite policies implemented or planned by the national government to change the population pattern. The figure for 2002, published in May 2003, was 1.33, the lowest ever in the postwar period. Moreover, as compared to other industrially advanced countries, the Japanese birth rate appears to belong to the lowest group, along with Germany and Spain which had rates of 1.19 and 1.20 respectively in 1999, the figure being 2.13 for the US in 2000 (Kokuritsu Shakai Hoshō Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūjo 2003). The low birth rate brought about speculation as to the possible decline of Japanese national power. According to IPSS, it could be estimated, on the basis of the current trend in the birth rate, that the Japanese population would start to decrease after reaching a pinnacle in 2006, while the ageing of society was progressing at an unprecedented rate (National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2002).

As discussed in the previous chapters, due to postwar population policies that enthusiastically promoted family planning in order to limit the size of the population in relation to Japan’s economic capability, the total fertility rate stabilized at around the population reproductive level (2.08) from the 1950s to the mid-1970s (see Appendix B). However, anxieties over the falling birth rate were already expressed in the late 1960s. In 1969, the Population Problem Advisory Council reported to the cabinet that there was a need to increase the birth rate in order to prevent the decline of the future population. In responding to this, the Nikkeiren, a major economic interest group, published a report on employment policies that recommended the revision of the Eugenics Protection Law by deleting the ‘economic reason clause’ on which 99.7 percent of abortions were approved (Buckley 1988: 206), in order to secure the necessary labour force in the population.

At around the same time, the need to revise the Eugenics Protection Law was also vociferously raised from a moral point of view that sought a ban on the practice of abortion. Japan recorded more than 800,000 abortions in 1965, and had received criticism from pro-natal groups and religious organizations both inside Japan and in other industrially advanced countries (Tama 1991: 215). In 1964, the then Minister of Health and Welfare publicly declared that Japan needed to erase its bad reputation of being an ‘abortion heaven’ (chūsetsu tengoku) (Yonezu, Nagaoki and Ōhashi 1996: 71). Also, in
the late 1960s, pro-life lobbying activities campaigning to limit access to abortion, closely related to a religious organization, Seichō no Ie (House of Growth), started (Ogino 1994: Buckley 1988: 210). The pro-life lobby exercised its influence through an LDP politician, Murakami Masakuni.

As such, concerns over the decline in the national population resulted in political efforts to revise the Eugenics Protection Law, as seen by the counter-discourse for abortion being a threat to national security and reputation by its allowing women an ‘excessive’ right to terminate ‘unborn children’. In 1972, the cabinet proposed a bill to revise the Eugenics Protection Law in order to restrict access to abortion. This involved removing the economic reason clause, but leaving in place Article 212 of the criminal code, which treated abortion as an illegal act, intact. Moreover, an attempt to revise the Eugenics Protection Law in 1972 also contained elements other than simply controlling the size of the population, namely controlling the quality of the population, as was the case with concerns about the national population in the previous period. According to Matsubara, a research project based around ‘prevention of the incidence of mental and physical disorder’, undertaken by the Ministry of Health and Welfare, took on board aspects such as a congenital anomaly mass-screening system, amniocentesis and foetal blood sampling, and contributed to building up a basis for the present prenatal diagnosis technologies and genetic counselling from the 1970s to 1980s (Matsubara 2000: 196–8). Responding to this development, as early as 1970, the Japan Medical Association (Nihon Ishi Kai) published its attitude towards the Eugenics Protection Law, recommending the inclusion of a clause that allowed abortion in cases where the foetus was designated as being abnormal, so as to prevent children with hereditary problems from being born, while disagreeing with the pro-life campaign for deleting the economic reason clause. The 1972 revision bill took on board the recommendation, and a so-called ‘foetus clause’, which allowed abortion on the grounds of foetal deficiencies that might result in serious mental and physical disability, was included. Also, in order to reduce risks caused by late childbearing, the bill proposed adding an advisory service on the delivery timing to the Eugenics Protection Consultation Centres (Shudō 1996: 262). Commenting on such population and public health policies taken by the Ministry of Health and Welfare, Matsubara points out that the term ‘eugenics’ was not a ‘taboo’ in the 1970s as it is in present-day Japan. In governmental white papers, pamphlets, and textbooks for health and physical education at high schools, along with the sub-regional policy on prevention of the birth of ‘unhappy children’ discussed in the previous chapter, the purpose of eugenics, namely to improve the quality of the national population, was seen as desirable in policy-making discussion (Matsubara 2000: 199–211).

The 1972 revision of the bill was proposed, however, in the midst of the development of the women’s liberation movement in Japan, as has been mentioned in the previous section. For many women who joined the
Japanese women’s liberation movement, the proposal to remove the ‘economic reason clause’ in the 1972 revision was an extension of control over women’s bodies and reproductive freedom. In reacting to the government’s move towards restriction on the access to abortion, many groups within the women’s liberation movement, having previously acted separately, organized a single anti-revision movement, named the Movement for Prevention of Worsening the Eugenics Protection Law (Yūsei Hogo Hō Kaiaku Soshi Undō).

However, the anti-revision movement against the 1972 bill by Japanese feminists met a strong challenge by another minority group that was also significantly affected by the Eugenics Protection Law, namely disabled people. Insofar as the foetus clause was included in the law that allowed women to have abortions, the claim for reproductive freedom appeared to be at odds with the existence of disabled people. Where prenatal diagnosis is able to identify the potential ‘deficiency’ of the foetus, the autonomous reproductive choice by women could result in the denial of the existence of disabled people by aborting a ‘risky’ foetus. Responding to the feminist slogan of the anti-revisionists, ‘it is I, a woman, who decides whether to have a child or not’, a disabled group, Aoi Shiba no Kai (Association of Green Lawn) raised objections to the feminists’ claim for reproductive freedom as well as the revision of the Eugenics Protection Law. Forming the background to the protest by disabled groups are the numerous judicial cases of what is known as ‘family double suicides’ (oyako shinjū) in Japan, i.e. killing of disabled children committed by parents. In such cases, parents were frequently immunized or given clemency on the grounds that the act was conducted due to ‘compelling reasons’. Yet, from the perspective of disabled people, such sympathetic legal judgements, combined with the development of medical technologies and sub-national policies regarding ‘unhappy children’, threatened their very existence, and the claim for reproductive freedom was also perceived to be analogous to the judicial decision due to the possibility of terminating a foetus that had the potential to be ‘deficient’ on the grounds of the foetus clause (Ōta, Shudō and Kanō 1996: 216–18; Shudō 1996: 264; Ueno 1996a: 191–6).

A twist unique to Japan is that a law to protect eugenics purposes was the only measure to secure women’s reproductive freedom. Because of this unique situation, a fundamental contradiction between feminists’ claim for reproductive freedom and the interests of disabled people was starkly exposed. The challenge by disabled people profoundly shook the anti-revision movement, drawing boundaries between different groups within the movement. The central committee of the anti-revision movement employed an alternative slogan, as follows: ‘From a society where I am supposed to give birth to a child to a society where I want to give birth to a child’ (Umeru shakai o Umitai shakai o), by taking the point made by the disabled group. Yet the Chūpiren (Chūzhetsu Kinshi ni Hantai shi Piru Kaikin o Yōkyū suru Josei Kaihō Rengō, meaning the Women’s Liberation Federation for
Opposing the Ban on Abortion and Lifting the Ban on Contraceptive Pills), perhaps the most well-known group in the women’s liberation movement in Japan for wearing pink helmets and deploying direct and eye-catching demonstrations, vehemently demanded the right to abortion by putting aside the issue of the contradiction between reproductive freedom and the rights of disabled people. According to the Chūpiren, the issue regarding the interests of disabled people needed to be separated from the issue of reproductive freedom as a matter of social welfare and social reform. Moreover, they argued that the new slogan was to endorse the dominant logic that posited women only as child-bearers (Shudō 1996: 267–8). In contrast to the individualist approach of the Chūpiren, other women’s groups struggled to find a language to articulate their stance on the abortion issue, and through this process, their action became a challenge to a society in which women had to adopt too heavy a burden to give birth to and raise children, and not merely a demand for abortion rights (Gurūpu Tatakau Onna 1972: 364–5; Ehara 1991a: 201–8; Ueno 1996a: 186). Referring to the oft-cited writing by another ideologue of the Japanese women’s liberation movement, Tanaka Mitsu, who posited the 1972 revision as an attempt to imprint the logic of productivity in women (Tanaka 1972), Ueno argues that the mainstream part of the women’s liberation movement was broadly antithetical to modernity and industrialization in its questioning yet maintaining of its bonds with motherhood (Ueno 1996a: 194). It was in this context that the family appeared to be a central objective of the scrutiny of the Japanese women’s liberation movement, as discussed in the previous section.

Faced with the fierce protest movements of the women’s liberation groups, disabled groups and other interest groups, the 1972 bill was finally discarded by the end of the Diet session of 1974. The pro-life group and associated politicians attempted to propose another revision to the Eugenics Protection Law in 1982, this time without including the foetus clause. However, this attempt had also failed by the following year, due to strong opposition not only from women’s groups, but also other parties, such as a cross-party group of female politicians, including even those from the LDP (Ogino 1994: 88–9). The anti-revision movement in the 1980s demonstrates some difference from that of the 1970s. Firstly, commenting on the second attempt in the 1980s, Tama points out that the debate over abortion in the 1980s shared a common understanding that women should be the main decision-making agents regarding the abortion issue. The worldwide trend represented by the International Decade of Women started in 1975 and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which was adopted by the UN in 1979 and signed by the Japanese government in 1985, provided further claims for reproductive freedom by women. Furthermore, a medical scandal that was revealed in 1980, in which a non-qualified owner of an obstetrics and gynaecology hospital made a series of misdiagnoses, consequently causing many women to lose their healthy wombs, outraged many and raised general awareness as to issues
relating to women’s bodies and reproduction. Yonezu, a core player of the anti-revision movement both in the 1970s and 1980s, confirms that from the 1970s to the 1980s the focus of the movement shifted from childbirth to the self-determination of reproduction (Ôta, Shudô and Kanô 1996: 217). Secondly, in relation to the first point, by the time the anti-revision movement in the 1980s started, the confrontation between women’s claims for reproductive freedoms and the existence of disabled people had somehow been settled. Since the 1970s anti-revision movement, some women’s groups and disabled groups had continued their dialogue, gradually reaching a common ground, for the right to the self-determination of reproduction. It was female disabled people who bridged the two different standpoints. As Asaka Yûho reported in the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo in 1994, disabled women had been primary targets of the eugenics policy that tried to ‘prevent substandard descendants from being born’. The national government implemented a policy to promote ‘institutionalization’ of disabled people from the 1960s onwards, and under such circumstances, numerous disabled women had their wombs removed without consent, often in order to efficiently carry out the care at welfare institutions (Marumoto and Yamamoto 1997: 19). Accordingly, disabled women were ones who were denied the right of giving birth, and in this respect, acquiring the right of self-determination regarding reproductive activities appeared to be a fundamental problem for women, regardless of whether they were disabled or not (Marumoto and Yamamoto 1997: 14–18). Finally, Matsubara shows that the contestation by disabled groups of both the Eugenics Protection Law and women’s claim for reproductive freedom publicly exposed the problematic nature of the eugenic ideas in terms of human rights. By the time that the second attempt to revise the Eugenics Protection Law was made, there appeared to be a consensus among many people in Japan that eugenics was not morally and politically an acceptable idea, with particular reference made to the case of Nazi Germany (Matsubara 2000: 219–25).

While the attempts to revise the Eugenics Protection Law were interrupted in the 1970s and 1980s, the birth rate kept falling, and population control in terms of quantity and quality still continued. On the one hand, given the concerns about the size of the population, the national budget relating to family planning was reduced (Ashino and Toda 1996: 160). Furthermore, in 1989, the Ministry of Health and Welfare proposed to shorten the period of legal abortion from twenty-three weeks to twenty-one weeks of pregnancy, and the proposition went into effect without any discussion in the Diet in 1991. The Ministry explained the reason for its action as the development of medical technologies that made possible the survival of a premature baby born at twenty-three weeks. Yet, effectively, the change made by the Ministry echoed its concerns over the declining birth rate and future population structure, by narrowing the eligibility for having an abortion (Ogino 1994: 89; Ashino and Toda 1996: 161). Moreover, the
availability of contraceptive pills, which had already been introduced in Japan in the early 1970s, remained severely restricted, being subject to prescriptions given by medical doctors through the 1970s and 1980s, despite a series of demands that they be opened up to public sale (Ueno 1996a: 201–8). On the other hand, although the term eugenics began to sound somewhat ‘scandalous’, progress in medical technology in terms of prenatal diagnosis made it possible to implement the ‘prevention of birth of “unhappy children” ’ more effectively. Around the same time, the Ministry of Health and Welfare enhanced its policy relating to the surveillance of the health of mothers and children. After the mass-screening system of congenital metabolic disorder was introduced in 1977, the health check of 18-month-old children was added to the list of a series of health checks that all children were required to go through from birth to the end of compulsory education. Moreover, the content of the maternity and child health book, which was given to all pregnant women as a health guideline, was nationally unified in 1978 (Amagasa 1996: 126–7). Following these changes, the schooling of disabled children within specialized schools became compulsory in 1979. Fukushima points out that this policy change effectively resulted in more children being transferred from mainstream schools to specialized schools for disabled children than children starting school for the first time. She argues that the means of differentiating children in terms of ‘quality’ was closely implemented together with a sub-national administration process surveying the health of mothers and children that monitored ‘high risk’ pregnancies (Fukushima 1983: 229–33). Furthermore, in 1983, the Ministry of Health and Welfare proposed the revision of the Mother and Child Health Law in order to strengthen the monitoring system of pregnancy and child development by including such measures as a maternal health examination for women at the pre-pregnancy stage and an advanced congenital deficiency monitoring system. The proposal was, however, withdrawn as a result of protest movements by women’s and disabled groups (Matsubara 2000: 28).

The International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo in 1994 adopted a programme of action that officially formulated reproductive health/rights as a form of basic human rights. Reproductive health/rights is a concept by which the right of self-determination of women and men regarding their bodies, sexuality and reproductive activities may be endorsed. More specifically, Chapter 7 of the Programme of Action reads as follows:

Reproductive health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being in all matters relating to the reproductive system and to its functions and processes. It implies that people have capability to reproduce and the freedom to decide if, when and how often to do so. Implicit in this is the right of men and women to be informed and to have access to safe, effective, affordable and acceptable methods of
family planning of their choice, as well as other methods of their choice for regulation of fertility, which are not against the law, and the right of access to health-care services that will enable women to go safely through pregnancy and childbirth. Reproductive health care also includes sexual health, the purpose of which is the enhancement of life and personal relations.

(United Nations 1994: Chapter 7)

In the passage which follows this, reproductive rights are recognized as the basic right of ‘all couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing and timing of their children and to have the information and means to do so, and the right to attain the highest standard of sexual and reproductive health’. That is to say, the concept of reproductive health/rights supports women’s right to have access to safe family planning, including abortions, but also aims to protect women from the aggressive and dangerous contraceptive measures that were frequently employed to control the so-called ‘population explosion’ in the third world (Nagaoki 1996: 99–102; Hyōdō 2000: 134–7). The notion of reproductive health/rights was also included in the official document of the Fourth World Conference for Women in Beijing in 1995.

Yet, the focus of the conference for the Japanese state rested on a slightly different point from reproductive health/rights, and the Japanese state, which had been enthusiastically engaging in international politics regarding global population control, faced a serious crisis in its legitimacy. As mentioned earlier, a disabled woman, Asaka Yūho, gave a speech in the NGO Forum, remarking that numerous disabled women were forcibly sterilized in postwar Japan, and that the Eugenics Protection Law, a measure used by the Japanese state to intervene in people’s reproductive activities, was closely related to discrimination against disabled people (Nagaoki 1996: 100; Ashino and Toda 1996: 141–2; Marumoto and Yamamoto 1997: 15). The Eugenics Protection Law was, in the 1990s, increasingly becoming an apparent problem in Japan’s international relations. In the year prior to the Conference, the Chinese government had been internationally criticized for attempting to legislate a eugenics law. Responding to the criticism, the Chinese government justified its act on the grounds that the Japanese state had also implemented a similar kind of law throughout the postwar era (Matsubara 2000: 230–1). Under such circumstances, Asaka’s remark in 1994 was a definite blow to the existence of the law concerning eugenics in Japan.

In the following year, the LDP formed a study group to consider the Eugenics Protection Law, and in 1996 the Eugenics Protection Law was revised to become the Mother’s Body Protection Law (Botai Hogo Hō). The revision process was exceptionally swift, taking only five days for the bill to be passed in both the Houses of Representatives and Councillors (Marumoto and Yamamoto 1997: 20; Matsubara 2000: 239; Nakayama
2002: 127). As this hasty schedule suggests, however, the revision was undertaken with minimum consideration, only removing all the references to eugenics from the texts of the law, and hence there was no substantial discussion exchanged in the Diet regarding such issues as reproductive health/rights, the self-determination of abortion and sexuality, the foetus clause and the actualities of eugenics practices carried out in the past. In this sense, as Marumoto rightly points out, the aim of the revision was to remove the term ‘eugenics’ that was jeopardizing the international credibility of Japan as an industrially advanced country, but not to establish a comprehensive law to secure reproductive rights/health (Marumoto and Yamamoto 1997: 18–22). Indeed, the revision left open the following four questions regarding the implementation of reproductive health/rights in Japan. Firstly, as the title of the law implies, the scope of the Mother’s Body Protection Law is limited to pregnant women who are going to be ‘mothers’. This means that the Law functions to draw a boundary between women who are/will be mothers and women who do not want to be or cannot be mothers, by protecting the reproductive health/rights of only one group. This also implies the endorsement of maternalism by the state through a reduction of a multiplicity of women’s sexualities and lifestyles into motherhood. Secondly, the Mother’s Body Protection Law does not yet have genuine provisions to secure women’s reproductive freedom and the right of self-determination, as it only allows women to have abortions and sterilization under conditions set by the Law. For example, Article 14 of the revised law says that an abortion can be granted firstly in case ‘a woman cannot continue her pregnancy or give birth due to the possible danger to maternal health caused by physical and economic reasons’, and secondly if ‘the pregnancy has resulted from a sexual act through assault and threat’. Furthermore, the Article still requires the consent of the ‘spouse’. In theory, therefore, Japanese women do not have the right to make autonomous decisions concerning their own reproductive activities even under the revised law. Thirdly, the revised law also lacks any regulation of the development of reproductive technologies, in particular artificial fertility treatment. Progress in medical technology has extended both the potentiality of pregnancy and termination. On the one hand, reproductive technologies such as AID and the use of surrogate mothers have certainly opened up the possibility of having children to people who had previously been medically categorized as being ‘infertile’, while they have also brought about many issues that have blurred the conventional understanding of the family and life itself. On the other hand, technological development has raised further questions regarding abortion. The selective termination of a foetus due to the results of the prenatal tests poses a legal, social and ethical challenge that may require appropriate political actions and regulations. However, these technologies, which, as frequently pointed out, involve certain risks and dangers in respect of women’s bodies, are regulated only by the official views of the Japan Society of Obstetrics and Gynaecology (Nihon Sanka Fujinka Gakkai,
Generally, these official views have been issued after the relevant technology has been reported to have been employed. In other words, new reproductive technologies have been applied to many women without appropriate state regulations, despite the existence of the Mother’s Body Protection Law. Finally, in relation to the third point, due to the lack of substantial consideration of the governmental implementation of the Eugenics Protection Law throughout the postwar period in the revision process, issues relating to eugenics and reproductive practices remained unsettled. Recent literatures on eugenics, as well as the previous chapters, demonstrate that eugenics cannot be simply associated with fascist regimes, for example the prewar Nazi and the Japanese military regime, but has also co-existed with left/progressive ideas, pacifism, welfare states and political liberalism. Referring to the Danish and Swedish cases, in which a number of disabled people were forcibly sterilized, Ichinokawa, for instance, points out that the logic of eugenics functioned as an essential part of the establishment of the welfare state system (Ichinokawa 2000b: 109–24). Furthermore, the development of new reproductive technologies shed light on different forms of eugenics that are autonomously and subjectively conducted by individuals. Since the 1980s, some terms, for example ‘backdoor to eugenics’ and ‘laissez-faire eugenics’, have been proposed to describe the selective termination of the foetus due to the results of prenatal diagnoses and genetic counselling. In such cases, the decision to terminate the pregnancy was determined by the women themselves or by couples. Yet, insofar as the individual decision-making process involves judging the ‘quality of life’ of the foetus, eugenics still appears to be a fundamental problem to reproductive activities surrounded by new reproductive technologies. Despite the long dialogue between women’s groups and disabled groups, ongoing since the early 1970s, which has tackled this very issue of eugenics and women’s rights of self-determination, the revision process was nonetheless completed without an examination of the functions of the eugenics ideas in the Japanese state and social system in the past, present and future. In fact, in 1999, the Japan Association of Obstetrics and Gynaecologists (Nihon Sanfujinka Ikai) again proposed the inclusion of a foetus clause into the Mother’s Body Protection Law, which allowed women to have abortions ‘in cases where the foetus has serious deficiency and disease that could be identified as incurable or deadly’.

The trajectory of the population policy in Japan since the mid-1970s, therefore, demonstrates a series of negotiations between claims for reproductive health/rights and population control by the state. On the one hand, having been alerted by the fall in the birth rate, politicians and policy-makers attempted to restrict women’s practice of abortion by revising the Eugenics Protection Law. Moreover, the revision was initially designed to enhance eugenics policy by including the foetus clause, responding to the development of new medical and reproductive technologies. However, the political campaign for the revision of the Eugenics Protection Law met with hostile
reactions and protests from many people who had increasingly become aware that a child was not a ‘blessing/gift’ but the result of the practice of family planning. In particular, feminist groups and disabled groups deployed fierce protest movements, seeking ways of resisting state interventions in reproductive activities in order to secure the right of self-determination over their own bodies, sexualities and reproductive capacities. The resistance of women’s groups and disabled groups was by no means harmonious or unanimous. As mentioned earlier, claims by women’s groups for reproductive freedom were initially countered by the protest of disabled groups over the state’s eugenics policy, as well as social practices and conventions concerning disability, and feminist anti-revision movements were fragmented through their responses to disabled groups. Yet, through dialogue between women and disabled people, the counter-discourse to the state’s intervention in biological reproduction to control both the quantity and quality of the national population has been pursued. As Tateiwa observes, the discourse of women’s groups and disabled groups has not yet provided a comprehensive answer to the fundamental issue concerning prenatal tests and eugenics (Tateiwa 1997: 377–90). However, it has certainly exercised its influence, with the help of the dynamics of international politics, to the extent of stopping the two attempts to revise the Eugenics Protection Law and to problematize the state management of population in terms of both quantity and quality. Indeed, the 1996 Mother’s Body Protection Law was the product of a compromise between the state population policy and women’s/disabled groups. While the term eugenics was erased from the text of the law, the revision did not allow the concept of reproductive health/rights, an agenda promoted in the international arena, to be included.

The Japanese birth rate, in the meantime, kept falling, causing concern over the future population structure and social security system. After overt attempts to control the quantity and quality of the population failed in the 1970s and 1980s, the governmental focus on measures to tackle the ‘population crisis’ and problems concerning Japanese families was forced to shift from the national population policy to other policy areas, and more importantly, coordination of different but intersecting policies.

The politics of a gender-equal society

In 1996, the Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryūtarō, in his inaugural speech to the Diet, addressed the falling birth rate problem as a ‘national crisis’ that required urgent political attention. Commenting on the speech, an American anthropologist, Merry White, points out the uniqueness of his speech, in which childbirth was given precedence over such conventional political issues as diplomacy, defence and national finance (White 2002: 158). Indeed, the Hashimoto cabinet swiftly organized a national administrative framework to deal with the issue from a broader perspective than that of population policy. First, the falling birth rate issue was clearly included in
the government’s political agenda. The issue was cited in the Vision for Administrative Reform, and subsequently became part of the Six Big Reforms pursued by the Hashimoto cabinet under the heading of structural reform of social security. It was mentioned along with the five other elements of structural reform, namely the national administrative system, national finance, economy, financial system and education. Secondly, the cause of the falling birth rate was officially acknowledged as the phenomenon of delayed marriage, a result of the heavy burden of child-bearing, in particular the increasing financial cost of raising children, and the fact that the childcare and domestic burden was falling unequally on women. In order to tackle this problem, the gender bias embedded in the existing pattern of family life and employment was logically focused upon, and the Advisory Council for a Gender Equal Society (Danjo Kyōdo Sankaku Shakaku Shingikai) was directly instituted under the Prime Minister’s Office in 1996. According to Ōsawa, Hashimoto was a key player in the council from its inception. He noted as follows in an inaugural meeting of the Advisory Council at the Prime Minister’s Residence:

As the twenty-first century approaches, the society that I am aiming to achieve through the Six Reforms is one where every Japanese national can have dreams and objectives for the future, fully exercise their creativity and spirit of challenge and create common values that can be shared with other people on earth. In terms of the relationship between men and women, such a society is exactly a gender-equal society. The realization of a gender-equal society is a demand of our time and a big key to determining the future of our country. It is vital to attempt to create an abundant and energetic society by dealing with the falling birth rate problem, ageing, and rapid changes in the economic and social environment represented by maturing economic activities and internationalization. In this sense, I believe that the creation of a gender-equal society is a social reform and a big pillar for creation and change in every area of society.

(cited in Ōsawa 2002a: 54–5)

The logic, as articulated by Hashimoto, that the realization of a gender-equal society is a key to tackling the falling birth rate issue, has been maintained by successive cabinets right up until the present Koizumi cabinet, and has been emphasized in other government documents relating to the falling birth rate issue. For example, a recommendation submitted by the Advisory Council to Consider Measures for the Falling Birth Rate Issue (Shōshika eno Taiō o Kangaeru Yūshikisha Kai gi) to the Prime Minister, entitled ‘To Construct a Society Where People Can Have Dreams for Family-Forming and Child-Bearing’ (Yume Aru Katei Zukuri ya Kosodate ga Dekiru Shakai o Kizuku Tameni) raises the issue of gender equality as one of three basic points, as follows:

176 The period of economic stagnation
It is unrealistic to consider that women should go back to their homes in order to increase the birth rate. Such an idea is against the ideal of a gender-equal society, and furthermore, it is inappropriate as well as irrational to restrict women’s work opportunities, considering the prospect that the working population will start to decrease in future.

(Shôshika eno Taiô o Kangaeru Yûshikisha Kaigi 1998)

To put it precisely, the Japanese term ‘danjo kyôdô sankaku’, officially translated as ‘gender equality’, started to appear in government documents in the early 1990s, and it was the World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 that stimulated discussion concerning the establishment of national machinery to promote gender equality (Ueno and Ôsawa 2001: 10–12). Moreover, as observed in an interview of Ôsawa Mari by Ueno Chizuko that relates some background information regarding the legislation of the Basic Law for a Gender-Equal Society in 1999, there are other conditions that have contributed to the institutional development of gender politics since the mid-1990s. Firstly, as Ueno points out, there were two historical conditions, namely disputes over American military bases in Okinawa and the coalition governments from 1993 to 1998, which helped gender politics to become more institutionalised. The breakdown of the one-party rule by the LDP and the coalition governments from 1993 created opportunities to take up agendas that the LDP had previously ignored or avoided. Though the cabinet was mainly composed of LDP politicians, the Hashimoto government could not be established without outer-cabinet support from the SDPJ and Sakigake. The then leader of Sakigake was Dômoto Akiko, a female representative whose political activities were profoundly linked with women’s issues and policies. According to Ôsawa, Dômoto succeeded in incorporating an agreement regarding women’s policy into the coalition agreement. Yet, around the same time, triggered by a rape incident, American military bases in Okinawa emerged as the political issue of greatest urgency. Because of this, the coalition agreement for which Dômoto worked was breached by scaling down the hierarchy of ministers in charge of gender equality. Ôsawa, who was consulted by Dômoto on the matter, indicates that the concession of accepting the breach of the coalition agreement was later paid back for by the relatively swift institutional development of gender politics. Furthermore, by the mid-1990s, a substantial number of female academics, bureaucrats and politicians had become influential players in formulating national policy-making and contributing to institutionalizing gender politics. Besides Ôsawa, it is said that Inoguchi Kuniko, a professor of international politics and a member of the Advisory Council for Administrative Reforms to the Hashimoto cabinet, played an indispensable role in establishing an institutional framework for the politics of gender equality (Ueno and Ôsawa 2001: 10–15).

Taking the conditions mentioned above into account, however, the falling birth rate issue as a national crisis still appears to be crucial, at least for the
government, in its drive to introduce the politics of gender equality into the framework of national politics, as the above Hashimoto address demonstrates. In other words, the politics of gender equality came to be institutionalized in a locus in which the postwar population policy and women’s political activities to extend their political, economic and social participation intersected. As Ōsawa points out, a series of legislation that was promoted by the Council marked a significant transition in the history of policy-making related to women and the family in Japan. Firstly, the object of contemporary policies for a gender-equal society was not directed towards women alone, but rather towards both men and women. Conventionally, Japanese women’s policies targeted women and sometimes children, and were separated from mainstream policy-making, with men being mentioned in the context of change in their consciousness. Compared to this prior situation, the scope of the contemporary gender equality policies became more comprehensive and inclusive. Secondly, contemporary gender-equal policies were aimed at constructing a social system that was not biased towards gender, yet improved the situation of women and children. This enabled the adoption of a new approach towards the review of gender bias embedded in both new and existing policies. Thirdly, insofar as the contemporary gender-equal policies concerned the gender bias embedded in policies, this diverted from the conventional presumption of women’s policies in Japan that women’s subordinate position in the political, economic and social systems was derived from people’s consciousness and attitude but not institutional arrangements, and through this, the gender bias embedded in the existing policies and institutions became central to the policy-making process (Ōsawa 2002a: 46–53). All in all, the legislation by the Advisory Council was to ‘mainstream gender’ in the national and local political arena, as the Programme Plan adopted by the World Conference on Women in Beijing lays out.

By taking such a new approach, the Advisory Council energetically worked to set a multitude of laws and regulations that were ‘neutral in terms of gender’ and hence did not drive both men and women to a particular lifestyle pattern according to their gender. The legislative stance of the Advisory Council is manifest in the Basic Law for a Gender-Equal Society (Danjo Kyōdō Sankaku Kihon Hō), promulgated in 1999, and which is a product of a series of discussions at the Advisory Council. First, in the Preamble, the law acknowledges that ‘even greater effort is required’ towards the realization of equality between men and women, although ‘steady progress has been made in Japan’ through domestic and international efforts. It continues as follows:21

At the same time, to respond to the rapid changes occurring in Japan’s socioeconomic situation, such as the trend toward fewer children, the ageing of the population, and the maturation of domestic economic activities, it has become a matter of urgency to realize a gender-equal society in which men and women respect each other’s human rights and
share their responsibilities, and every citizen is able to fully exercise their individuality and ability regardless of gender.

(The Preamble)

On this understanding, the law delineates the need to respect the human rights of women and men (Article 3), the joint participation in policy-making (Article 5), the compatibility of activities in family life and other activities (Article 6), and international cooperation (Article 7). The national government and sub-national authorities are obliged to make efforts to realize these targets (Articles 8 and 9). Importantly, the law extends to the need for ‘consideration to social systems or practices’. Article 4 reads as follows:

In consideration that social systems or practices can become factors impeding the formation of a Gender-equal Society by reflecting the stereotypical division of roles on the basis of gender, etc., thus having a non-neutral effect on the selection of social activities by women and men, care should be taken so that social systems and practices have as neutral an impact as possible on this selection of social activities.

Accordingly, the national government and sub-national authorities are responsible for monitoring and reviewing the existing regulations and future legislation so as to satisfy the condition that ‘social activities and practices have as neutral an impact as possible’. Based on the principles stipulated in the Basic Law, the Advisory Council further worked on the legislation of the Law for the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the Protection of Victims (Haigūsha kara no Bōryoku no Bōshi oyobi Higaisha no Hogo ni kansuru Hōritsu), the revision of the Equal Employment Opportunity Law (EEOL) and Labour Standards Law, and the review of the social security and tax systems, as well as of the political and administrative systems.

The comprehensive approach to ‘mainstream gender’ undertaken by the Advisory Council is indeed salient in dealing with the falling birth rate issue. As discussed in Chapter 4, the trajectory of postwar policy development in the areas of population policy, social policy and women’s labour policy created an environment that was most rational to a particular type of family, namely the postwar family system. Logically, if the delayed marriage phenomenon is a consequence of dissatisfaction with and avoidance of the conventional pattern of forming family and working life represented by the postwar family system among young Japanese, changing the existing set of policies relating to the family, employment and other related areas through a thorough review of current practices is indispensable in achieving policy outcomes.

This issue can be most clearly demonstrated through an examination of a short history of EEOL. After the government signed the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women in 1985, the legislation of EEOL was carried out as a means of improving the discriminatory employment system and practices against women. The law came into
effect in 1986 (Lam 1992: 221–40; Lam 1993: 217–20; Shinotsuka 1994: 111–13; Shinotsuka 1995: 228–33; Yokoyama 2002: 210–32). Yet, many have already noted that EEOL, in 1986, did not function as effectively as expected. On the one hand, there were some shortcomings in the law itself that impeded effective implementation. Firstly, the 1986 EEOL lacked sanctions to enforce its provisions, as Nakano, a lawyer who has been working on women’s employment cases, summarizes in the following three points:

1. The articles concerning recruitment and hiring, assignment and promotion only require employers to make voluntary ‘endeavours’;
2. There are no punitive measures for violations of the agreements on vocational training, fringe benefits, retirement age, resignations and dismissals;
3. An Equal Opportunity Mediation Committee was established to address sexual discrimination, but it cannot involve itself in any case unless there is agreement between the disputing parties.

(Nakano 1996: 65)

Secondly, the dual-track system introduced when EEOL went into effect generally served to segregate the female workforce from the core workers in auxiliary and clerical jobs. The literal purpose of the dual-track system is merely to employ new recruits for two different types of job categories, namely managerial track and general track. The managerial track is for mainstream employees who are offered lifetime employment with the chances of promotion and training, but are required to have a high degree of commitment to their job and company. As compared to the managerial track, the general track is only expected to take employees taking on auxiliary roles within the company. In consequence, promotion and training chances are more restricted, and moreover, pay rises virtually cease in the middle of career development. In other words, employees in the general track are not meant to stay at companies throughout their working lives (Kumazawa 2000: 74–81). As Nakano points out, this system

soon proved to be a pretext for stabilizing and even expanding the existing sexual discrimination against women, since women were placed into the subsidiary group at the starting gate, or were excluded from the managerial groups because of imposition of transfers to faraway places and long working hours.

(Nakano 1996: 72)

Yet not all women were assigned to the general track, and a small number of elite women survived the harsh selection to take their place within the managerial track, now required to perform to the standards expected of men. In this sense, EEOL also widened the gaps between women, the elite and the non-elite (Ueno 2003: 263–5).
This second point is closely related to the other reason for the malfunction of the 1986 EEOL. The dual-track system may have led individuals to either the managerial or general track, according to one’s preference and ability, had it been introduced into a vacuum. Yet, insofar as it worked alongside other policies and common practices, based as they were on the principle of the family as a basic unit, as discussed in Chapter 4, more women were driven to ‘autonomously’ seek jobs in the general track. In an environment where social policy is constructed on the assumption of ‘women as hidden capital of welfare’, and the tax and social security systems prescribe the existence of housewives in society as care-workers within the postwar family system, the effect of such gender bias merged with the dual-track system, serving to ascribe women to a marginal position within the labour market. Indeed, Ōsawa points out that the Japanese state and economy survived the economic setback in the mid-1970s by strengthening the male breadwinner and housewife model of the family. While companies were encouraged to streamline and rationalize their management by downsizing personnel, restricting pay rises and making their labour more flexible, as well as using more non-regular workers, the welfare system based on women’s unpaid work at home was enhanced by the introduction of the idea of the Japanese Type of Welfare Society (Nihongata Fukushi Shakai). At the same time, in order to appreciate the role of housewives at home, the Measure to Strengthen the Basis for Homes (Katei Kiban Jūjitsu Seisaku) was introduced, and the domestic contribution of women as wives and mothers started to become institutionally reflected within the pension and tax system through benefits and subsidies to breadwinners’ incomes (Harada 1991: 50–1; Ōsawa 1993b: 124-235; Ōsawa 2002a: 80–6; Osawa 2002b: 264–75, see also Chapter 4). In this context, EEOL had a particular function. Rather than securing equal opportunities for many women, it consolidated a pattern of life for many women in which women entered the labour market as part of the marginal labour force until their first child was born, thereafter staying at home, caring for their young children and then taking part-time jobs. In so doing, EEOL enabled a relatively cheap, flexible labour force, which was needed as a result of the structural transition of industry that had begun in the mid-1970s, to be secured. Interestingly, the Dispatched Worker Law passed the Diet around the same time as the promulgation of EEOL, in order to enable employers to use a more flexible workforce (Nakano 1996: 66). Consequently, the female workforce was further marginalized through EEOL legislation, and the model of the sexual division of labour remained unchanged.

Having learnt from previous experience, including the EEOL legislation in the 1980s, contemporary political actors promoting gender equality aimed to review policy areas that were distinct from the gender-equality perspective, so as to create political, economic and social systems that had ‘as neutral an impact as possible’ on the selection of social activities. That is to say, the revision of EEOL proceeded along with the review of the social security and tax system that had provided housewives with benefits and entitlements, while the plan for improving childcare facilities and the national insurance system
for elderly care was established in order to reduce the burdens of care on women that often hampered them from committing to paid work. Through these changes, the rigorous sexual division of labour was dismantled, and the basic unit of policies and social activities shifted from the family to individuals. On the whole, the existing pattern of family and employment was reviewed to suit the current demands of setting up a family, in the hope that the birth rate might be increased.

When considering the economic conditions through the 1990s, however, such a blueprint presented by the combination of the politics of gender equality and the strategy to cope with the falling birth rate reveals another fact of the problem. As mentioned earlier, the majority of the 1990s in Japan was experienced as the ‘lost decade’, in which the national economy had to struggle to cope with an enduring recession. Many large corporations attempted to survive this crisis by further rationalizing their personnel policies. While lay-offs, downsizing and early retirement became common practices, eroding the expectation of lifetime employment among white-collar workers and their families in the name of the ‘restructuring’ of companies, the number of non-regular workers rapidly increased from 8.81 million in 1990 to 12.25 million in 1999 (Ōsawa 2001: 183). This transition in the employment practices was presaged by a report entitled ‘The Japanese Style of Management in a New Age’, published in 1995 by an interest group composed of managerial directors of large corporations, Nikkeiren. The Nikkeiren’s oft-cited report draws up an employment portfolio as a means of reducing the total personnel cost. First of all, it categorizes employees in concrete terms as follows:

- group with a long-term stock of competence (to take a core managerial position);
- group with highly specialized competence;
- group with flexible employment.

It then recommends applying the flexible style of employment to the second and third groups, and in so doing, giving companies the ability to have a free hand in adjusting their employment structure to particular demands from time to time, while simultaneously saving personnel costs by being immunized from taking responsibility for a large number of employees with lifetime employment. Yet, according to the Nikkeiren, this also benefits employees as a new employment system enables them to choose a suitable working style for their own needs and conditions. The strategy presented by the Nikkeiren later obtained legal backing: the Dispatched Worker Law was revised to remove restrictions placed upon job categories to which the law had been applied in 1999. Also, as Saitō Takao, a journalist, reports, the educational reforms that have taken place since the late 1990s have had echoes of the Nikkeiren report through their promotion of a style of education designed to respond to individual needs, a departure from the previous homogeneous and universal model (Saitō 2000: 25–36).
Insofar as the politics of gender equality aim to create a society in which a person's life is not determined by gender but free choice as an individual, it is undeniable that such an agenda appears to have an ambiguous relationship with the promotion of a flexible labour force. On the one hand, gender-equality politics has certainly attempted to offer both men and women opportunities to become productive, competent, competitive and innovative agents in the labour market, regardless of their gender, and therefore become ‘enterprising selves’ in the advanced capitalist economy (Chapter 1). On the other hand, as Ōsawa suggests, the Nikkeiren’s strategy of flexible employment needs to be supported by policies for gender equality, as it in effect means introducing the destabilization of employment for male white-collar workers of large corporations. Other groups of workers, workers of SMEs, non-regular workers and female workers, including those working for large corporations, have been excluded from the benefits of lifetime employment. However, this exclusion did not appear as a serious problem insofar as the male breadwinners were able to earn a family wage: women and the youth could survive as dependants of the male breadwinners. The Nikkeiren’s 1995 report of the promotion of flexible employment changed this assumption by radically reducing the chances of lifetime employment, hence bringing about the necessity for women to join, stay in and rejoin the labour market (Ōsawa 2002a: 119–24). In this respect, the contemporary politics of gender equality are supplementary to Nikkeiren’s 1995 report through their encouragement of the construction of a neutral system in which women and men share domestic and financial responsibilities. Naturally, some commentators such as Ōsawa are sufficiently cautious to propose the reform of the current employment system, in particular the working conditions of non-regular workers and discriminatory practices as well as the social security system (Ōsawa 2002a: 203–34). Yet, given that the project of the Nikkeiren that resulted in the 1995 report was triggered by the concerns of the management of large corporations over the restructuring of the workforce responding to globalization, there is a danger that the politics of gender equality, which started through critical reviews of the existing system, could contribute to the reorganization and advancement of the capitalist economy under the challenge of globalization.

In July 2003, under the leadership of the Koizumi cabinet, the bill of the Basic Law for Measures for a Society with Fewer Children (Shōshika Shakai Taisaku Kihon Hō) passed the Diet. Prior to this, the government had introduced a multitude of reforms that were a radical shift from the conventional model of the postwar family system, based on the sexual division of labour, to a model of an individual-based society. For example, the Strategy for Reducing the Number of Children Waiting for Nursery Spaces to Zero (Tāiki Jidō Zero Sakusen) was introduced in May 2001 in order to solve a long-term problem of the shortage of nursery spaces, in particular in the Tokyo Metropolitan Area, to provide working mothers with institutional support. Following this, a private economic policy consulting group to the
Prime Minister, the Economy Strategy Council (Keizai Senryaku Kaigi), recommended shifting the model of the social security system from one that was family-based to one that was individual-based, and this resulted in the abolition of the Spouse Special Tax Reduction from FY 2004 that passed the Diet in 2003. Through these reforms, the status of housewives gradually lost institutional endorsement, becoming more an object of aspiration, which only a small number of lucky women who were affluent enough to be immune to from financial responsibilities could aspire to. Under such circumstances, the existence of the second-class group of young women categorized by Ogura, women who wish to get married so as to be dependent, appears to be a necessary consequence of the transition.

Summary: dealing with risks and enterprising self

In providing an overview of the transitions in the family, the population policy and the politics of gender equality from the mid-1970s to the present, a contrast is evident with the families, population policy and government measures aimed at the achievement of gender equality in the period prior to the mid-1970s. In the period from the end of the Second World War to the mid-1970s, population policy was set with a view to smoothing biological, economic and socio-political reproduction by controlling the quantity and quality of the national population. This was achieved by encouraging people to form a particular type of family, referred to by Ochiai as the postwar family system. Women played a relatively rigid role as agents taking on domestic responsibilities as wives and mothers according to the norms of the sexual division of labour within this particular type of family. In so doing, the care work needed to maintain the nation-state and national economy was secured chiefly through women’s unpaid work. The Japanese state supported this system by providing an institutional arrangement in which the postwar family system could flourish. Through a multitude of policies, the government directly and indirectly intervened in people’s everyday lives. The economic world, and large corporations in particular, functioned in accordance with the state (Chapter 4). In contrast to this, the period from the 1970s to the present can be characterized as one of individualization. The family as a unit began to be seen as more vulnerable as an emotional entity, each member of the family acting according to their own individual desires, feelings and will, while marriage and the setting up of a family lost positive appeal among young Japanese as a result of calculating financial and emotional gains from the act. Individual preferences and desires also blocked further legislation in terms of the population policy, overtly aiming as it did to change the popular trend of biological reproduction, and through the protest movements against population control by the state, the awareness of reproductive rights/health gradually permeated the populace. However, an individual’s awareness of the right of self-determination in terms of reproduction also appeared to be ambiguous, in particular in circumstances where
new medical technologies that could identify genetic disorders were developing and bringing about the potentiality of eugenics practices ‘through the back door’. Finally, gender politics attempted to empower women to be individual agents equal with men in the political, economic and social systems by creating a neutral system in terms of gender.

As a result of such individualization, both contemporary women and men in Japan tend to be individual agents who conduct their acts in accordance with the norms of the enterprising self within an advanced liberal capitalist society, namely, a self that strives to maximize one’s own advantage by autonomously and competently using one’s skills, knowledge, expertise and other means so as to calculate strategies, costs and benefits (Chapter 1). In contemporary Japan, each individual endeavours to make herself/himself better off by resorting to all means available. And as a result of this, more people avoid setting up a family and giving birth to children, since such acts often bring about risks that may jeopardize the possibility of constructing a happy life under current arrangements. Gender equality has been introduced into the state political system in order to restructure the political, economic and social system, to the extent that both men and women are able to become entrepreneurs. In this sense, the impact of the tendency towards the enterprising self from the mid-1970s on the tri-dimensional reproductive system is twofold. On the one hand, the orientation towards the enterprising self has certainly caused an element of dysfunction within the tri-dimensional reproductive system. The delayed marriage phenomena and the falling birth rate that has emerged as a deterrent to biological, economic and socio-political reproduction does not result from the absolute refusal of the idea of the modern family. Rather, many people today remain single, wishing to form an ideal family in their own right. This suggests that the model of the postwar family system, and in particular, the emotional bond that ties members of the family and the centrality of children, remains influential. On the other hand, the norm of the enterprising self also enhances the functions that the postwar family system had in the early postwar period. The concern of the enterprising self lies in maximizing benefits and happiness, and this could be achieved by dealing with risks in a way that is rational, and economical in terms of a particular objective. In this sense, the rationality of reproduction, as part of individual life, is logically intensified. Indeed, the rational decision to postpone marriage and childbirth in everyday life, for economic reasons, contributes not only to organizing individuals’ lives such that they become better off, but also to eliminating the potentiality of popular uprisings and the instability occasioned by national political and economic systems, despite the existence of the political inability to settle the economic setbacks experienced since the bursting of the bubble economy (Takeda 2005). Moreover, the enterprising self has functioned as a means of self-regulation in terms of the practices of controlling the quality of the national population. As well as the example of the antagonistic relationships between
prenatal tests and selective abortion, as Kurihara rightly points out, the civil movement that acted on behalf of the victims of the Niigata Minamata Disease caused by mercury-polluted water from a factory, supported and indeed eulogized the health centre’s recommendation of abortion for pregnant women who were highly suspected of suffering from mercury poisoning. This is because its precedent, the Minamata Disease, which was also caused by organic mercury contamination of water, led to the birth of a number of disabled babies. In order to avoid this ‘bad precedent’, abortion was recommended, and seventy-seven women went ahead with such operations. Consequently, only one victim has been born after its mother’s coming into contact with polluted water (Kurihara 2000: 13). This example suggests that civil movements that pursue ‘protection of everyday life’ act in accordance with the logic of the advanced capitalist state of efficiency and economy in order to attain the objectives of the movements.

As discussed above, the women’s movement in Japan also faced a similar dilemma. While many women found opportunities to express and raise problems that had not been articulated in the conventional political language through organizing the women’s movement, women’s desires for romantic love, a better life and self-realization were channelled into the national economy and politics, as the examples of the New Family and the gender-equality politics in the 1990s show. Perhaps the most ironic example, though, is the group of contemporary young women who delay their marriages until they find the ‘right’ partner. In one sense, these women are attracted to a potent sense of the postwar family system. Yet, the situation in which they are driven to choose to stick to the conventional model of the family as a means of self-enterprise in contemporary Japan seems to be derived from the limitations surrounding them. They have been witnessing the struggles and frustration of the previous generations of women who exercised the sexual division of labour within the family, as well as the working women who have been facing the patriarchal world of economic practices. They have also witnessed the double burden of financial and domestic responsibilities. Considering these problems, which have often been articulated in feminist critiques of the conventional family system and labour market, it would seem unsatisfactory both to follow the previous generations in taking unpaid work at home and to follow a career. For the majority of women who cannot survive the harsh competition in the labour market, the optimum choice is to form a postwar family system with an understanding and cooperative husband. Accordingly, women’s search to maximize their own advantages in a given situation has resulted in the erosion of the postwar family system through their endless search for the ‘right’ partner, and simultaneously, the further idealization of family life in women’s life.

Finally, the impact of globalization seems, again, to be double-edged in nature. External pressures have often brought about policy changes in the domestic sphere, as in the examples of the Mother’s Body Protection Law,
EEOL and gender-equality politics. Moreover, the international political arena has provided Japanese grassroots movements with opportunities to exercise their power within the domestic political system. However, the revision process of the Eugenics Protection Law failed to reflect the reproductive rights/health within domestic legislation, and this left control over the quantity and quality of biological reproduction in the state’s hands. This also demonstrates that globalization has been a selective process, not an unavoidable necessity. In this sense, there is still the possibility that the expansion of pro-life politics in the international arena, triggered by the establishment of the Bush Administration in the US, might change the current direction of policy on population.

All in all, what can be observed in this chapter is the continuity of the components that made up tri-dimensional reproduction in the early postwar period, beneath apparent discontinuity and transition. Individualization, through the logic of the enterprising self, has renovated the postwar tri-dimensional reproductive system by redefining the model of the family, population policy and gender roles at home and in the labour market, so as to adjust to the environment of the advanced capitalist society. Through this process, an element of the counter-discourse, notably gender equality, came to be selectively incorporated into the mainstream system. Yet, at the same time, the enterprising self has functioned as a mechanism of selection, as discussed in Chapter 1. In so doing, it differentiated those who successfully managed to adjust themselves to the norm of ‘enterprising’ from those who failed to do so, and the difference between the two groups is explained by the rhetoric of self-responsibility.
Conclusion

A ‘modern ego’ is not motivated to necessarily reproduce a condensed community that has an ability to reproduce a ‘modern ego’. (Kant does not give birth to Kant. Beauvoir produces Beauvoir, but does not give birth to Beauvoir.)

(Mita 2001: 4)

Shifts in the material basis of the middle class were accompanied by social changes in the family, such as the perceived increase in the reluctance of young women to marry, bear children, and spend the rest of their lives educating them. In these issues, it was less a matter of how many women felt this way than the threat that even a small number seemed to pose to the ideology of the middle-class family.

(Gluck 1997: 20)

The reproductive system in Japan

The previous chapters have examined, explored and analyzed the historical trajectories of the tri-dimensional Japanese reproductive system since the beginning of Japanese modernization in the late nineteenth century. The onset of modernization led the Meiji government to the realization of the necessity for fostering good human resources in order to survive the intensifying imperialist competition. A multitude of policies that encouraged Japanese people, in particular women, to organize their reproduction in an effective way that suited the national project of ‘enrich the country, strengthen the military’ was introduced ‘from above’. The state’s attempts to intervene in reproductive activities were enhanced during the total war and Occupation period. Population policies and social policies were innovated, and more women than ever became influenced by state regulation of everyday life, as the scope of policy was extended to engage in ‘total war’. Postwar democratization required the national government to cease such an authoritarian way of governing. Yet, political concerns over the biological, economic and socio-political reproduction of the population remained crucial in order that Japan advance along the path towards becoming a
global economic superpower. The Japanese government was actively involved in policies designed to control both the quantity and quality of the population, first in order to control the Malthusian-type crisis after the war, and then in order to reconstruct the Japanese nation-state and to catch up with the advanced industrialized countries of the West. The ‘creation of “good” human-beings’ was considered an integral part of the state’s catch-up strategy in striving to achieve ‘income-doubling’. The postwar reproductive policies, however, relied heavily on a gendered assumption of the form the family should take, namely, the ‘postwar family system’. However, from the mid-1970s, the ‘postwar family system’ showed signs of destabilization, as represented by the phenomena of the delayed marriage and falling birthrates, and received a series of serious challenges. Also, direct interventions by the state into everyday life, in particular, ones relating to eugenics, seem to have lost legitimacy during this time. On the surface, the situation since the mid-1970s appeared to be characterized by the dysfunction of the once solid and stable reproductive system. Yet, as delayed marriage was caused by a rational calculation of maximizing benefits and happiness through setting up families among young Japanese people, the self-regulation of reproductive activities that aimed at maximizing happiness still remains at the core of the organization and management of everyday life, or more precisely, the tendency has been enhanced through being internalized as a norm for individuals.

What the historical trajectory of the reproductive system from the late nineteenth century to the present in Japan suggests can be summarized in the following three points. Firstly, the Japanese nation-state has been concerned with the biological reproduction, economic reproduction and socio-political reproduction of society’s offspring since the initial stage of modernization, from the perspective of developmentalism and later economism, because these three interrelated types of reproduction are the key to renewing and sustaining ‘good’ human resources able to contribute to the survival and development of the nation-state in the competitive environment of modern international relations. Hence, the governmental concerns resulted in both direct and indirect interventions into people’s everyday lives through policies, semi-governmental movements, voluntary groups, schools and wider social education. In this respect, the tri-dimensional reproduction processes that are generally considered as everyday practices occurring in the private sphere have been quintessentially part of the political agenda of the modern Japanese nation-state.

Notwithstanding the continuous presence of such governmental intervention, the mode of intervention varied according to the specific historical conditions characterized by the development of capitalism and the political arrangements of state organizations. In the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, the government actively played a role as enlightener, and introduced policies that aimed at changing people’s reproductive practices. During the so-called Taishō Democracy (1905–25), the mass media and
voluntary groups working on life improvement and birth control emerged, and often challenged the government’s attempts at intervention.

However, the total war authoritarian regime required the Japanese people to adopt a strict psychological and spiritual identification with the national goal of winning the war so that the government’s interventions in reproductive practices appeared much more direct and enhanced. On the other hand, in the postwar democratized Japan, the prewar type of direct intervention was firstly prohibited by the Occupation forces, and secondly considered as bad practice that had led the Japanese nation-state into the ‘wrong’ war. Hence, the New Life Movement, which contributed to the proliferation of practical skills and concrete knowledge regarding housekeeping and home management like its precedents, emphasized the autonomous motivation of Japanese housewives, and the medium apparatus such as large corporations and regional authorities, and voluntary groups organized a network in which the objectives of the movement were meant to be maximized by each agent. In this respect, the postwar political strategy of consolidating the reproductive system has been based on not only one political institution or policy made by a certain agent, but rather on a network of diffused organizations that are often located outside of conventional political institutions. As touched on at the outset, the ‘political’ goes beyond the boundary of conventional politics.

In contrast to the previous period, the focus of the development since the mid-1970s lay in autonomous actions and decisions based on a principle of self-determination. Faced with the ‘reproductive crisis’ caused, the government posited, by the diversification of families and falling birth rates, political attempts to restrict women’s access to abortion were initially made. However, these direct attempts were repeatedly countered by civil movements of women and disabled people that sought to realize their own reproductive health/rights. Furthermore, although frustrated by ever-falling birth rates, the national government seems to be cautious enough to avoid the implementation of prenatal policies that overtly target women to ‘multiply’ as happened in the wartime. The politics of gender equality in the 1990s was a core part of the government agenda which necessitated a comprehensive approach to the contemporary reproductive issues in the recognition that direct interventions into reproductive activities were no longer acceptable or effective governing methods. Yet, the developments in the 1990s still demonstrate a deep concern with reproductive issues on the government’s side. Recent policy developments concerning population, families, women’s labour and gender equality suggest that negotiations on the tri-dimensional reproduction between individuals who endeavour to survive in their everyday lives and the government that tries to maintain the growth of the nation-state and politics is an ongoing process.

Secondly, eugenic thought clearly influenced the reproductive system in Japan. As has been discussed in Chapter 2, eugenic thought was introduced into Japan by the Meiji enlightenment writers in the late nineteenth century,
and attracted the attention of policy-makers, academics and medical experts. There have been two ways of introducing eugenic ideas into the Japanese reproductive system. First, eugenic ideas were realized in law, regulations and policies, as can typically be observed in the legislation of the National Eugenics Law established in 1940 and the Eugenics Protection Law in 1948. Eugenics was also introduced through the ‘back door’ by resorting to ‘positive sanctions’. Positive sanctions functioned by stimulating individual motivation to adopt a recommended or encouraged pattern of behaviour by suggesting positive results that the particular behaviour would be likely to bring about. More concretely, they provided a set of expectations regarding happiness in everyday life and its cause. For example, in the case of the New Life Movement, the dichotomy (children of good quality through planned reproduction equals happiness at home versus unfortunate or poor-quality children and excessive numbers of children equals misery at home) was presented to the participants (housewives), and by so doing, housewives were guided towards achieving ‘good’ biological, economic and socio-political reproduction in order to construct their own ‘happy homes’. Hence, these positive sanctions effectively worked to lead people to govern their own reproduction in a more desirable way from the perspective and interests of the state and corporations, without coercion or enforcement of eugenic operations, but through providing inducements and incentives for constructing ‘good’ homes through ‘good reproduction’. The analogous tendency can still be observed in present-day Japan where despite its compromised character, the revision of the Mother’s Body Protection Law eloquently marked the unacceptability of eugenic thought. Today, it seems that self-determination appears to be the central norm of reproduction. Yet, insofar as it relates to the individual’s motivation to create a ‘happy family’ that purports to maximize benefits for the individual and her or his family within an advanced capitalist society, this self-determination was framed by a management of reproduction that is compatible with the needs of the national economy and state.

Thirdly, women have always appeared to be the main target of the government’s interventions in reproductive practices through the process of consolidation and enhancement of the reproductive system. This suggests that women, who are located outside of ‘political economy’ in conventional research, have without doubt been an integral part of Japanese political economy. In other words, the reproductive system has contributed to incorporating women into the Japanese political economy through their ‘gendered’ role of reproduction.

In sum:

1 The national government has always been intervening in people’s reproductive practices though the mode of intervention differs according to the specific historical moment.

2 Concern with eugenics always lay at the core of governmental intervention.
Women have been the main target of the government’s intervention due to their gendered role in the Japanese reproductive system.

**Political functions of the reproductive system**

But how has the Japanese reproductive system with the above three characteristics functioned politically? And what was its political influence? The following five points need to be made regarding the political functions of the reproductive system.

First and foremost, politics, as Lasswell has argued, is about who gets what, when and how (Lasswell 1950). Clearly, therefore, these three dimensional reproductions are in and of themselves political acts, as all three have been a target of governmental interventions through national and sub-national policies and other measures advanced by the government. These governmental interventions have been financed by the national and regional governments and, at the same time, morally endorsed by the government. Moreover, the administrative organizations specialized in reproduction, for example, the APP and the IPP in the area of population policy, were formed in order to design and implement appropriate measures for governing people’s reproductive practices. These organizations functioned in close cooperation with large corporations as well as regional authorities and voluntary associations. In this sense, governmental interventions clearly illustrate the close link between the biological, economic and socio-political reproductive processes in Japan. As has been discussed above, the links between tri-dimensional reproductions are utilized by policy-makers and other agents in order to maintain and construct the nation-state through renewal and development of a ‘good’ population. Hence, although mainstream research has not paid enough attention to such activities, considering such activities as no more than practices in everyday life, namely the private not public sphere, the reproductive system has been and continues to be a quintessential part of Japanese political economy.

Secondly, and related to the first point, a certain degree of continuity can be found between prewar and postwar politics in relation to three dimensional reproduction. The most obvious area of continuity is the personnel. As the case study of the New Life Movement clearly demonstrated, the prewar bureaucrats specialized in population policy and prewar activists of birth control engaged in organizing the initial stage of the New Life Movement largely overlapped, although new names such as Shinozaki Nobuo, Aoki Hisao and Kunii Chōjirō were also added to the circle. The list of names associated with the prewar period contains such key players as Nagai Tōru, Koya Yoshio, Tachi Minoru, Kitaoka Juitsu, Katō Shizue as well as Oku Mumeo, Yamataka Shigeri, Tanino Setsu and Ōkouchi Kazuo. These veterans who had relationships with the total war regime and supporting organizations, were nevertheless deeply involved (the degree varied in each case) in the postwar population policy. On one level their goal...
was the exact opposite of the prewar population policy, that is, they sought a decrease, rather than increase, in the population. On another level, however, whether the goal was to increase the population to fight the war or reduce the population to fight for the peace, the unremitting concern of the Japanese state has been throughout the improvement in the quality of the population, i.e. eugenics. This should leave no doubt that the tri-dimensional reproduction processes are political matters, not only during the total war period in which the national government evidently took ‘securing human resources’ as a top priority goal, but also in postwar, democratized Japan.

Thirdly, the reproductive system is grounded in a set of normative criteria for organizing the everyday life of the Japanese people. In essence, the reproductive system has acted as a conduit for bringing into the everyday life of the Japanese people three normative principles for organizing, directing and living modern life: (1) rationality, (2) developmentalism and economism, as well as, of course, (3) eugenics. The first of these principles, rationality, was emphasized by various movements and organizations intent on life improvement. These movements and organizations were an essential part of the reproductive system and served to popularize a certain set of ideas and knowledge of home management amongst housewives rooted in a normative understanding of the ‘good life’ in the ‘good state’, and in their activities, rationality appeared to be the most important criterion for their normative understanding of home-keeping and family life, not only of the corporate or state activities. From the domestic science education for girls launched in the late nineteenth century and the Everyday Life Improvement Movement in the 1920s to the New Life Movement, policy-makers and other agents have advocated the rational management of Japanese homes, and this applies to the number and quality of children resulting from the act of biological reproduction. Homes should be happy, bright and prosperous. Children need to be raised as well as possible through home training and national education that serves national goals. And this new norm requires housewives to be agents able to competently manage those tasks in a rational and effective way. The transition set in motion by this promotion of rationality was threefold. First, the equipment and facilities of households as well as the methodology of housekeeping, for example kitchen or childcare methods, were modernized through various life-improvement movements. The modernization of housekeeping equipment brought about a rise in consumerism amongst the population, which created ready buyers for household products and electrical appliances made by Japanese companies. As discussed in Chapter 2, the Everyday Life Improvement Movement promoted, in cooperation with private companies, department stores, westernized commodities, houses and most importantly consumerist behaviours. The rise of the New Life Movement coincided with the period when electrical appliances were introduced into everyday life on an unprecedented scale. Secondly, mental attitudes and morality also required modernizing and, as result of this, absolutely no place remained for old-fashioned
customs and beliefs or traditional housekeeping skills that had been passed down from generation to generation. Finally, this transition through the norm of rationality and modernization resulted in the westernization of the lifestyle of the Japanese people, as the model of rationality and modernization was taken from West European and North American examples. As a result of these three transitions, the consolidation of the reproductive system contributed to changing the way housewives were expected to run Japanese households as well as the ethos at the heart of familial and domestic relationships. This brought about a conversion between the Japanese lifestyle and that of the advanced industrial capitalist states in Western Europe and the US.

Rationality as a principle for the organization of everyday life was closely linked with a particular political and economic attitude, namely, developmentalism and economism. Instructions for organizing everyday life were offered from these normative perspectives. For instance, the Everyday Life Improvement Movement in the prewar period was organized in order to prepare the Japanese nation-state for imperialist expansion and international economic competition. Also, the New Life Movement pursued the realization of ‘happy, bright and prosperous homes’, but it did so from the perspective of creating a ‘good economy’ that would contribute to the creation of a ‘good and strong Japanese state’. Hence, the normative standard, ‘happy and prosperous’, belongs to the development of both the micro and macro economy as well as the state; and, as long as this developmentalist and economistic perspective defined the normative standard of behaviour, being productive, effective, rational and industrious became absolutely crucial for Japanese members of the family, society and the state.

Related to this point, eugenics, a science concerned with the quality of human beings, appeared as the third criterion of the organization of everyday life. Simply put, eugenics as a science is a system for judging the suitable quality of human-beings for pursuing developmentalism and economism. As was introduced in Chapter 5, the official discourse of the New Life Movement contained the dichotomous framework of understanding ‘happy’ and ‘unhappy’ homes differentiated by the quality of the children produced through the biological reproductive process. In this type of discourse, children with undesirable qualities, especially those with mental and physical handicaps, were marginalized by linking the ‘good quality’ defined by the developmentalist and economist perspective with the image of ‘happy homes’.

In order to discuss the fourth point related to the political functions of the reproductive system, women who were identified as the agents of reproduction according to the sexual division of labour, as embedded in the political and social system from the Meiji period onwards, deserve special attention. The reproductive system appeared to be paradoxical for women. On the one hand, the reproductive system encouraged women to be competent and autonomous agents by transmitting knowledge and skills which included the
organization of social and local activities. Indeed, ‘competent and autonomous housewives’ were an integral part of the reproductive system in order for it to function well. Otherwise, governmental interventions had to be more directly conducted in order to assure the quality of the Japanese population. Yet, this encouragement was Janus-faced. On the one hand, women were encouraged to be ‘competent and autonomous’ so that they could fully and effectively shoulder domestic responsibilities as housewives and mothers, who could reliably carry out the task of economic and socio-political reproduction at home, once biological reproduction had been achieved. Therefore, ‘competence’ and ‘autonomous’ were heavily framed by not only the norms of rationality, developmentalism and economism, as mentioned earlier, but also by gender. In this sense, the reproductive system located women in the postwar Japanese political economy by allocating them to the domestic sphere of economic existence, as ‘competent and autonomous’ agents. What we have uncovered here is the Janus-faced dualism of constraint and empowerment, which is a theme that repeatedly appeared in the discourses of the Meiji enlightenment writers (Chapter 2), prewar maternalist politics (Chapters 2 and 3) and the New Life Movement (Chapter 5).

In fact, the dualism of constraint and empowerment paraphrases one current of the Housewife Debates through the 1950s to the 1970s discussed in Chapter 4. It was a discourse in which housewives themselves attempted to theorize and elucidate their historically contingent presence in the modern Japanese social and political system. Through the nearly twenty-year debate the view that considers social participation as an indispensable and significant contribution that housewives were making remained one essential part of the debate. From this perspective, housewives could escape from the accusation that they were entirely financially dependent on their husbands, the breadwinners, by claiming their contribution outside of market mechanisms. Some even argue the ‘professionalism’ of Japanese housewives as an alternative lifestyle (Hendry 1993). Yet, the regime of the sexual division of labour that drove housewives out of the market mechanism left their role unquestioned, as their ‘social participation’ was simply recognized as an extension of housewives’ domestic responsibility. This ‘social participation’ was in fact primarily meant for ‘happiness’ at home and ‘the quality’ of children and, as long as ‘happiness’ at home and ‘the quality’ of children were emphasized, the sexual division of labour remained, and consequently the social and political system that is based on the regime of the sexual division of labour continued to be predominant.

The present politics for gender equality has a momentum that encourages departing from the rigid framework of the sexual division of labour. A ‘gender-free society’, though at present perhaps little more than an aspiration, in theory enables both women and men to have opportunities to choose their own lifestyles regardless of their gender. This implies that both men and women should be recognized as agents of reproduction. However, institutional arrangements, including the reorganization of the labour
market necessary to realize such a society, still remained underdeveloped. Under such circumstances, it is undeniable that policies of gender equality may only bring about gaps between women, such as those between elite women who can afford to pay for reproduction and non-elite women who cannot or who have to take on reproductive work for somebody else, as has happened in the US and in Western European countries. In other words, gender equality could be used to reconfigure the sexual division of labour.

Finally, it also needs to be noted that the reproductive system functions in the framework of the Japanese nation-state, and in this sense, ‘the national’ engraves the reproductive system. From the discourses of the Meiji enlightenment writers via the New Life Movement to the present attempts to bump up birthdates, the ultimate goal of these governmental interventions in reproductive practices was development, growth, and the maintenance and security of the Japanese nation-state in the competitive environment of international relations. For example, as Prime Minister Hatoyama’s speech demonstrated (Chapter 5), the primary concern of the New Life Movement from its inception was to ‘reconstruct’ the Japanese nation-state, and ‘reconstruction’ of the nation-state via the national economy remained the central agenda of the movement. The intention on the part of the state was clearly and consciously recognized by the other actors in the reproductive system. Housewives or company personnel in the New Life Movement believed that ‘activities of the New Life Movement would contribute to building the nation-state’. This can be seen in the housewives’ discourse mentioned in Chapter 5. In present Japan, reproductive issues are still discussed from the perspective of the nation-state. Or to put it more crudely, as they are matters fundamental to the maintenance of the Japanese nation-state, reproductive issues again appeared in the national politics of the 1990s, and this involved many male politicians. As this suggests, the reproductive system contributed to reproducing the Japanese nation-state by proliferating a new kind of nationalism rooted in pursuing economic success in international relations mediated by economism and developmentalism.

Reproduction of agents of nation-states/procreation of agents of civil society

To summarize the above five points, it could be said that the reproductive system in Japan was once consolidated by bureaucrats and academics as well as activists of the women’s movements associated with either the prewar population policy or the prewar birth control movement who set a certain normative framework of understanding for Japanese families rooted in developmentalism, economism, eugenics, and gender, with finances provided by the Japanese government, in the framework of the Japanese nation-state. More specifically, in this system, ‘good’ biological reproduction was linked to ‘good’ economic reproduction, and consequently resulted in ‘good’ social and political reproduction. Of course, this does not mean that every Japanese
family had to ineluctably follow this reproductive pattern. What it certainly did mean, however, as illustrated in the declaration of ‘income-doubling’ by Prime Minister Ikeda Hayato in 1960 (Chapter 4), is that personal and familial desire for ‘a happy, bright and prosperous home’ and a ‘better life’ overlapped with the state’s catch-up strategy of boosting economic growth. This system functioned well during the period of high economic growth. In fact, what we can discover in the statistical data produced from the 1950s to the 1970s is precisely the realization of the key goal promoted by the New Life Movement: the birth rate fell due first to abortion and then to contraception, reducing the ‘quantity’ of the new members of the Japanese state, and improvement in the quality of childcare increasingly became the very reason for committing to birth control. There were more housewives from the 1950s to the 1970s than at any other time in Japanese history. What is more, for these families the ‘quality’ of the new members of society they were charged with reproducing economically and socio-politically was measured against the normative yardstick of achievement. That is, children’s achievement in the education system became the *sine qua non* for each family’s ‘quality’. In essence, competition in the educational system became a new measure of Darwin’s ‘survival of the fittest’.

In this very sense, the reproductive system functioned in the Japanese political economy as a tool of ‘governmentality’ (Chapter 1). Take the discourse of ‘happiness/unhappiness’ linked with the quality of children in the New Life Movement as an example. In the system of the discourse, handicapped children were considered a source of ‘unfortunate’ and ‘unhappy’ lives due to the ‘extra burden’ that those children would place on mothers in carrying out household management, so that the eugenic idea of preventing from the very start the birth of handicapped children was subtly encouraged. This means that eugenic thinking was spread, nurtured and inculcated amongst housewives as a justification for having an abortion before and at the time when a number of local governments were implementing a campaign for ‘prevention of “unhappy” children’ in the 1970s (Chapter 4). In other words, by both direct and indirect methods of intervention the Japanese government was able to achieve a situation in which each member of its population, in this case, each housewife who carried out biological, economic and socio-political reproduction, independently and autonomously acts in a certain way suited to the normative standard instigated through state apparatus and adopted in society, not as a result of physical power, but by ‘fostering and disciplining its population according to the rationality of advanced industrial society’. In the case of the Japanese reproductive system that started to develop with the headlong drive to modernization in the Meiji period and was consolidated in the early postwar period, then, national economic success and a strong state were to be achieved by taking care of the quantity, quality and condition of the population and by introducing disciplined patterns of behaviour for each person, i.e. a governing system in terms of governmentality.
This may sound as if it is argued that the reproductive system led the Japanese state to incorporate and control every single member of the Japanese population. This is partly true, as certainly, the reproductive system contributed to incorporating every member of the Japanese population, in particular women who were primarily responsible for biological, economic and socio-political reproductive practices. Women were located in the ‘private sphere’ through the reproductive system in which personal and familial happiness was equated with national prosperity by taking on domestic responsibilities. However, as Foucault suggests, resistance is an integral part of power relationships (Foucault 1983). In the case of the development of the tri-dimensional reproductive system, we could see this twist in power relations in the dualism of constraint and empowerment. Power always operates in multiple ways in the reproductive system. As mentioned earlier, the prewar education for ‘good wives and wise mothers’ and the activities of the Everyday Life Improvement Movement brought a certain pattern of activity and normative understanding into the everyday life of the Japanese people, in particular women, as well bringing resources to organize social activities and movements. Women often channelled themselves into the public sphere, namely ‘politics’ and ‘economics’ in the conventional sense of the terms, as well as the world of professionals, through their gendered roles as wives and mothers at a time when their political rights were legally denied, and this even applied to women’s activities at the time of the total war regime.

Perhaps, the obvious examples of the dual structure of power were the Everyday Life Schools that developed out of the previous New Life Movement in the late 1960s. Around this time, the everyday life of Japanese people appeared to need protection in the face of the aggressive pursuit of the state’s economic goals. In other words, the state’s objective of economic growth, which was indifferent to pollution and other negative effects of economic development, created dissonance in the normative framework of understanding ‘a happy and prosperous home’ and ‘a prosperous state’: the two, as the numerous cases of pollution showed, could be at odds with each other. This is illustrated in the 1970s by the example of Everyday Life Schools in Yamaguchi or Tokyo that demonstrated developments of the New Life Movement into grassroots and civil movements seeking protection of local areas and everyday life. Their stand against pollution and the other negative effects of economic growth often put them at loggerheads with multiple levels of governments, and big business was forced to negotiate with them as autonomous actors in the arenas of national, regional and local politics. In this sense, the New Life Movement also occupies a crucial position in the history of the development of social movements, as well as in the creation of the tri-dimensional reproductive system, in post-war Japan. In this respect, the reproductive system contributed to reproducing agents of the state, and simultaneously it contributed to procreating agents of civil society.
However, as Ogura argues, the most striking examples of the twist caused by the dual structure of power are the numerous contemporary Japanese women who delay their marriages, hoping to see their ‘ideal husbands’ and enjoying their luxurious lifestyles in the meantime. Ogura describes these women as ‘termites’ of the patriarchy who erode the patriarchal political, economic and social system from inside. These women on the one hand maintain the norms propagated by the mainstream system. Yet, as they attempt to maximize their benefits and desires in the present social settings, taking advantage of the common expectation that they can remain a dependent of father or husband, the reproductive activities appear less attractive, and the ‘population crisis’ deepens. According to Ogura, in the end ‘the Japan nation-state will collapse’ because of its ‘favourite daughters’ who autonomously organize their actions as they have been taught (Ueno and Ogura 2002: 230–40).

This double-binding structure of power in the reproductive system challenges our understanding regarding the relationship between politics and everyday life. The reproductive system has been at the mercy of the government. It has intervened through medium apparatuses such as companies and regional or voluntary organizations, although reproduction is considered a practice of everyday life. This suggests that the conventional understanding of the public/private distinction cannot be applied to the reproductive system, as it rather appears as a complex vector where the government, the medium apparatus (companies, schools and voluntary organizations) and everyday life, interact. In the reproductive system, the government intervenes in everyday life, through medium apparatuses, and at the same time, the national agenda is subject to intervention by the agenda of everyday life, in other words, the government has been ‘privatized’. In this system, therefore, the private life of a person is inseparably interwoven with politics.

As has already been seen in Chapter 1, in his oft-cited ‘The Subject and Power’, Foucault outlined the dynamics of ‘subjectification’ that both constrains and empowers individuals. He wrote:

This form of power applies itself to immediate everyday life which categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him which he must recognize and which others have to recognize in him. It is a form of power which makes individuals subjects [my emphasis]. There are two meanings of the word subject: subject to someone else by control and dependence, and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge. Both meanings suggest a form of power which subjugates and makes subject to.

(Foucault 1983: 331)

According to Foucault, the way of dealing with this particular form of power is ‘to liberate us both from the state and from the type of individualization
linked to the state’ (Foucault 1983: 336). This implies that power is constitutive of ourselves, and resistance to this power is therefore latent in everyday life practices and activities.

As discussed in Chapter 6, reproductive activities are an arena in which the negotiations between individuals, in particular, women, and the state concerning the re-definition of everyday life and subjectivity are most acute. Though there is still a long way ahead as well as many pit holes, the present politics for gender equality is an attempt to find an alternative way of reproduction, as is the behaviour of young women who delay their marriage. Both are inevitably under the influence of state intervention. Yet, simultaneously, they offer many women opportunities to deconstruct the existing reproductive system. With the social and political skills and knowledge that they have obtained through the reproductive system, women have become more aware of the ambivalence of constraint and empowerment inherent in the reproductive system, and most importantly, have been driven to realize that what they are expected to be is not the fate for all ‘women’ in Japan. In so doing, then, the process ‘to imagine and build up what we could be to get rid of this kind of political “double-bind”, which is the simultaneous individualization and totalization of modern power structures’ (Foucault 1983: 336) can become recognizable as the next step. The challenge for the tri-dimensional reproductive process has just started.


Appendix A
Biographic information

Nagai Tōru

1879  Born in Tokyo as the second son among twelve children of a judge.
1904  Graduated from the Faculty of Law, the University of Tokyo. Become a bureaucrat and served the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce. Engaged in implementation of the Factory Law and Mine Law.
1912  Transferred to the Ministry of Transportation.
1920  Left the bureaucracy and appointed as an executive director of the Cooperation Association.
1925  Received a PhD in Economics.
1933  Appointed as a Director of the APP.
1940  Appointed as a Consultant of the IPP.
1946  Appointed as an Executive Director of the APP.
1949  Appointed as a Director of the Population Association of Japan.
1951  Appointed as the Chief Director of the APP.
1952  Appointed as an Adviser of the JPPF.
1956  Appointed as a Director and as Acting President of the New Life Movement Association.
1957  Appointed as the President of the Population Association of Japan.
1960  Honoured with the Medal of Blue Ribbon.
1964  Honoured with the Order of the Sacred Treasure, Gold and Silver Star.

(Shinozaki 1983: 55)

Kitaoka Juitsu

1889  Born in Nara prefecture.
1918  Graduated from the Faculty of Law, the University of Tokyo. Became a bureaucrat and served the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce, Firstly, assigned to the Mining Bureau, then to the
Social Bureau, the **Home Ministry**. Engaged in legislation of the Factory Law, and appointed as a Japanese government representative to the ILO.

1939 Transferred to the **IPP**. Also, started lecturing in social policy at the Faculty of Economics, the University of Tokyo.

1944 Organized a stop-the-war campaign with Watanabe Izō and Ashida Hitoshi.

1945 Appointed as the Vice Chief Director of the Housing Corporation.

1946 Appointed as the Head of the Fourth Section (labour problems) of the **Economic Stabilization Board**. Around this time, started to organize the **Birth Control Popularization Association** with Katō Shizue.

1948 Recruited as the Head of Tōhō Kinuta Studio to take on the unions.

1949 Appointed as Professor of the Faculty of Political Economy of Kokugakuin University in Tokyo. Taught labour laws and social policy. Also, around this time, started to organize a re-armament movement.

1950 Visited the US and met Margaret Sanger.

1954 Established the **Japan Planned Parenthood Federation** with Katō, Nagai and Koya.

1955 Hosted the **International Planned Parenthood Convention** as the Head of Secretariat.

1960 Received PhD in Economics.

1972 Retired from Kokugakuin University.

(Kitaoka 1976)

**Koya Yoshio**

1890 Born in Ōita prefecture.

1915 Graduated from the Faculty of Medicine, the University of Tokyo. After having been an Assistant in the Faculty of Medicine, the University of Tokyo, was appointed as an Associate Professor of Chiba University. Then, went to Germany to study hygiene. After returning to Japan, became a Professor of the Faculty of Medicine, Kanazawa University.

1939 Appointed as a technical expert of the **Ministry of Health and Welfare**. Assigned to the **Bureau of Physical Strength**.

1940 Appointed as the Head of National Strength Section, the Welfare Science Institute.

1947 Appointed as the Chief of the **National Institute of Public Hygiene**. Since then, while remaining in this post, took the various public positions including the President of the **Japan Planned Parenthood Federation**, the Vice President of the **International Planned Parenthood Federation**, the President of the Japan Population
Association. Also became a member of Central Eugenic Insurance Screening Committee and a member of the International Population Problem Study Federation.

1966 Honoured with the Order of Rising Sun, Gold and Silver.

(Sankei Shinbunsha 1972)

Tachi Minoru

1907 Born in Mie prefecture.
1929 Graduated from the Faculty of Economics, the University of Tokyo.
1933 Appointed as a researcher of the APP.
1937 Appointed as a temporary officer of the Social Bureau, the Home Ministry.
1938 Appointed as a research officer of the IPP, the Ministry of Health and Welfare. From December, appointed as a Statistics Officer of the Cabinet Statistics Bureau.
1941 Appointed as a research officer of the Institute of Economic Planning. Transferred to the Ministry of Transportation.
1942 Appointed as the Head of Population Policy Department, the IPP.
1946 Appointed as the Head of General Affairs Department, the IPP.
1950 Appointed as an Executive Director of the APP.
1953 Appointed as a Specialist Member of the Population Problems Advisory Council.
1958 Appointed as a member of the National Pension Preparation Committee.
1959 Appointed as the Director of the IPP.
1960 Received a PhD in Economics.
1961 Appointed as a councillor of the National Genetics Research Centre. Also, appointed as a temporary member of the Economic Advisory Council.
1972 Honoured with the Order of the Sacred Treasure, Gold and Silver Star.

(Shinozaki 1983: 118)

Katō Shizue

1897 Born in Tokyo.
1920 Went to the US with Baron Ishimoto. Stayed in New York until 1920, and met Margaret Sanger.
1922 Sanger visited Japan. Established the Japan Birth Control Study Society. Also, translated The Pivot of Civilization written by Sanger.

1924 Joined the Women’s Suffrage League.

1931 Established the Japan Birth Control League.

1932 Established the Japan Women’s League for Birth Control.

1934 With Kawasaki Natsu, opened a birth control consultation centre in Tokyo.

1937 A governmental closure order was placed on Katō’s centre.

1944 Divorced from Baron Ishimoto and remarried with a unionist Katō Kanjū.

1945 Acted as an informal consultant to the Occupation Force.

1946 Elected as a member of the House of the Representatives. Joined the SPJ.

1950 Elected as a member of the House of the Councillors.

1954 Established the Japan Planned Parenthood Federation.

1960 Appointed as the Vice President of the Japan Planned Parenthood Federation.

1972 Honoured as a long-term serving member of the House of the Councillors.

1973 Appointed as the President of the Japan Planned Parenthood Federation. Retired from politics.

1988 Honoured with the UN Population Award.

(S. Kaneko 1999: Appendices 6–17)

Note: organizations mentioned in the previous chapters are highlighted in bold.
# Appendix B

Statistics regarding abortion, eugenic operations and total fertility rate

**Table A** The number of abortions (screening)

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
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Source: Adapted from Ōta 1967: 181; Tsuge, Ichinokawa and Katō 1996: 387

Note: The screening for implementation of abortion was abolished by the 1952 revision of the Eugenics Protection Law (Chapter 2)

**Table B** The number of eugenic operations (National Eugenics Law)

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Source: Adapted from Tsuge, Ichinokawa and Katō 1996: 379
### Appendix B

#### Table C  The number of abortions (voluntary)

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Source: Adapted from Ōta 1967: 181; Tsuge, Ichinokawa and Katō 1996: 387
The number of eugenic operations (Eugenics Protection Law)

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Source: Adapted from Tsuge, Ichinokawa and Katō 1996: 381–3
Figure A  Total fertility rate (1948–2002)
Appendix C
The New Life Movement

Companies involved in the New Life Movement

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Denden Kōsha telecommunications
Nihon Kōtsū Kōsha travel
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Osaka Gasu gas
Kashima Kensetsu construction
Mitsubishi Kōgyō mining
Furukawa Kōgyō mining
Shōwa Denkō electrical engineering
Nihon Kokuyū Tetsudō railway
Nihon Bikutā electrical appliance
Keisei Dentetsu railway
Hokuetsu Seishi paper
Hitachi Seisakujo electrical appliance
Kobe Seikō steelmaking
Kokusai Denshin Denwa international telecommunications
Mitsubishi Kinzoku Kōgyō mining
Mitsubishi Denki electrical appliance
Chūbu Denryoku electricity
Mitsubishi Jisho real estate
Nissan Jidōsha automobile
Yahata Seitetsu steelmaking
Nihon Seikō steelmaking
Tōbu Tetsudō railway

(Ajia Kazoku Keikaku Fukyū Kyōkai 1959)
Introduction

1 The term ‘government’ requires differentiation from the term ‘state’. As Hague, Harrop and Breslin explain, the former generally ‘consists of all those organizations charged with the task of reaching decisions for the whole community’ (Hague, Harrop and Breslin 1998: 5), and the latter rather refers to ‘a political community formed by territorially-defined population which is subject to one government’ (Hague, Harrop and Breslin 1998: 6). In addition to this, I use the term ‘nation-state’, following Anderson’s influential discussion, in order to emphasize ‘imaginary’ aspects in construction of ‘a limited community’, namely ‘state’, inside a particular territory (Anderson 1991: 5–7).

2 For the concept of ‘total war’, see Chapter 1, note 9.

3 It needs to be noted that, as will be discussed in the later chapters of this book, the eugenic control of the national population was not limited to the rule of the Nazis in Germany, and that eugenics was considered as an advanced technology of government over the nation-state at one stage of history.

1 Reproduction and governmentality

1 For example, in categorizing Dahl’s definition of power as ‘one-dimensional power’, Lukes argues that it was essential for the power concept to have expanded its scope to become a better tool for political analysis. He argues that the ‘two dimensional view’, presented by Bachrach and Baratz, ‘incorporates into the analysis of power relations the question of the control over the agenda of politics and of the way in which potential issues are kept out of the political process’ (Lukes 1974: 21). Furthermore, he maintains that the concept of power needs to shed light on latent conflict, by extending the concept of power into the ‘three dimensional view of power’, which considers ‘the many ways in which potential issues are kept out of politics, whether through the operation of social forces and institutional practices or through individual decisions’ (Lukes 1974: 24). Lukes’ discussion can be summarized as an attempt to reveal aspects of ‘power’ which cannot be externally observed.

2 Needless to say, ‘reproduction’ is a key theme of economics since Marx.

3 Research on the practices of creating and bringing up the next generation is the most fundamental theme of anthropology since B. K. Malinowski (Malinowski 1930). Another well-known example is a classic theorization of forms of families by George P. Murdock (Murdock 1949).

4 For example, the work by Basil Bernstein (Atkinson, Davis and Delamont 1995).

5 See Bourdieu (1986) and Bourdieu and Passeron (1990).
‘Governmentality’ has a certain relationship with ‘governance’, a term that has recently received particular attention among scholars. Although the two terms have sometimes been used as virtual synonyms, the analytics of governmentality are, according to Rose, differentiated from sociologies of governance and rule in the following two respects. Firstly, ‘analyses of governmentalities are empirical, but not realist’, as ‘they are not studies of the actual organization and operation of systems of rule’, but ‘of a particular “stratum” of knowing and acting’. In other words, they ‘are concerned, that is to say, with the conditions of possibility and intelligibility for certain ways of seeking to act upon the conduct of others, or oneself, to achieve certain ends’. Secondly, the roles of the analytics of government is ‘diagnostic rather than descriptive’ and ‘they seek an open and critical relation to strategies for governing’, and in so doing, ‘open a space of critical thought’ (Rose 1999: 19).

For example, Dean discusses ‘authoritarian governmentality’, though as he says, ‘the literature of governmentality usually stresses the study of rule in liberal democracy’ (Dean 1999: 131).

For example, Yoshimi (1992) provides analysis on proliferation of the Foucauldian powers in the Japanese modernization process, while Ochiai (1987) examines transitions in abortion/childbirth practices in the Edo period that introduce rational control over sexuality and bodies into ordinary people’s everyday lives, comparable to Foucault’s argument in *History of Sexuality Volume 1*.

Kôketsu explains that ‘total war’ can be characterized in the following three ways. First, it advanced the extent of destruction caused by fighting, while it required the maintenance of resources in order to survive the long-run war. For this purpose, secondly, controls in the economy and industrial production became crucial for the national government. Thirdly, in order to maintain comprehensive control of the economy and industry, the government needed to avoid any political opposition, and for this purpose, the government started to commit itself to ideological and mental control of its population (Kôketsu 1981: 12–15).

Rose and Miller note that this term is an adaptation of Bruno Latour’s notion of ‘action at a distance’ (1992: 203 note 18).

It needs to be noted that in the fascist regimes such as Germany or Italy the extent of social mobilization, and consequently the extent of rationalization and systematization, appeared more intensive, although it also needs to be emphasized that the process itself can be seen across the division of the wartime alliance. In National Socialist Germany, aid and relief for women, children and youth were reinforced under the wartime welfare regime. The same phenomena can be witnessed in both Italy and Japan.

Pierson writes: ‘just as Marx took the work of the classical political economists and sought to press their premises to radically new conclusions, so do contemporary Marxist writers find much to endorse in the New Right’s morphology of the problems of welfare capitalism’. However, as Pierson also states in the latter part of the paragraph, this does not mean that the neo-Marxists and neo-liberals have different ideas to explain ‘cause-effect’; their labelling of the contradictions of the welfare state can demonstrate this situation. While the neo-liberals maintain that the contradictions and problems of the welfare state are due to ‘the excess of democracy/socialism’, for the neo-Marxists they are due to ‘the contradictions of capitalism’ (Pierson 1991: 49).

For example, in her analysis on the distributional process of social welfare transfers in America, Joan Acker tells us that the social benefits system is based on a particular premise of ‘normalcy’ of the family and, consequently, it sometimes misfunctions for women or ethnic minorities who do not fit into this ‘normalcy’ category (Acker 1988: 489–95).
Rose refers to Hayek and Friedman for this definition of ‘enterprise’. According to Heelas and Morris, who cited the comment in their article, it was made in the Conservative Summer School in 1979 (Heelas and Morris 1992: 1).

Rose emphasizes the role of therapeutic manoeuvres for construction of ‘the enterprise of self’ (Rose 1992: 147–53).

According to Fraser and Gordon, in the US, this bifurcation of welfare benefits was consolidated during the New Deal era. However, this pattern of categorization is found in Britain and Japan, in the way that social welfare benefits are categorized either as ‘social insurance’, which is supposed to allow contributors to take back what has been already paid, and welfare allowance, which usually requires some kind of ‘means testing’ and consequently is more stigmatizing for the receivers.

This comment was extracted from an interview published in Women’s Own in 1987. It was Heelas and Morris (1992) who first turned my attention to this statement.

The criticism towards the welfare state system in the different industrially advanced countries of course shows some degree of variation depending on national contexts. For example, while neo-liberalist reforms by Mrs Thatcher and President Reagan coincided on both sides of the Atlantic, in other European countries, for example, France and Germany, social democratic forces exercised a certain influence. Yet, the problems such as ungovernability due to inefficiency as a governing system and the deficiency in democracy were commonly discussed across industrially advanced countries (Offé 1988: 70–7; Offé 1993: 196–201; Donzelot 1991: 174–6; Sugiyama 1985: 72–9; Melucci 1989: 165–79).

As regard the silence over the concept of ‘gender’ in studies of governmentality, there are two points that need to be made. First, the concept of ‘gender’ was generally ‘invisible’ (Cook and Robert 2000: 3) in various disciplines in the social sciences. Secondly, Foucauldian thought has an ambivalent relationship with feminist academic endeavours. While Foucault’s work has offered essential analytic tools for the development of feminist studies for the last decade, as seen in, for example, the influential work by Scott or Butler, it has also thrown doubt on such core concepts for feminists as ‘patriarchy’, ‘freedom’ and ‘truth’ (Ramazanoğlu 1993: 4–8).

Numerous scholars have already pointed out that the term ‘family’ (or its Japanese equivalent, kazoku) often functions as a normative framework. For example, Gubrium and Holstein argue that ‘if family reality is the product of descriptive practice, family discourse can be understood as a form of social action through which aspects of social life not only are assigned meaning but also are organized and manipulated – that is, controlled’ (Gubrium and Holstein 1990: 132). The same point has been made by, for example, Ehara (1991b) in the Japanese context.

Badinter provides a detailed description of childcare situations and motherhood when Rousseau wrote Emile. It is worth noting that ‘children’ did not exist, in a contemporary sense, until the modern society was firmly established (Badinter 1981: 6–114). Badinter’s argument is grounded on an influential work by Ariès that argues transitions in ways of recognizing ‘childhood’ from medieval to modern Europe. According to him, it was only in the late eighteenth century that children became an existence that needed to be educated under protection of adult tutelage (Ariès 1985). Although there are still some controversies over Ariès’ work, it is important to note that children appeared to become an object of educational attempts in the course of modernization.
The creation of a modern reproductive system in prewar Japan

As Maruyama wrote in the preface to the English translation of *Nihon Seiji Shisōshi Kenkyū* (the title of the English translation version is *Studies in the Intellectual History of Tokugawa Japan*) that originally included the article, the article was written just before Maruyama was called up by the Japanese army as a private. Maruyama completed it as his ‘last testament’ on the morning he was going to leave for camp. Influenced by this background, the article contains some contentious tones (Maruyama himself describes it in terms of ‘some pathetic tones’) (Maruyama 1974: xxxiii; Maruyama 1996 vol. 12: 96), which have been discussed in the controversy concerning Maruyama in the 1990s. For critics of Maruyama, see for example, Sakai (1997: 68–77), *Daikōkai* no. 18 (October, 1997), and *Gendaishisho* vol. 22 no. 1 (January 1994) (both special issues concerning Maruyama Masao).

The details of the conflict that Maruyama mentioned here are as follows. Since May 1863, Chōshū-han (a fief roughly equivalent with present-day Yamaguchi prefecture) implemented the order of ‘jōi’ (exclusion of foreigners). The US, Britain, France and the Netherlands formed an allied marine force and occupied Shimonoseki. After this conflict, ‘jōi’ lost its appeal as a diplomatic policy inside Chōshū-han, and was replaced by the opposite attitude and policy that were positively committed to importing foreign ‘modern’ techniques and knowledge. This policy after the conflict was closely linked to the policy of the Meiji government, as Chōshū-han played a principal role throughout the process of abolishing the Tokugawa Shogunate and establishing the Meiji government.

The term ‘jōsei no kokuminka’ generally represents what is discussed under the concept of the ‘nationalization of women’ in English academic writings. Here, I intentionally employ a phrase ‘incorporation of women into nation-state’, instead of the ‘nationalization of women’, a common translation of the term, in order to emphasize the importance of functions of state as a governing mechanism in the Japanese context.

Said (1979) discusses the political implications of representations of difference as ‘Otherness’. In his oft-cited book, *Orientalism*, Said argues:

> Orientalism is never far from what Denys Hay has called the idea of Europe, a collective notion identifying ‘us’, European as against all ‘those’ non-Europeans, and indeed it can be argued that the major component in European culture is precisely what made that culture hegemonic both in and outside Europe: the idea of European identity as a superior one in comparison with all the non-European peoples and cultures. There is in addition the hegemony of European ideas about the Orient, themselves reiterating European superiority over Oriental backwardness, usually overriding the possibility that a more independent, or more sceptical, thinker might have had different views on the matter.

(Said 1979: 7)

Nishikawa discusses the problematics of Orientalism in the Japanese context. By pointing out that the trend of Westernization and nationalism respectively came to prevail in the Japanese modernization process, the presence of ‘the West’, often represented by ‘civilization’, has been recognized as an external presence, namely the ‘Other’, with which ‘Japan’ as an entity should either identify or refuse to identify (Nishikawa 1992: 94–101). Sakai also argues that the homogeneous ‘West’, which represents ‘universality’, is a quintessential part of discourses on ‘Japan’ and ‘Japaneseness’, namely ‘particularity’ (Sakai 1997:...
3–50). In other words, the West has been recognized in Japan as something ‘non-Japanese’, that is, the Other that defines what Japan is.

5 Before its corruption, the Tokugawa Shogunate agreed to conclude two important treaties, first, with the US, and then with other states such as Britain, Russia, the Netherlands and France under the pressure of possible military aggression. Those treaties, the peace and amenity treaties in 1854 and the commercial treaty of 1857, contained several unequal provisions for Japan such as jurisdiction by the consulate or the denial of tariff autonomy. These two provisions became and were perceived as a great burden on the newly established government, and ‘national symbols’ of Japanese inferiority. The Meiji government was enthusiastically committed to amendment of these two provisions, and jurisdiction by the consulate was abolished in 1894, and tariff autonomy was recovered in 1911.

6 The Meirokusha was established in 1873. It was primarily an enlightenment group consisting of politicians, bureaucrats and educators who generally had experience of being abroad. Its magazine the ‘Meiroku Zasshi’ aimed to broaden the knowledge of the Japanese people. The main contributors to the magazine included Fukuzawa Yukichi, the founder of Keio University, Mori Arinori who was Minister of Education in 1885, Nishi Amane who later drafted the Imperial Rescript to Soldiers and Sailors (Gunjin Chokuyu), Nakamura Masanao who was a professor at Tokyo Women’s Normal School (Tokyo Joshi Shihan Gakkô) and the University of Tokyo, Katô Hiroyuki who became the chancellor of the University of Tokyo in 1890, and Tsuda Mamichi who was a legal bureaucrat.

7 Kaneko points out that the discourse promulgated by the Meirokusha writers tends to emphasize the value of a good domestic relationship between men and women and the importance of women’s domestic role, but not to mention issues that violated the British Victorian domestic norms such as women’s political participation, eligibility for property rights and the right of economic autonomy that John Stuart Mill, who deeply influenced the Meirokusha writers, discussed (S. Kaneko 1999: 48–50).

8 According to Hastings, Mori and his wife Hirose Tsuneko wore Western-style wedding costumes at their wedding ceremony in 1875 (Hastings 1999: 5). At that time, the Meiji government attempted to introduce Western style clothes instead of Japanese traditional costume into everyday life. In 1872, the Western style became the formal costume of the imperial and governmental ceremonies, and since then, the Meiji Emperor appeared in Western-style military uniform. Senior governmental officials followed the Emperor, and then the general conscription system enacted in 1873 popularized the Western-style clothing among men. Compared to men, the introduction of the female Western-style costume came later. In 1886, the Empress decided to dress Western-style and ordered her imperial servants to follow. Wives of governmental officials also adopted the Empress’s new dress code. Hastings points out that this transition concurred with the introduction of Western style clothing into school uniforms for female higher education and nursing occupations, and concludes that the Empress’s new dress represented women’s importance in Japanese modern nation-building (Hastings 1999: 6–11).

9 In this phrase, ‘prenatal’ is supposed to be a translation of the Japanese word ‘senten’, which means ‘before being born’ or ‘by nature’. As Nakamura discussed the transmission of knowledge and techniques from generation to generation, ‘prenatal’ seems to be too specific as a translation, and I would argue that ‘Not having had adequate educational nourishment by nature’ is more appropriate in this case.

10 Numerous Christian schools were established in many regions across Japan from the late nineteenth century, and contributed to female education (Nakajima 1984: 106).
11 For example, Mori became the Minister of Education and introduced the general school system. Nakamura later taught at the Tokyo Women's Normal School (Tokyo Joshi Shihan Gakkō), which is one of the first schools that provided women with advanced levels of education.

12 Interestingly, Takii informs us that both Fukuzawa and Mori had some personal contacts with Lorenz von Stein in the 1880s, a German academic whose work on state administrative institutions can be located in the tradition of the studies on Polizei, one current of thoughts in which Foucault found a way of thinking of governementality (Chapter 1). Von Stein is generally known for having lectured Itō Hirobumi on constitutional theories and public administration during Itō's stay in Vienna as a governmental envoy to research on European constitutions. Besides Itō, or through Itō's introduction, many high-ranked bureaucrats, politicians and academics visited or wrote to von Stein to have some tuition from him. According to Takii, particularly, one of von Stein's influence on the construction of the political system in early Meiji period through Itō can be observed through the systematization of the state higher education, in particular, the Faculty of Law and Politics, the University of Tokyo, which was posited as an academic institution to train professionals that have knowledge and competence to govern modern states (Takii 1999: 208–12). Fukuzawa exchanged letters with von Stein (Takii 1999: 120). Also, Mori initially got to know about von Stein's thoughts through Itō and later asked von Stein for comments on Mori’s blueprint of state-building (Takii 1999: 222).

13 This provision was revised in 1907 in a more strict way, and the amended provision still remains in the current criminal code. As result of this, abortion is technically illegal under the contemporary Japanese legal system.

14 Narisawa points out that the hygiene focus of administration in the early Meiji period was sterilization of polluted space, interception of the traffic, enforced isolation of infected persons, and well-planned management of space for prevention of diseases. In this sense, the hygiene administration was not designed to maintain the general health of regional residents, but aimed to increase the strength and wealth of the nation-state as well as to maintain security (Narisawa 1991: 96).

15 At the regional level, semi-governmental cooperative associations for hygiene purposes were established in the 1880s. Those organizations played a certain role in transmitting hygiene knowledge to each house and in organizing such activities as collective immunization or cleaning for infectious disease prevention regulated in the Infectious Disease Prevention Law established in 1897 (Narita 1990: 93–4). According to Narisawa, however, the regional cooperative associations were failed projects in the overall scheme of the hygiene administration, as the main objective of the policy lay in an increase in the strength of the Japanese nation, not in the health of the population (Narisawa 1991: 96). Although Narisawa’s comment focusing on the national level of policy-making needs to be taken into account, it is also important to pay attention to regional-level activities in order to analyze women’s policies, especially reproductive policies (Bock and Thane 1991: 3).

16 An ‘opinion magazine’ carries intellectually challenging articles and reviews regarding politics, society, economics and other social sciences as well as fiction.

17 Since the ‘ie’ system was an essential component of the prewar civil code and administrative system, and it was considered a major institutional deficiency that led Japan towards military aggression, there has been much research conducted on this topic. In the traditional literature on the ‘ie’, it was considered as a remnant of the feudal system, especially in its terminology derived from Confucian principles. However, recent developments in research have questioned the conventional theory, and have discussed elements of modernity within the ‘ie’
system. Ueno’s remark that the ‘ie’ was a modern invention (Ueno 1994: 69) is probably its most extreme expression. Ochiai summarizes the discussion regarding modern elements of the ‘ie’ system, and concludes that it can no longer be contended that the prewar ‘ie’ defined the nature of the modern family (Ochiai 1996: 42).

18 Around the turn of the century, a number of magazines targeting women and girls were established (S. Kaneko 1999: 96).

19 Hatoyama was recognized as a very distinguished wife and mother at that time. Hatoyama’s husband Kazuo was a law scholar who studied abroad and a member of the Faculty of Law and Politics, the University of Tokyo. He was also associated with Kokkagakkai, an academic association of the faculty, which was inspired by von Stein’s work (Takii 1999: 256–7). As his wife, Hatoyama Haruko acted like a Victorian housewife who understood and helped her husband. She raised her two sons to be elite bureaucrats who later became a Prime Minister and a professor of the University of Tokyo. Added to those achievements as a housewife, she also engaged in social activities, and later became headmistress of a private girl’s school (Komano 1975: 212–13).

20 The typical and well-read literature of the ‘ryōsai kenbo’ ideology is Fukaya (1990) or Nakajima (1984).

21 Even in Britain or the US, it was only in the late nineteenth century that housekeeping became a subject of scientific research, and rationalized and scientific knowledge started to be required in order to manage homes. Modern domestic science books such as ones written by Beeton or the Beachers appeared in the 1860s, and since then the scientific side was pursued in order to systematize knowledge of housekeeping. Nutritional knowledge, precise measuring methods and other modern knowledge such as hygiene, psychology, or bacteriology were incorporated into the knowledge system of domestic science. In 1876, Ellen Richards established the Women’s Laboratory at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology with support from the Women’s Education Association organized by Catherine Beacher, and created the course for women to learn ‘the science of housekeeping’, which resulted in an increase in the numbers of female students at MIT (Kashiwagi 1995: 58). In Britain, the Department of Domestic and Social Science was established by merging courses at London University and King’s College in 1908 (Nihon Kasei Gakkai 1990: 67). The history of domestic science in Britain and the US suggests that when the Japanese government attempted to absorb knowledge of domestic science, it was still a newly emerging cutting-edge intellectual movement.

22 Both of the Japanese sound ‘po’ and ‘bo’ are derivatives of the sound of ‘ho’. Ōe here used them interchangeably.

23 A Japanese word seitō is an equivalent of ‘blue-stocking’, which refers to a literary circle of women founded in eighteenth-century London, and secondarily female intellectuals, literary women or feminists.

24 Women’s exclusion from politics was set by the following laws: Regulations of Municipality (Shisei/Chōsonsei/Gunsei/Fukensei) in 1888; the Law on Election of the House of Representatives (Shūgiin Gii Senkyo Hō) in 1889; the Law on Association and Meetings (Shūkai oyobi Seisha Hō) in 1890 (later revised as the Security Police Law (Chian Keisatsu Hō) in 1900); and the Meiji civil codes (Meiji Minpō) in 1898. All texts are included in Ichikawa (1977). Before these laws were enacted, there were some female political activists, and women’s political participation was openly discussed. Also, historical records, which show that some municipal authorities allowed women’s political participation or voting rights still remain (Ichikawa 1977: 33; Tachi 1994: 127–9; Nolte and Hastings 1991: 154–7).
See Itō (1915) and Yamada (1915). In their article, an anarchist Iō, who later became the partner of Ōsugi Sakae and was slaughtered by the Japanese military corp together with him in 1926, emotionally addressed the idea that abortion was an act against nature, while Yamada, who later enthusiastically promoted ‘national motherhood’ (kokkateki bosei), maintained that abortion and contraception are immoral because they destroy personal happiness and the state’s prosperity.

Ellen Key’s theory provided Hiratsuka with the essential intellectual and personal foundation. Key’s theory was introduced through review articles in her book *Love and Marriage* (an English translation) in *Taiyō*. Hiratsuka learned about Key from Taiyō’s articles. She was deeply influenced, and published abridged translations of chapters from *Love and Marriage* in *Seitō*. Hiratsuka later joined a private study circle organized by Yamada Kakichi, husband of Yamada Waka, and further studied Key’s writings (Shimada 1975: 190–3; S. Kaneko 1999: 134–6).

The *Fujin Kōron* was established by Shimanaka Yūsaku as a sister magazine of *Chūō Kōron*, which was and still is a leading opinion magazine in Japan. According to Kaneko, Shimanaka planned the *Fujin Kōron* to be proud of being ‘the most high quality magazine in Japan’, and featured issues such as women’s suffrage, female labour, education and love/marriage targeting educated women (S. Kaneko 1999:105).

Yamakawa Kikue was one of the most prominent socialist feminists in modern Japanese history, who was appointed as the first chief of the Bureau of Women and Children, Ministry of Labour after the Second World War, and also wife of a leading socialist activist and theorist, Yamakawa Hitoshi.

Ehara argues in her book published in 1988 that the question of equality/difference is misleading in the sense that answering both yes and no to the question just leads women to a pitfall. While answering ‘yes’ justifies the different treatment of women, which mostly resulted in continuing unfair treatment, answering ‘no’ forces women to act just as men do, which mostly leads women to be failed or inferior men, i.e. a second-rate status. Accordingly, for each woman, what this question actually means is whether to accept or reject women’s ‘destiny’ (Ehara 1988: 15–17).

This was a debate between Aoki Yayoi and Ueno Chizuko at the Women’s Studies Conference in 1985. When Aoki advocated ecological feminism that tends to emphasize ‘the women’s principle’ influenced by Ivan Illich’s *Gender*; Ueno criticized the reactionary nature and the political pitfalls of ‘the women’s principle’ (Ueno 1994: 135–6; Nishikawa 1997: 237).

Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1860–1935) was a leading activist and theorist of the American suffrage movement. Olive Schreiner (1855–1920) was born in South Africa, and later joined the British peace and suffrage movements. After returning to her home country, she also engaged in anti-racism activities. Both influenced Japanese feminists and the intellectual world as much as Key had at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Article 5 of the Security Police Law prohibited women from attending or organizing political meetings. Ichikawa (1977) contains the text (139–40).


An American historian Sheldon Garon translates the original Japanese word of the Everyday Life Improvement Movement ‘Seikatsu Kaizen Undō’ as the Daily Life Improvement Campaign, as for him, it is one example of the governmental moral suasion campaign undertaken during ‘the past hundred years of governance in modern Japan’ (Garon 1997: 8). He maintains that the modern Japanese government made tremendous efforts in order to turn people into active partici-
pants in the state’s various projects, and in order to do so, moral suasion (kyōka), which can be equated to ‘moral reform’ and ‘moral education’, was implemented by the bureaucracy for ‘social management’, which is a term coined by Garon. According to Garon, he uses the term ‘social management’ for analyzing the Japanese situation, with reference to ‘social control’ that is a concept derived from, though he does not mention the Foucauldian term itself, the study on governmentality by Foucault and others. He argues that in Japan the direct role of the state needs to be more highlighted compared to the US, Britain and France – the most liberal democratic politics – where ‘social control’ is often discussed and therefore there is a need for a differentiated term.

I would argue, however, the term ‘campaign’ does not sufficiently convey the meanings of the Japanese term ‘undō’, and hence I here employ ‘movement’ rather than ‘campaign’, although I agree with Garon in terms of the strong state presence. In his article outlining the theoretical framework to analyze Japanese ‘undō’ as a political phenomenon, Takabatake points out the difference in nuance between Japanese ‘undō’ and different English terms that are often used as equivalents in social science texts. While English ‘movement’ merely suggests, he explains, the dynamics, in comparison to the static represented by the political institution, ‘undō’ means ‘moving bodies actively and autonomously’ which includes movements of a person, minority or government that are generally in English-written texts of social science dealt with as ‘action’, ‘activity’, ‘agitation’ or ‘campaign’ with a distancing from the context of mass movements. Yet, according to Takabatake, the Western way of distinguishing campaign from movement has resulted in losing the connotation of activeness and autonomy that Japanese term ‘undō’ continues to maintain (Takabatake 1983: 186–8). Considering such discussion, both ‘movement’ and ‘campaign’ have some problems as translations. My decision to employ ‘movement’ has been made by taking the ‘autonomous’ and ‘active’ elements of the Everyday Life Improvement Movement into account. As I discuss later, although it was semi-governmental, the ‘Seikatsu Kaizen Undō’ could develop its activity and widely attain the involvement of people, as in one sense it met the desire of middle class. Hence, the term ‘movement’, which is associated with the concept of ‘social movements’, appears less misleading than ‘campaign’ in order to stress the dynamic process of the ‘Seikatsu Kaizen Undō’.

Related to this, I would also argue that Garon possibly oversimplifies the Foucauldian discussion on ‘governmentality’, although he does not use this term in his text. Garon’s explanation of social control remains in the dichotomized scheme of state/civil society or control/resistance. However, what Foucault and his colleagues argued in studies on governmentality is multiple relationships of power deployed in liberal democratic politics, in which resistance to power does not only mean ‘struggle against authority’, but ‘transversal’, ‘immediate’ struggle that aims ‘the power effect as such’ or ‘questions the status of individuals’ and opposes the effects of power which are linked with knowledge, competence and qualification (Foucault 1983/2000: 329–31). Hence, as discussed in Chapter 1, power here ‘represents the potential fluidity of social relations’ (Nash 2000: 25) where the double-binding subjection lies at the heart of the struggle of/for power. Consequently, Garon’s summary of the Foucauldian discussion with the term ‘social control’, it seems to me, only covers half of the discussion on governmentality.

35 It was the rice riots organized by women which occurred in 1918 that directly turned the state’s attention to rural women, especially housewives. Reacting to soaring rice prices, women in a fishing village in Toyama Prefecture rose in revolt, and demanded the reduction of rice and other commodity prices. This
incident spilled over nationwide. In total, riots happened in thirty-six prefectures, lasted for three months and in total 700,000 people joined in the protest.

36 The Everyday Life Improvement Movement was implemented in Okinawa, a Southern island incorporated in the Japanese nation-state after the Meiji Restoration. According to Amemiya, it was ‘an effort (at least the Okinawans involved were concerned) to transform Okinawans from “peripheral Japanese” into mainstream “Japanese”’ (Amemiya 1999b: 162).

37 Commenting on the popularization of the term ‘shakai kaizō’ (social reform), Kobayashi maintains that the term ‘shakai kaizō’ was an ideological expression that represented a social trend claiming a new social order around that time. According to him, the bureaucrats at the Ministry of Education who joined in fostering the Everyday Life Movement ‘sensitively reacted’ to this trend among the populace (Kobayashi 1984: 314).

38 Iwamoto Yoshiharu was a pioneer of female education and journalism targeting women. He established the first women’s magazine Jogaku Zasshi in 1885, as well as engaging in the management of Meiji Women’s School, which was one of the first schools that provided education based on Christianity. Iwamoto was an enthusiastic advocate of the ‘reform of women’ in the sense that he believed that to be a ‘better-half’ at home is women’s calling, and made a contribution to ‘the reform of women’ in order to turn women into competent wives and mothers (Katano 1978: 43–53; S. Kaneko 1999: 69). He also supported the Japanese Christian Temperance Association (S. Kaneko 1999: 84) which was known for its campaign to abolish the public prostitution system, and later took an important part in the women’s suffrage movement.

39 According to Kaneko, the Shufu no Tomo recorded the highest monthly number of copies sold in Japan in 1920. In 1931, it sold 0.6 million copies and 1.8 million copies in 1941 (Kaneko 1999: 149). Even during the Second World War, the magazine kept selling a high number of issues, in contrast to the fact that many other magazines were driven to cease publishing or reduced the number of issues under military control. The founder of the Shufu no Tomo, Ishikawa Takeyoshi was purged from public office by the General Headquarters (GHQ) of the Supreme Command for the Allied Powers (SCAP) after the war due to war cooperation activities. Wakakuwa analyses drawings in the Shufu no Tomo during the war in order to discuss women’s war cooperation (Wakakuwa 1995/2000: 156–263).

40 The Taylor system, also called ‘scientific management’, is a management system of factories based on behavioural science. It was designed by an American technician, Frederick Winslow Taylor in the early twentieth century, and was imported into the Japanese military and companies from the 1910s to the 1920s (Mita, Kurihara and Tanaka 1988: 128 and 622).

41 For example, the Everyday Life Reforms Exhibition in 1919 attracted 107,670 visitors during about three months, the Children’s Hygiene Exhibition in 1920 approximately 250,000 during about one month, and the Consumption Economics Exhibition in 1922 126,407 during about one month (Koyama 1999:113).

42 One of the main agendas of the Everyday Life Improvement Movement was the introduction of the rational management of household economy into everyday life. This was linked with the then governmental campaign on promotion of saving, which, as Garon rightly points out, aimed at accumulating the national financial resource (Garon 2000: 46–8).

43 Gauntlett Tsuneko was a senior member of the Women’s Suffrage League and the Japan Women’s Temperance Association. Inoue Hideko, Ōe Sumi, Kaetsu Takako, Kiuchi Kiyau and Yoshioka Yayoi were senior members of the Women’s Fellowship Association (Fujin Dōshikai), which was a more moderate and conservative organization than the Women’s Suffrage League. According to
Koyama, a conservative part of the Women’s Suffrage League including Kaetsu, Kiuchi and Yoshioka joined the Women’s Fellowship Association under the influence of the Democratic Party (Minseitō) (Koyama 1999: 214–15).

Inoue wrote an article in the 1920s asserting that women were not yet ready and mature enough to undertake and implement political rights. Despite that, she engaged in the Everyday Life Improvement Movement, and in 1930 she embarked on her commitment to the suffrage movement with a comparatively conservative attitude of emphasizing femaleness (Inoue 1930: 376).

The birth control movement spontaneously became prominent in Europe and the US in the late nineteenth century, and it was not only Margaret Sanger who was committed to the birth control movement around this time as can be seen in the example of the court case of Besant and Bradlaugh in 1876 and Dr Marie Stopes in Britain. However, as Sanger held an internationally prominent position in the birth control movement that later developed into the family planning movement, and the Japanese birth control movement was deeply influenced by her, this section focuses upon Sanger’s birth control movement.

The Neo-Malthusian League was established in Britain in 1879. Neo-Malthusianism promoted the commitment to artificial methods (i.e., contraception, abortion) in order to control the national population for the limitation of economic competence and to avoid the proliferation of poverty, while Malthus himself, as a cleric, recommended sexual abstinence (Ogino 1991: 186).

In the US, the compulsory sterilization for people with mental handicaps (the ‘unfit’) was legally accepted in the policies of a number of states from the beginning of the twentieth century (Yonemoto 2000: 34–7; Ogino 1991: 190).

The Kaitō launched a programme to invite distinguished Western intellectuals. Albert Einstein and Bertrand Russell came to Japan under this programme as well as Sanger (S. Kaneko 1999: 179).

It is worth noting that Gotō was the father-in-law of a prominent politician and writer Tsurumi Yūsuke, who was an intimate uncle and mentor of Katō Shizue. Tsurumi is also father of Tsurumi Shunsuke and Tsurumi Kazuko, who led postwar Japanese social science. It is in fact Tsurumi Shunsuke’s article that turned my attention towards the implications and significance of population in Japanese political history (Tsurumi 1984/1991: 244–6).

Kaneko Shigeri (later, Yamataka Shigeri, hereafter Yamataka Shigeri throughout to avoid confusion) was first a journalist working for Kokumin Shinbun and Shufu no Tomo, and before she joined the Women’s Suffrage League and became Ichikawa Fusae’s right-hand person. According to Suzuki, Yamataka played an essential role in the course of the Women’s Suffrage League, which inclined towards war cooperation in the 1930s (Suzuki 1997: 136). Yamataka continued her political activities in the postwar period. She was twice elected as a member of the House of Councillors, and also held the post of Chairwoman of the National Federation of Regional Women’s Organizations (Zenkoku Chiiki Fujin Dantai Renraku Kyōgikai, in short Chifuren, NFRWO).

It is worth noting that Marie Stopes was an enthusiastic eugenicist long before she started her campaign promoting birth control in Britain. Soloway points out that Stopes’ ‘efforts to provide birth control for the poor had far more to do with her eugenic concerns about the impending “racial darkness” that the adoption of contraception promised to illuminate’. Her fascination for eugenics went back to her childhood when she read Darwin’s book and made acquaintance with Francis Galton through her naturalist father (Soloway 1997: 54).

As Ichinokawa discusses, the feminist discourses that sought the expansion of women’s autonomy in society were inseparably mingled with eugenics thinking, as can be observed in examples such as Helene Stöcker (Germany), Marie Stopes (Britain) and Margaret Sanger (Ichinokawa 1996: 194–9).
53 For the family state system, see Ishida (1954) and Muta (1996).
54 In May 1932, a group of Navy young officers attacked the Prime Minister’s Official Residence, the Metropolitan (Tokyo) Police Department and the Bank of Japan, and assassinated the then Prime Minister Inukai Tsuyoshi. After this incident, an Admiral Saitō Makoto was appointed as the Prime Minister, and the convention of majority party’s rule, which was practised from 1924 to 1932, was abandoned.

3 Reproduction in the total war regime and the Occupation
1 The term ‘Fifteen-Year War’ covers the whole period of Japanese military aggression starting from the Manchurian Incident in 1931 to Japan’s defeat in the Second World War in 1945, while the Pacific War, starting with the Pearl Harbour attack by the Japanese military in 1941, generally refers to the war between Japan and the US, but not to the war with China and the other Asian countries. The Japanese term referring to the series of military activities from 1937 to 1945, the Greater East Asian War (Daitō Sensō), is a term constructed from the then militarist perspective to justify the imperialist actions.

The term Fifteen-Year War is employed in this book in preference to ‘Second World War’ as the focus of the discussion embraces the period from 1931 to 1945 and is not limited to the narrower period, 1941–5.
2 The Japanese mobilization system was completed through the legislation of the Large-Scale Mobilization Law (Daikibo Dōin Hō) and the Institute of Economic Planning (Kikakuin) in 1937, and thereafter the National Total Mobilization Law (Kokka Sōdōn Hō) in 1938 (Nakamura 1986: 103–21). It was just after the First World War that the military bureaucrats started to design a comprehensive mobilization plan for total war, which aimed for Japan to maximize usage of resources as well as achieving an economic structure of self-sufficiency (Duus 1996: xvi).
3 According to Yamanouchi, the typical works representing conventional research are Mitani (1974/1995) and Matsuo (1974/1994).
4 From the feminist perspective, the term ‘women soldiers’ demonstrates contradictions in the expansion of women’s participation in the public sphere. The extent of women’s participation certainly increased through the two world wars. For example, about 350,000 women soldiers served in the reserves or auxiliary corps in the United States. In Britain, the conscription system applied even to women, while women took part in the actual fighting in the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republic’s armies (Takahashi 1992: 250–1) and in the resistance forces in Europe (Schwartz 1987) and China (Takahashi 1992: 251). These developments in one sense suggest that total war enabled women to transgress the boundaries of the sexual division of labour. Hence, for feminists, especially those who claimed equality between men and women, the expansion of women’s participation during total war meant ‘progress’ in terms of the equality issue. However, as Ueno argues, women who joined in the labour market or on the battlefields had to face a dilemma in a world where male-centred standards dominated. In other words, women had to choose one of the following two ways: to be like men by negating their own femininity, or to take the feminine role in the man’s world, and act as supplementary forces (Ueno 1998: 92–3). In fact, women mainly served in the auxiliaries or the reserves, and in this respect ‘the system of gender shaped women’s participation’ (Higonett, Jenson, Michel and Weitz 1987: 8). Of course, there is a fundamental issue preceding the above discussion, namely whether participation in a war as a soldier, in other words killing people for the state, contributes to ‘expansion of women’s participation in the public sphere’.
5 The expression ‘comfort women’, in Japanese ‘jūgun ianfu’, refers to ‘young females of various ethnic and national backgrounds and social circumstances who became sexual labourers for the Japanese troops before and during the Second World War’ (Soh 2000: 59). After its surrender, the Japanese government quickly reorganized this system for the Occupation forces, and created the Recreation and Amusement Association (RAA) in order to protect the purity of the majority of Japanese young girls at the cost of sexual service by 1,360 women. According to Dower, Ikeda Hayato, who was a young elite bureaucrat of the Ministry of Finance and played an important role in organizing the RAA, ‘was later quoted as saying that a hundred million yen is cheap for protecting chastity’ (Dower 1999: 123–32, the citation is from 126). This historical episode demonstrates that women’s ‘sexual’ cooperation was required in order to support not only the total war regime but also the postwar Occupation force that brought about democratization in Japan.

6 In this sense, Japanese women’s involvement in military activities remained in a more limited form than that of their counterparts in Britain or the US. As mentioned above, the Japanese government and military bureaucracy were very reluctant to mobilize women on the battlefield, and the Imperial Military Forces kept women out until June 1945 when the Volunteer Soldiers Law was established. However, although the Volunteer Soldiers Law ruled that women from seventeen years of age to forty years of age must serve as volunteer soldiers, as well as men from fifteen to sixty, Japan surrendered before the Law actually had a chance to be implemented. In this sense, Japanese women were mostly excluded from the military organizations and battlefields, except for a small number of military-related personnel, nurses and the so-called ‘comfort women’ (Takahashi 1992: 251–5).

7 According to Hori, the increment in the number of women workers is proven by the expansion of wartime nursery facilities across Japan. For example, the governmental order for labour management based on the National Total Mobilization Law required employers with more than two hundred women workers to provide nursery facilities as necessary for babies and young children, as from 1942. Also, such big cities as Tokyo, Osaka, and Nagoya started day-care facilities for children whose parents were absent due to work commitments (Hori 1991: 139–41).

8 For Yamataka, see Chapter 2 note 50.

9 There are a great number of studies on the role of nurses in the modern war era in both Japan and Western academia. These studies commonly make note of the following two points. Firstly, nurses were exceptional in the sense that they were allowed to serve the nation-state and their death was honoured in the same way as that of male soldiers. In Japan, dead nurses are worshipped at the Yasukuni Shrine along with dead soldiers. Secondly, although they were allowed to present in battles, what was expected of nurses was the ‘caretakers’ role’ in order to restore fighting ability, this being conventionally the natural quality of women. In this sense, nurses were ‘surrogate mothers’ on the battlefields (Wakakuwa 1995/2000: 104–7).

10 Ueno points out that ‘comfort women’ often helped the troops by caring for injured soldiers and carrying ammunition at the war front, and shared their fate with the imperial corps (Ueno 1998: 139).

11 The official reason for the limitation of women’s compulsory mobilization in industry was the ‘protection of the family system’ in order to secure adequate human resources, in terms of both quantity and quality, for the waging of total war. This was clearly stated in the speech by Prime Minster Tōjō Hideki and the Minister of Health and Welfare Koizumi Chikahiko at the Diet (Takahashi 1992: 258–9). Hence, voluntary labour services by unmarried women were not included
in the scope of the limitation set by the maternal causes. In 1944, when the government mobilized unmarried women from fourteen years of age to twenty-five years of age for armaments factories, Tōjō stated that women who avoided labour service were a disgrace to women's morality. All female students at the higher education institutes were mobilized to engage in labour service (Wakakuwa 1995/2000: 98–9).

12 As an expert in aesthetics, Wakakuwa analyzes pictures in wartime women's magazines, in particular Shufu no Tomo, which kept its overwhelming popularity in comparison to the other magazines even during the total war period. Pointing out that 'mother and child' (often a boy) was one of the most popular themes of the pictures in the magazine, Wakakuwa argues that the image of 'mother', the supreme profile of women in a patriarchal regime, was the most effective visual propaganda. The image of the mother informed women of what they should do during the time of the war, namely 'to raise human resources and support the war carried out by men as well as to pray to the gods in order to comfort the spirits of war casualties' (Wakakuwa 1995/2000: 257).

13 For example, Higonnet and Higonnet point out, with reference to Michel's article on public childcare programmes in the United States (Michel 1987), that 'the authorities were reluctant to institutionalize changing sex roles by creating nurseries'. What the wartime government intended was to provide short-run day-care facilities in order to mobilize the female workforce for the defence industry for the duration of the labour shortage caused by the war (Higonnet and Higonnet 1987: 36).

14 According to Takazawa, the APP received government funding of ten thousand yen in its first year, and forty thousand yen per year thereafter. It was also greatly financed by a private company, Daiichi Seimiei Hoken Sōgo Kaisha, through the first president of the APP, Count Yanagisawa Yasutoshi (Takazawa 1992: 105).

15 The establishment of the Ministry of Health and Welfare itself was a product of the total war project. The Ministry of War (Rikugunshō) submitted several proposals that demanded the establishment of a ministry specializing in dealing with public health since 1936. At that time, the deterioration in the physical conditions of the Japanese population, which was reflected in the bad results of the physical examinations for conscription, concerned the military elites. The deterioration was supposed to be mainly caused by sweeping tuberculosis, and in order to tackle this problem, the Ministry of War sought the establishment of a ministry which was in charge of nationally administering public health and hygiene projects (Shō 1998: 40–1 and 60–8 and 168–70). For the establishment of the Ministry of Welfare, see also Hino (1991: 20–4) and Fujino (1998: 266–71).
The maternity health book was planned by the Department of Mothers’ and Children’s Health, part of the Bureau of Population of the Ministry of Health and Welfare. The Bureau of Population was newly established by the merging of all or part of the policy areas that had previously been dealt with by the Bureau of Physical Strength (Tairyoku-kyoku), the Bureau of Hygiene (Eisei-kyoku) and the Social Bureau (Shakai-kyoku) in 1941 after the implementation of the GEPP, in order to intensify governmental efforts towards growth of the national population and control over the physical condition of the Japanese population (Shō 1998: 59).

The maternal health book was designed to supervise the process of pregnancy and the care of babies. More concretely, it required pregnant women to be registered, and in so doing, attempted to fully incorporate them into the medical inspection system and decrease the death rate of young babies and mothers. As mentioned in the previous chapter, according to Yoshimura, by obtaining the maternal health book, in other words being a patient of a licensed midwife, pregnant women were able to take advantage of being able to secure material resources, and this system resulted in popularization of treatment by licensed midwives among Japanese women (Yoshimura 1992: 136–7).

The person who introduced the idea of the maternity health book into the Japanese administrative system was Segi Mitsuo. Segi was a medical scholar specializing in obstetrics and gynaecology who studied in Germany from 1938 to 1941. During his stay in Germany, Segi did research on the Nazi policies for the protection of maternal and childhood health as well as his initial research theme on uterine cancer, and with this experience, he joined the Ministry of Health and Welfare and contributed to constructing a medical administrative system for the protection of maternal and childhood health (Ōbayashi 1989: 92–103). As Segi was one of the key players in prewar health policy-making, he has been considered as supporting the prewar population policy that aimed at increasing the number of the population, which from the eugenics perspective ought to be healthy, in order to construct good human resources for the waging of total war. However, Ōbayashi rejects this view, pointing out that Segi’s intention lay solely in improving maternal health. Segi also contributed to the modernization of midwifery and served as chief of the Department of Mothers’ and Children’s Health, the Bureau of Children under the Occupation regime after the war until he was transferred to the other bureau by the chief of the Public Health and Welfare Section (PHW), Brigadier General Sams (Ōbayashi 1989: 94–114).

It is worth noting that the maternity health book is still issued to pregnant women when they register at the municipal offices according to the regulations.

The Physical Strength Advisory Council of the Ministry of Health and Welfare submitted a report ‘On Improvement in Physical Strength of Motherhood/Baby and Little Children’ in September 1940, and recommended guidance for the ‘multiple childbirths service to the nation-state’ ideology (tasan hôkoku shissō) as well as the economic protection of households with many children. Subsequently, in November, the Ministry commended 10,336 households which were raising more than ten children each. The largest number of children among those ‘many good children homes’ (yûryô tashi katei) was sixteen (Shimokawa and Katei Sôgô Kenkyûkai 1997: 116).

According to Fujime, the contentious issue over the birth control movement was whether to allow birth control as a measure of social welfare, in other words, whether or not economic hardship was a justifiable cause for allowing the use of birth control. As a comparison to this, birth control for eugenic reasons was accepted even by the police authorities (Fujime 1997: 262).

The Home Ministry ordered the Control of Harmful Contraceptive Equipments Law in1930, and many birth control activists were prosecuted under this law (Fujime 1997: 271).
20 Fujime introduced the example of Shibahara Urako (chapter 2), a midwife who devoted herself to the grassroots birth control movement and practices. Shibahara practised her birth control consultation including abortion even under the repression of the movement during the total war period (Fujime 1997: 273–6).

21 For example, the Japan Eugenic Marriage Popularization Society targeted women as formal members while men were admitted as supportive members, and all senior members except the president, Nagai Hisomu, who was the main advocate of the prewar Eugenics movement, were female. Hence, Otsubo describes the society as the ‘male-initiated, all-female eugenics organization’ (Otsubo 1999: 45), although she also points out that the society provided opportunities for women to act autonomously and demonstrate their capabilities as agents (Otsubo 1999: 60–5).

22 The eugenics cause was taken up by the APP, and the recommendation to the government for establishing population policy research centres made by the APP clearly raised the eugenic issue as one of the most urgent topics (Fujime 1997: 350).

23 It needs to be noted that the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (Nihon Gakujutsu Shinkōkai, JSPS) organized a special committee for eugenics research. It made a five-year plan with a 72,000 yen budget. Bureaucrats of the Ministry of Health and Welfare, Miyake and Koya, were appointed as members of the committee, and contributed to designing the development of eugenics research (Fujino 1998: 278). Also, in 1938, under the leadership of the Bureau of Eugenics, a semi-governmental eugenic organization, the Racial Hygiene Study Association (Minzoku Eisei Kenkyūkai), was established in order to conduct research on racial hygiene and to contribute to the further popularization of eugenic ideas. The office of this organization was located in the Bureau of Eugenics, and high-ranking bureaucrats acted as secretaries, while Mitsui provided finance (Fujino 1998: 280–1).

24 ‘Those with vicious heredity’ effectively meant ‘hereditary mental disease’, ‘hereditary mental deficiency’, ‘hereditary abnormal personality’ and ‘hereditary deformation’, which would create ‘inadequacy in their social life or disturbance in the social order’ (Matsubara 2000: 181).

25 It is a well-known fact that the National Eugenics Law was not effectively implemented because of the following reasons. First, it was only effective for four years (1941–5). Second, the wartime population policy was focused upon the quantitative side rather than the qualitative side of the equation. This was because an increase in the population was supposed to be of higher priority than an improvement in population quality in terms of carrying on the total war effort (Matsubara 2000: 182). Hence, the total number of sterilizations only amounted to 538 cases (Tsuge, Ichinokawa and Katō 1996: 379). Takagi concludes that the function of the National Eugenic Law was as follows:

The significance of the National Eugenics Law was to embody clearly an ideology of attaining the superiority of the Japanese race rather than concrete results, namely the number of sterilization operations.

(Takagi 1993: 47)

26 For instance, the amount of the total rice supply in 1946 could only sustain half of the population as compared to prewar consumption standards. Referring to the survey conducted by Minami Ryōzaburō, Ōuchi points out that the domestic production of food was still only able to support less than 70 percent of the total population in 1951 (Ōuchi 1997: 23).

27 The Occupation rule by SCAP was indirectly conducted by utilizing the existing Japanese bureaucracy. According to Sugiyma, the United States military had already made decisions in the preliminary research process for the implementa-
tion of Occupation policies that the Japanese Ministry of Health and Welfare could be a useful tool for ruling. Hence, although SCAP partly revised the structure of the organization by weighting technical bureaucrats more heavily than administrators, the Ministry of Health and Welfare remained relatively untouched as a key administrative organization, and many bureaucrats who made prewar population policy kept their positions as policy-makers (Sugiyama 1995: 41–61).

28 Oakley points out that ‘Sams had taken a course in demography at the Army’s elite Carlisle Medical Field Service School, in the mid-1930s, and had been taught from Warren Thompson’s text’ (Oakley 1977: 153). Warren Thompson was a well-established expert in demography. He was invited to Japan by Sams in 1949, and advocated the necessity of introducing birth control into national policies. He was also a collaborator with Margaret Sanger when the family planning movements developed into an international organization in the 1950s (Fujime 1997: 360–8).

29 For example, the then Minister of Health and Welfare, Ashida Hitoshi, expressed his concern in the House of Peers that it was difficult for any race to reverse the trend in the birth rate after it had started decreasing (Tama 1996: 159).

30 The National Eugenics Law that had by then been implemented for four years was questioned as to its effectiveness, especially by obstetricians just after the war finished. Firstly, as the law strictly prohibited any type of abortion, numerous illegal abortions were being conducted, and consequently numerous women experienced danger to their lives. Secondly, the law was insufficient as a eugenic regulation since it did not allow abortions for eugenic purposes. Finally, the law allowed a wide range of administrative interventions in medical treatments conducted by doctors. Therefore, the majority of doctors considered the law as being a violation of their autonomy in medical activities. These problems certainly stimulated discussion over revision of the law, and finally resulted in the draft of the Eugenics Protection Law (Ōta 1976: 164–5).

31 Leprosy was discovered in 1872, and this proved that Hansen's disease was not a hereditary but a contagious disease. The prewar National Eugenics Law that strictly limited its scope in hereditary diseases did not legally include Hansen's disease in the objects for eugenic treatments, though the sterilization operation was in fact applied to patients at the leprosarium. Matsubara mentions that Nagai Hisomu, an enthusiastic advocate of eugenic causes, criticized the Eugenic Protection Law for including Hansen's disease as one of its targets (Matsubara 1998: 133 footnote 43).

32 As Dower explains, the purge directives started in the new year of 1946, and it ‘eventually prohibit(ed) some two hundred thousand individuals – mostly but by no means exclusively former military officers – from holding public office’ (Dower 1999: 82).

33 As Point 1 and 12 are written in the present tense in the original text while the others are in the past tense, my translation follows the original, and hence there are some discrepancies in the tense within the 12 points cited.

34 The Cooperation Association was established with a governmental fund (two million yen) and private donations (6.8 million yen). Prince Tokugawa Iesato, Kiyoura Keigo (Chairman of the Privy Council) and Shibusawa Eiichi (an entrepreneur) joined the establishment of the association (Sugaya 1978: 2).

35 The Everyday Life Improvement Movement, as a part of the Private Sector Cultivation Movement discussed in the previous chapter, is, in this sense, a typical example of social enterprise, and was in fact carried out as a part of social enterprise.

36 Ōkouchi also made commitments to the Labour Problems Section of the Shōwa Study Group (Shōwa Kenkyūkai), which aimed to study labour problems as a part
of economic policy or social policy intended for the expansion of productive power, and seeking a way of re-organizing the Japanese economy (Arima 1983: 2–3). The Shōwa Study Group was initially a private study group of academics who gathered around Konoe Fumimaro, and was established in 1933. Eventually, it started to play the role of think-tank for Konoe's political activities, and was particularly known for being an enthusiastic promoter in the New Regime Movement during the Konoe cabinet. In its golden age, it took in more than three hundred members every year (Baba 1969: 68–125). The other members of the Shōwa Study Group included Kazahaya Yasoji (a social policy expert), Minoguchi Tokijirō (also a member of the Cooperation Association, the Institute of Economic Planning and the APP) and Tanino Setsu (a female bureaucrat of the Home Ministry, and an expert in women's labour problems throughout the prewar and postwar period). For a full list of the members, see Arima (1983: 3–4).

37 The initial relief policy of SCAP was that the Japanese government should solely bear any responsibilities of providing aid for those who had economic difficulty, because the economic destruction was only caused by Japanese engagement in the war. Hence the responsibility for relief must be the business of the Japanese people, and SCAP did not hold any obligation for maintaining or attempting to maintain a certain life standard for the Japanese people. However, this initial policy had to be changed during the course of the Occupation, and SCAP began to provide relief for the purpose of stabilizing private lives in order to eliminate the possibilities of disease, epidemic and social anxiety that might put the Occupation in danger (Murakami 1987: 9–12).

38 It is widely known that a symbol of the National Defence Women’s Association was the sleeved Japanese aprons which were a typical style for housewives at the time when they were engaging in housework, especially in kitchens. The members wore this particular apron when they committed themselves to the Association (Fujii 1985: 68–9).

39 For the list of women who were appointed to various public positions, see (Suzuki 1997: 17–19). The list includes such names as Yoshioka Yayoi, Yamada Waka, Ōe Sumi, Hani Motoko, Inoue Hideko, Kawasaki Natsu, Ichikawa Fusae, Kōra Tomi, Kaneko Shigeri, Takeuchi Shigeyo, Gauntlett Tsuneko, Muraoka Hanako and Oku Mumeo.

40 Analyzing the discourses of Takamure Itsue during the time of the war, Nishikawa points out that Takamure’s study on matriarchy in ancient Japanese history emphasized women’s essential contribution in building the ‘ancient Japanese nation’ and provided many feminist leaders with a logic of war cooperation (Nishikawa 1982: 179; Nishikawa 1982/2000: 149–58).

41 Katō Shizue was elected as one of the first women’s representatives in the Diet. In the early Occupation period, Katō acted as an unofficial advisor for SCAP (Hopper 1996: xiv).

42 The obligation of providing support was a most contentious point throughout the process of revision. Although the revision was started to bring the civil code into line with the newly established constitution, and the ‘ie’ system needed to be eliminated in order to accomplish democratization in Japan, the idea of direct blood relatives and obligation of support between them remained. This resulted in a contradiction between the civil code based on the extended family system and the constitution based on the nuclear family (Harada 1988: 319–20).

4 A reproductive system for postwar economic growth

1 In this sense, as Gluck also points out, the meaning of ‘postwar’ could be different from the perspective of an ethnic minority in a nation-state. For
instance, for Okinawan people, its postwar period ‘only began with the “reversion” to Japan by the United States in 1972’, and its post-postwar period ‘will not commence until Tokyo and Washington stop treating it as a negotiable piece of military real estate’ (Gluck 1997: 3).

2 Japan is not the only country whose working rate of women draws the letter M-letter shaped pattern. The M-letter shaped pattern of working can be observed in South Korea or in Britain (until the 1970s). Yet, in countries where women's working pattern is not so different from men's, such as the United States, Sweden or France, the graph draws a trapezium (often called the reversed U-shape), as women tend to keep working without any break for childcare (Yuzawa 1995: 54–5; Ochiai 1997a: 14–18).

In an international comparison of women’s working patterns, Ochiai introduces another interesting statistical finding. Comparing the long-term trend of the women's working rate from 1890 to 1980, the Japanese figure sometimes recorded a much higher rate than the figures for the US, Britain, Sweden, France and former Western Germany. For example, the figure for the US in 1910 just reaches 10 percent, and the figure for former Western Germany, the biggest among the above Western countries, is still less than 50 percent, while the Japanese figure well exceeds 60 percent. In this respect, the common assumption that more Western women tend to work outside of the domestic sphere than Japanese women appears to be a historical phenomenon, which occurred in the course of modernization where the industrial structure is transformed from agriculture to industrial production and ‘employment’ becomes a dominant pattern of working (Ochiai 1997a: 25–30). It needs to be noted that the statistics Ochiai resorted to here were compiled in 1984, before the unification of Germany, by Mizuno Tadao using the following two German sources: Müller, W., Willms, A. and Handl, J., Strukturwandel der Frauenarbeit 1880–1980, Campus Verlag, Frankfurt, 1983, p. 35; Statistisches Bundesamt, Statistisches Jahrbuch, 1981, p. 94 (Ochiai 1997a: 25).

3 Total fertility rate is calculated by summing up individual birth rates broken down by the age of women aged from 15 to 49. This figure represents the number of children that a woman is supposed to have during her reproductive life. In order to sustain the size of the population, the birth rate needs to be above 2.08 (the population replacement level) (Ochiai 1997a: 51). Hence, the figure recorded in 1957 (2.04) means that the Japanese population had started to decrease.

4 It needs to be noted that in Japan the demographic transition happened with exceptional speed as compared to other developed countries. Ochiai points out that Japan is the first country that experienced the demographic transition within three generations, namely parents–children–grandchildren (Ochiai 1997a: 87).

5 The theory that the major form of the family in society changes from the extended family to the nuclear family due to industrialization is an issue that is not yet settled. Industrialization that required mobilization of the labour force and caused an increase in financial competence in each family created a condition where the nuclear family could multiply. However, the increase in the number of the nuclear families is attributed to such different factors as popularization of the ideal of the nuclear family or demographic transition (Morioka and Mochizuki 1993: 186–96). Also, the form of the nuclear family has been widely observed in the pre-modern period. Hence, some research has cast doubt on the linear path of transition from the extended family to the nuclear family, while the diversity of the family form throughout history has been highlighted (Ochiai 1996: 45–8).

6 The ‘modern family’ is an ideal type of the family and an analytical concept that the sociology of the family posits as a popular type of the family in the modern period. Ochiai extracted the following eight characteristics of the ‘modern family’
from Western research on the social history of the family (Ochiai 1989: 2–24; Ochiai 1996: 76–7).

1 Separation of the domestic and public sphere.
2 Strong emotional relationships among family members.
3 The centrality of children.
4 A gender-based division of labour, with the public sphere assigned to men and the domestic sphere to women.
5 A strengthening of the group solidarity of the family.
6 A decline of social interaction and sociabilité, and the establishment of privacy.
7 Exclusion of non-relatives.
8 Existence as a nuclear family household.

Among them, Ochiai expresses some reservations on the eighth point, as the extended family tends to remain in some countries such as Japan, although the ethos of the modern family (e.g. the intimate and emotional relationship between family members) has infiltrated people’s thinking.

The definition by Ochiai does not clearly state the relationship between the modern state and the modern family, which has been pointed out by other researchers. For example, Yamada points out that modern society is composed on a premise of the presence of the modern family, and also that the modern state contributed to the popularization of the modern family (Yamada 1994: 75–86). Compared to the above definitions, Nishikawa rather stresses the significance of the nation-state in the establishment and popularization of the modern family. She argues that the definition of the modern family can be focused upon one point – the family as a basic unit of the nation-state – and moreover that the other points that Ochiai suggests are a general quality or indices of the modern family (Nishikawa 1996: 80–1).

Despite the fact that Japanese researchers have been enthusiastically discussing the definition of the modern family since the late 1980s, this issue is still an open question. However, the following three items: intimacy and private relationship between family members; a smaller scale of family (albeit not necessarily in the form of the nuclear family) and the influence of the nation-state, can be said to be commonly observed across research on the family.

7 For the ‘Modern Family Definition Debates’, see Inoue, Ueno, Osawa, Mita and Yoshimi (1996), which is a collection of articles on ‘the family’ in which the major participants in the debate contributed articles reflecting their own positions.

8 The provision that prescribed the ‘economic reason’ is Article 14, Clause 1:

A doctor specified by each College of Physicians found in each administrative division as an incorporated association (hereafter, a specified doctor) is able to conduct abortions for women that fall under one of the following provisions, with the consent of the concerned person or her spouse.

1 A woman or her spouse has mental illness, mental deficiency, psychopathic qualities, hereditary physical disease or deformation.
2 A woman or her spouse has a relative within the fourth degree who has mental illness, mental deficiency, psychopathic quality, hereditary physical disease or deformation.
3 A woman or her spouse suffers from Hansen’s disease.
4 A woman has a risk of harm being inflicted on the health of maternal body by continuity of pregnancy and childbirth due to physical and economic [my emphasis] reasons.
5 A woman who has conceived after being subject to sexual assault or intimidation, or due to sexual intercourse which happened while being unable to resist or refuse.

9 For the statistical details regarding abortion, see Appendix B. The statistics only contain the abortions reported by doctors. At that time, illegal abortions conducted by unqualified persons were still common, and the actual number of abortions can be estimated, according to Ōta, to be at least twice or three times as much as the reported number. This suggests that the number of abortions often exceeded the number of births in the early postwar period (Ōta 1976: 179–81; Tsuge, Ichinokawa and Katō 1996: 386–90).

10 The US government changed its policy concerning the Japanese economy in 1948 by announcing the ‘Nine Principles of Economic Stabilization’ (Keizai Kyūgensokō), which intended to re-build an ‘independent’ Japanese economy, corresponding to the emerging Cold War regime. In order to implement this policy thoroughly, a special mission led by the President of Detroit Bank, Joseph M. Dodge, was sent to Japan. With the close cooperation of Ikeda Hayato, the then Minister of Finance of the third Yoshida cabinet, Dodge imposed a strict retrenchment policy and fixed an exchange rate of 360 yen to the US dollar in order to curtail inflation (Gotō, Uchida and Ishikawa 1982/1994a: 53–82; Dower 1999: 540–6).

11 See chapter 3 note 28.

12 As many cases of eugenic operations not only in Japan but also in Sweden or other countries show, the ‘consent’ of the patient often appears to be contentious. For example, although the Swedish sterilization law that came into effect in 1941 required consent of the concerned person in order to implement sterilization, the investigation carried out in the 1990s revealed more than two hundred operations where consent was strongly suspected of not being ‘autonomous’ (Ichinokawa 1999: 170–1; Ichinokawa 2000b: 122–5). Also, in Japan, eugenic operations for those who had Hansen’s disease required legal consent of the concerned person by the Eugenics Protection Law, but this provision was a far cry from actual practices (Furukiyo 1983: 78–82).

13 Ogino points out that the cabinet consent in 1950 was drafted by Koya Yoshio due to a request by the then Minister of Health and Welfare, Hashimoto Ryūgo (father of Hashimoto Ryūtarō, Prime Minister from 1996 to 1998) (Ogino 2001: 182).

14 Many articles point out that the attitude of the then government was in many senses not homogeneous as regards approval of birth control. For example, Ōta criticized the government for promoting birth control only on the grounds of public hygiene, especially for the prevention of abortion, and still attempted to avoid a decrease in the amount of birth control (Ōta 1976: 188–93). Ogino also argues that the government and bureaucrats just after the war, especially those of the Ministry of Health and Welfare and the IPP, were not enthusiastic about the introduction of birth control due to concerns about ‘adverse selection’, compared to SCAP/GHQ (Ogino 2001: 176).

There are some debates over ‘conversions’ (tenkō) of attitudes of bureaucrats working for the Ministry of Health and Welfare and the IPP. Although it is crucial that the trend of population policy changed from an increase to a decrease in number from the prewar period and postwar period, I will not discuss the issue further here. This is because the governmental role in governing the population is a more important point than the direction of the trend of policy. I would argue that the direction of population trends can be altered according to a particular historical situation, but this cannot be implemented without recognition on the part of the government, bureaucrats and people that population
control, especially control over the quality of the population, is a political issue that requires some kind of administrative intervention. For instance, Koya’s conversion from the prewar population policy (increase) to the postwar (decrease) is one of the examples that have often been discussed, as Koya himself admitted his ‘180 degree’ conversion from prewar to postwar period in his autobiography (Fujime 1997: 361–2; Ogino 2001: 176). However, Koya’s concerns on the quality of the Japanese population, as a medical doctor specializing in ‘racial hygiene’ and a technical bureaucrat of the Ministry of Health and Welfare, did not change throughout his life. Even in 1961, when he was acting as the president of the Japan Planned Parenthood Federation (JPPF), Koya still expressed his abiding and strong concern about quality by saying that the quality of children, namely attempts to raise more healthy and intelligent children, was one of the three main agenda items of the Japanese Family Planning Movement (Koya 1961: 63–4).

15 Jinkō Mondai Kenkyū is a monthly journal published by the IPP. It has a ‘miscellaneous news’ section that contains information regarding population policy-making.

16 The guideline itself defined the objective of birth control, the methodology of instruction (case work or group work) and the institutions concerned (the Eugenics Protection Consultation Centres or Public Health Centres). In addition, the Ministry of Health and Welfare laid down details concerning birth control such as the training of instructors at the National Institute of Public Hygiene and the equipment available for guidance on contraception.

17 The Rockefeller Foundation supported the establishment of the National Institute of Public Hygiene in the 1930s. In the postwar period the Foundation re-started its support for the Institute under the leadership of Koya Yoshio (Sugiyama 1995: 65–8). It also supported the activities of Japanese birth control and family planning movements with the Ford Foundation. In 1951, Kitaoka Juitsu, Nagai Tōru and Katō Shizue asked the Ford Foundation to provide a one million dollar grant for sustaining the birth control movement after the San Francisco Treaty was concluded, though this was never realized (Fujime 1997: 365–6).

18 The Jinkō Mondai Kenkyū changes its edition number from this edition.

19 According to Kitaoka, the mass media’s attention to the convention can be explained through Katō Shizue’s success in the election for the House of Councillors in 1956. Katō, who was the vice-president of the convention and a chairperson of the steering committee of the convention, played the main role in the PR activities of the convention. Newspapers and advertisement posters featured her, and she gave an opening address in English. Hence, Kitaoka wrote that ‘nobody denies that the advertisement significantly contributed to Katō’s success to be the first winner by collecting 750,000 votes at the 1956 election for the House of Councillors’ (Kitaoka 1956: 278).

20 ‘Myrdal’, whom Kitaoka mentions here, was one of the well-known Swedish scholars of social policy and population, either Gunnar or Alva Myrdal, though Kitaoka did not specify in his text. Both Gunnar and Alva Myrdal, who were a married couple, made significant contributions to the construction of the Swedish welfare state. They proposed to establish provisions to provide aid for low-income families with children at the governmental advisory council when the Swedish birth rate hit its lowest record in 1935. Ichinokawa points out that their proposal, which brought about the realization of one of the earliest governmental family policies, contained eugenic causes. According to him, the Myrdals maintained the necessity of selection of appropriate persons for having children when the decision of providing aid was made. Ichinokawa concludes that along with the example of Ellen Kay (see in chapter 2), the development of child
welfare in Sweden had an ‘inseparable’ relationship with eugenics (Ichinokawa 2000b: 118–19).

21 For example, visits by the public health nurse for premature babies, new babies and pre- and post-natal women were institutionalized in 1958, 1961 and 1961 respectively. Also, the health check at three years of age was instituted in 1961.

22 It needs to be noted that the APP submitted to the Minister of Health and Welfare a ‘guideline concerning improvements in the quality of the population’ prior to the resolution presented by the Population Problem Advisory Council (Jinkō Mondai Kenkyū no. 85 1962: 64).

23 This includes the promotion of policies for young babies and infants, the promotion of policies for pre-natal and post-natal women, the promotion of policies for young delinquents, the promotion of policies targeting households with income support, physical and mental disability, and being fatherless.

24 It was Hyōgo Prefecture that first started the policy. According to Sugawa, who was in charge of policy-making and implementation, the planning itself was embarked upon around 1964, and with the cooperation of the then Governor of Kobe and the Department of Medicine of the University of Kobe, the policy began to be implemented in 1966 (Sugawa 1967: 50). The policy quickly spread all around Japan, and by 1970, forty-two regional offices (prefectures and cities) implemented the policy for public health of mothers and children in which the ‘prevention of incidences’ was focused upon (Matsubara 2000: 208).

25 Although the original text of the guideline specifies particular diseases and illness that would be caused by specified problems in each item, I have omitted the diseases, as details of medical information regarding ‘problematic genetic inheritance’ has very little relevance for the content of the discussion of this chapter.

26 According to Sawa, the term ‘income-doubling’ was made up by generalizing Ikeda’s political agenda ‘doubling-monthly-pay’, which was inspired by an article ‘A Proposal for Doubling Monthly Pay’ written by a prominent economist Nakayama Ichirō published in the Yomiuri Shinbun (Yomiuri Newspaper), in order to include the self-employed (Sawa 1984: 57).

27 It was the Kishi cabinet that requested a new national economic plan in order to replace the New Long-Term Economic Plan started in 1957, as the New Long-Term Economic Plan had achieved its goals much earlier than its schedule, due to economic growth over expectations. The Kishi cabinet had to resign following the political opposition to his revision of the US–Japan Security Treaty, and Ikeda, who became the Prime Minister after Kishi, employed a new economic policy (Sawa 1984: 56–7).

Compared to its predecessor, which fell apart in the biggest political conflict in postwar Japan, the Ikeda cabinet concentrated on the economy. More frankly, economic policy was the only characteristic of the Ikeda cabinet – hence the spread of ‘economism’. As a political journalist noted, it did nothing else but locate the economy in the very centre of politics (Gotō, Uchida and Ishikawa 1982/1994b: 60–1).

28 The other four policy agenda issues are as follows:

1 To improve social capital (e.g. social facilities such as roads, harbours, various land and water, educational facilities and systems).
2 To advance the industrial structure, namely to shift towards the industrial structure based on heavy industry.
3 To promote trade and international cooperation.
4 To lessen the dual structure (large corporations/SMEs) of the economy and to secure social stabilization.
Itō Masaya, who was a secretary of Ikeda and later became a senior member of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), pointed out in his biography of Ikeda that Ikeda’s agenda of fostering human beings was derived from his hope for creating the Japanese nation-state as a spiritually independent country with the ability of self-defense (Itō 1985: 234–41). In fact, Ikeda himself said in the New Year address in 1963:

I have been emphasizing the importance of promotion of human beings. The development of youth who will take responsibility for the future generation is the foundation for nation-building. And for this reason, it is an issue that the whole nation should think of.

*(Asahi Shinbun 1 January 1963: 2)*

The Round-Table Conference was composed of academics (including the then Chancellor of the University of Tokyo), a writer, a medical doctor and a prominent businessman *(Asahi Shinbun 10 November 1962: 1)*.

To be exact, ‘A Profile of Desirable Human Beings’ was an appendix of a report concerning ‘Improvement in the Later Secondary Education (i.e. education at high schools)’, which discussed secondary education in the period when demands for human resources with higher educational qualifications were increasing *(Asahi Shinbun 21 October 1966: 9)*.

It also needs to be noted that the interim report was published in 1965 before the final text and prompted a wide range of debates. Its obvious nationalistic tone was especially criticized, and the final text was modified in a way that softened expressions and eliminated terms such as ‘the national anthem’ or ‘the national flag’ (Yamamoto 1993: 56–7). The interim report was printed in *Asahi Shinbun* (11 January 1965: 3), and the final text in *Asahi Shinbun* (31 October 1966: 9).

According to the report by *Asahi Shinbun*, Araki Masuo, the Minister of Education when the discussion for composing the report was embarked upon, hoped that making the report could provide the postwar ‘nationless’ Basic Education Law with staunch principles as ‘Japanese’ *(Asahi Shinbun 17 October 1966)*. The nationalistic intention of the report is obvious, as this clearly demonstrates.

Morris-Suzuki also points out some continuity found in the report with prewar Principles of the National Entity in 1937 in terms of the notions of the ‘home’. Firstly, it posited the home, a community of love, as a foundation of the Japanese state. Secondly, it also posited different roles in a household for men and women. Although the text of the report itself did not make any distinction in terms of ‘gender’, ‘a book-length introduction to the report composed by’ Kōsaka Masaaki, who was a Kyoto School philosopher and the main writer of the report, ‘emphasized the differences between the roles of man and woman in the household’. In this sense, it shows ‘the postwar rhetoric of democratization, modernization, and scientific progress could readily be integrated with reworked prewar ideas about the centrality of the “ie” in the national order’ (Morris-Suzuki 1998: 126).

Interviewees were randomly selected married women aged from twenty to thirty-nine. About 60 percent of them were in their thirties, and about 40 percent in their twenties. In terms of the age of their spouses, about 60 percent of their spouses were in their thirties, about 20 percent in their twenties, and another 20 percent in their forties. About 40 percent of interviewees had been married for more than ten years, about 30 percent for five to ten years, and another 30 percent for less than five years *(Naiikaku Sōri Daijin Kanbō Köhōshitsu 1965: 3)*.

Among the 41 percent of the interviewees who had had an abortion, 18 percent had had multiple abortions.
36 Article 25 (conventionally called the provision of the right of living) has attracted much contentious theoretical discussion. There are traditionally three standpoints regarding the interpretation of Article 25 of the constitution. The first one is the so-called ‘program provision theory’, which posits that Article 25 laid down not any concrete right but the political and moral obligation for the legislative power regarding the right of living. The second is the so-called ‘“abstract” right theory’, which admits that people are able to request of the state any necessary legislation in order to secure the right of living on the grounds of Article 25, though Article 25 itself does not secure any concrete rights to complain of the lack of administrative actions. The third is the so-called ‘“concrete” right theory’, which basically recognizes that Article 25 provides concrete provisions regarding the subject, content and responsible agents of the right and hence it can sufficiently sanction judicial and legislative power. Consequently, in this theory, people are able to request of the legislative power any necessary and adequate legislation in order to fulfil the right defined by Article 25, and people are also able to request the judicial court to confirm the unconstitutionality of the lack of administrative acts regarding any violation of the right of living, in the case that the legislative power does not fulfil its obligations (Miyazaki 1984: 264–8). Among them, the first one, which does not problematize the actual lack of administrative endeavours on social welfare, has been widely accepted among legal professionals and scholars.

Relating to the above issue, there is also discussion over the relationship between the first sentence and the second sentence of Article 25. The perspective of the ‘abstract’ or ‘concrete’ right theory tends to interpret the two sentences individually as it prescribes the rights, while the programme provision theory tends to interpret Article 25 as a whole. Also, some legal experts argue that the first sentence is a provision of aid for poverty, the second is for ‘prevention of poverty’ (Watanabe 1984: 122–3).

37 The Tokyo District Court accepted Asahi’s claim, though the appeal by the Ministry of Health and Welfare was admitted at the Tokyo High Court. The case was completed by the dismissal in the Supreme Court due to Asahi’s death in 1967. Incidentally, noting the value of currency in 1956 for reference purposes, the rent for the newly built public housing apartment (two rooms and kitchen) cost from four thousand yen to four thousand eight hundred yen, while a 10kg bag of rice (in the food distribution system in Tokyo) cost eight hundred and forty-five yen (Shimokawa and Katei ŌKenkyūkai 1997: 266–73).

38 The Daily Life Security Law was first established in 1946, being influenced by SCAP/GHQ. However, its severe limitations, such as disqualification due to deviant behaviour or slothfulness, were criticized by the Occupation forces, and the law was radically revised in 1950 by incorporating the non-discriminatory principle and the objection system (Ishida 1984: 45–52).

39 As Goodman rightly points out, ‘a Western welfare system’ was a model for the Japanese nation-state for twenty-five years following 1945’. He says:

Japan should, and indeed would, develop a system approximating a ‘Western’ one; in some senses, this was considered in many people’s eyes a measure of how far Japan had come in its modernization process and how seriously it should be taken as a player on the world stage.

(Goodman 1998: 151)

40 The Japanese government employed a series of policies such as the revision of the Job Placement Office Law (Shōkuan Hō) and the Basic Agriculture Law (Nōgyō Kihon Hō) that encouraged liquidation of the population structure in order to obtain enough in the heavy industry sector from the late 1950s (Asakura
During the period of high economic growth, in particular during the period of the income-doubling policy, a so-called ‘great move of the Japanese race’ (minzoku daiidō) occurred. The population mobilization rate recorded 5 to 8 percent, and more than seven million people moved inside Japan, mainly from the countryside to the cities (Shinotsuka 1995: 165–6).

Shinotsuka points out that the ‘maternal protection’ provision was incorporated in the law after consideration of concrete examples of women's harsh working conditions and exploitation such as prewar young women workers in the textile industry (Shinotsuka 1995: 207). In fact, the ‘maternal provisions’ were welcomed by many women as a measure that realized equality between men and women (Ito 1982: 300). On the other hand, the maternal provision was used as an excuse for redundancy or discrimination against women workers. For example, in the early 1950s, female journalists working for different newspapers and magazines jointly made a request to abolish the maternal provisions in the Labour Standards Law that prohibited them from working late nights. This action was taken because the provision not only narrowed areas where female journalists were allocated work by media companies, but was also a reason for companies to exclude female workers (Itagaki, Seki, Esashi and Miyoshi 1987: 115–16).

It was only in 1966 that the first judicial decision that the enforcement of retirement due to marriage is a form of sexual discrimination was made, and it was well into the 1980s that the judicial decision in 1966 at last became an accepted legal decision in courts across Japan. However, ‘practices’ of marriage/early-age retirement for women and encouragement of retirement for married women are still common phenomena in Japan (Hisatake, Kainō, Wakao and Yoshida 1997: 81–3).

The shortage of nurseries is one of the biggest factors that restricts women's work, although it has not been improved since the early postwar period. In 1967, it was said that the shortage of spaces amounted to 550,000, and 110,000 children were under care provided by unauthorized nurseries across Japan. Women's movements worked for improvements in nursery care, but the then government's attitude was, as discussed, to stress the importance of care by mothers (Hisatake, Kainō, Wakao and Yoshida 1997: 81–3).

Besides these, there are numerous policies that worked to favour a family in the sexual division of labour. The following are only examples: the tax policy; the health insurance system that provided greater benefits to employers of big corporations; the delay in establishing child benefits and the insufficiency of child benefits.

5 A case study: the New Life Movement

The same point is made by Dore (1992: 4–19; 2000: 25–32).

Referring to Campbell's work (1989), Curtis points out that the actual policy-making system in Japan is more varied than the discourse of the iron triangle suggests. The same point is also made in the work of, for instance, Muramatsu and Krauss (1987), Calder (1988) and Hook, Gilson, Hughes and Dobson (2001: 41–2). As will be discussed below, in regard to the policy-making process, the implementation of the New Life Movement was subject to the influence of other actors, especially academics and voluntary associations.

In the late 1990s, after having been forgotten for a while, a small number of academic inquiries have shed light on the New Life Movement both inside and outside of Japan. Tama (1996), Garon (1997), Omoda (2000) and Ogino (2001) discuss some aspects of the movement, though none in detail.
It is worth noting that Katayama started his political career as a secretary of a Christian Socialist, Abe Isoo, who was one of the main players in the prewar birth control and eugenics movement (see Chapter 2). Abe also engaged in the prewar Everyday Life Improvement Movement. Katayama was later appointed as a permanent director of the New Life Movement Association (Shinseikatsu Tsūshin 1 August 1957: 2–3).

For this purpose, the guideline set the following seven objectives for the national movement (Tokyo-to Shinseikatsu Undō Kyōkai 1973: 110–13):

- to instil enthusiasm for labour;
- to demonstrate friendship and mutual cooperation;
- to develop autonomous minds;
- to realize social justice;
- to establish rational and democratic customs in everyday life;
- to promote arts, religion and sports;
- to promote peace movements.

The Housewives’ Confederation (Shufuren, see Chapter 3) led by Oku enthusiastically took part in the New Life Movement. While it held exhibitions on the creation of the ‘New Life’ under the auspices of the New Life Movement (Shufu Rengo-kai 1998: 38), Oku served as a director of the New Life Movement Association (Shinseikatsu Tsūshin 10 November 1958: 1). Also, the National Conference of the New Life Movement was held at the Shufu Kaikan, the headquarters of the Shufuren (Shinseikatsu Tsūshin 10 June 1956: 1).

Yamataka was also a director of the New Life Movement Association, as the Chairwoman of the board of directors of the NFRWO (Shinseikatsu Tsūshin 10 May 1956: 1).

Hatoyama’s speech at the Prime Minister’s official residence was published by the New Life Movement (Tokyo-to Shinseikatsu Undō Kyōkai 1973: 119–21). In his speech, Hatoyama first pointed out that the current situation in Japan required mental, spiritual and material improvement in order to establish an autonomous and independent nation-state. He also stressed that the New Life Movement, which would encourage and lead the Japanese people to radical innovation in everyday life, must contribute to enriching national strength, in order to deal with the turbulent international situation and so promise a bright future for the Japanese race (Tokyo-to Shinseikatsu Undō Kyōkai 1973: 119–21). He also emphasized that the New Life Movement needed to be a national movement beyond party politics. In an interview conducted a year after his speech, Hatoyama maintained that the New Life Movement should be an autonomous national movement, and politics and administrative authorities would help the movement but never intervene in its activities (Shinseikatsu Tsūshin 10 June 1956: 1).

The names of senior members listed on the director’s board mostly overlapped with the members of the special committee for the New Life Movement of the APP. Besides the names mentioned above, Katayama Tetsu, Ichikawa Fusae, Yanaihara Tadao and Kagawa Toyohiko were on the board. Initially, the president of the association was Maeda Tamon, and Nagai Tōru served as the president following his departure (Shinseikatsu Tsūshin 10 May 1957: 2; Garon 1997: 168; Ōshiro 1998: 138).

The last published figure of governmental funding, as far as I have been able to gather, was one in 1978, which totalled 376 million yen (Shinseikatsu Tsūshin 1 February 1987).

Japanese socialist parties were merged into the Japan Socialist Party in October 1955, which occupies one third of the seats of the House of Representatives. This
led the conservative parties to merge, and the Liberal Democratic Party was established in November 1955 (Masumi 1985a: 3–6). Needless to say, this was the beginning of the 1955 system, which was the foundation of Japanese politics until 1993 when the LDP lost office for the first time after thirty-eight years of ‘one-party domination’.

12 The term ‘traffic morality’ may sound odd in English, conflating as it does ethics with automobiles. During this period there was a rapid rise in traffic accidents and ‘traffic morality’ was on the one hand simply a way of encouraging responsible driving and on the other of encouraging pedestrians, in particular children, to be careful on and around roads. The moral dimension was analogous to that of the contemporary anti-drink/drive campaigns in Britain at Christmas time.

13 The encouragement of saving in the New Life Movement was carried out in close cooperation with the Bank of Japan and the Ministry of Finance. The Saving Promotion Movement itself originated in the prewar period. It was especially active during the total war period in order to secure enough financial resources for prosecuting the war, and a number of women’s organizations were involved in this activity (Garon 2000). The Saving Promotion Movement restarted in the postwar period, after the Dodge line was implemented, and the Japanese economy, faced with the termination of financial aid from the US, sought a mode of reconstruction (Garon 2002). Again, the Bank of Japan and the Ministry of Finance took on leadership of the movement, and the Saving Increment Central Committee (Chotiku Zōkyō Chūō Iinkai) was set up within the Bank of Japan in 1952. One of the key players in developing the postwar Saving Promotion Movement was Ikeda Hayato, who was the Minister of Finance and became the Prime Minister in 1960 (Tama 1996: 168–76; Garon 1997: 171). It is worth noting that the promotion of saving is one of the most popular strategies for states that attempt to accumulate financial resources for economic development.

The committee still exists and continues to promote savings, though it was renamed as the Saving Promotion Central Committee in 1988 and the Financial Promotion Central Committee in 2001 (http://www.saveinfo.or.jp/index.html accessed 20 December 2003).

14 Nihon Tsūn paid housewives travelling fees to attend the meeting, and moreover provided souvenirs (Ajia Kazoku Keikaku Fuyū Kyōkai 1959: 131).

15 Hill points out that ‘agenda-setting’ of a policy is ‘an ideological process, translating an issue into a policy proposal’ (Hill 1997: 115). This is carried out by not only political parties and their activists but also pressure groups and ‘even comparatively isolated intellectuals’ (Hill 1997: 116). Given the role of intellectuals and housewives, it needs to be noted that the latter agents of agenda-setting were essential in the process of agenda-setting in the New Life Movement.

16 Japanese labour movements were revitalized after the Second World War, especially in the 1950s, and severe confrontations between capital and employees, represented by the Mitsui Miike strike, occurred again and again (Nakamura 1997: 14–20). Around 1960, a strategy that sought cooperation between management and employees was put in place by both management and the unions of large corporations, and the spring offensive system (Shuntō Hōshiki) was devised, in which the unified negotiation for a pay raise is coordinated by a national organization of labour unions, Nihon Rōdō Kumiai Sōhyōgikai (Sōhyō), every spring. In the spring offensive, whose pinnacle came during the period of high economic growth, employees attained a pay raise every year as a share of that year’s economic growth (Stockwin 1999: 181–2; Asahi Shinbunsha 2001: 506). This system, however, drove unions to employ conformist policies that prioritized job protection rather than class struggle, and unions eventually lost their confrontational elements. In fact, through implementation of this system,
one could argue that unions became an extension of management, as they cooperated with the company policy of improving productive efficiency in order to maintain and expand economic growth through the company’s growth (Okumura 1992: 105–7).

17 Offe discusses transitions in the general trend of social movements across the advanced industrial world occurring between the 1950s and the late 1960s by categorizing the ‘old-paradigm’ movement represented by the labour movement and the ‘new-paradigm’ represented by the New Social Movements (Offe 1985). Kurihara observes this transition in the Japanese context of social movements by pointing out the emergence of the civil movement and residents’ movement in the late 1960s to 1970s (Kurihara 1999: 7–13). Nevertheless, one should be cautious in describing the development in the New Life Movement as a development into a New Social Movement, as there was influence of the national politics on the New Life Movement throughout its life, and despite changes in emphasis, it remained a politics-led movement which maintained the status-quo by ameliorating problems, rather than a movement seeking alternative solutions.

18 The members of the Family Planning Study Committee were Kōguchi Yasuaki (the Bureau of Public Hygiene, Kanagawa Prefecture), Hirose Katsumi (the Bureau of Public Hygiene, Tokyo Prefecture), Kubo Shūji, Muramatsu Minoru, Ogino Hiroshi (the Department of Hygiene and Population, the National Institute of Public Hygiene), Hinoue Sadao (the Bureau of Public Hygiene, the Ministry of Health and Welfare) and Kon Yasuo (the Japan Planned Parenthood Association). Among them, Kubo and Kunii were involved in the Special Committee for the New Life Movement of the APP, and the New Life Movement Association together with Shinozuka and Aoki.

19 Nijūbashī (the Double Bridge) is a bridge to the entrance to the Imperial Palace. This term is often employed in order to imply the ‘national authority’.

20 These training courses were held with support from the Saving Increment Campaign Committee of the Bank of Japan and newspaper companies (Mainichi, Asahi and Yomiuri).

21 The lectures of the training courses were reprinted in a journal called Jinkō Mondai Shiryo’ published by the APP from 1955 to 1981.

22 A publication of the APP edited by Shinozaki Nobuo clearly stated that the New Life Movement ended in 1971, though the New Life Movement Association still existed and continued its activities, including publishing its annual report on the Movement and hosting community activity competitions. It was not until 1982 that the New Life Movement Association ceased operation and changed its name and organization into the Association for Building Tomorrow’s Japan (Shinseikatsu Tsūshin 1 April 1982). It could be said that the discrepancy between the APP and the New Life Movement Association demonstrates the transitions in the focus of the Movement from family planning to community activities. For the APP, the core of the New Life Movement should be family planning, and in this sense, the New Life Movement ended when it turned its focus away from family planning.

23 In a sense, the Japanese term ‘seikatsusha’ is a strange word. This term emerged as an antonym of ‘seisansha’, a producer, in a context where the quality of life appeared as the central concern of everyday life in the 1970s. Faced with the negative consequence of economic development, the term ‘seikatsusha’ was used to stress the value of everyday life in opposition to the predominant trend of economism.

As Takabatake points out, both conservative and progressive politicians often employ the term ‘seikatsusha’ in order to press forward their policies in contemporary Japan. The term ‘seikatsusha’ has functioned as ‘the largest common ideology or political symbol for justification’ since the dichotomized ideological
confrontation regarding political and social regimes disappeared (Takabatake 1993: 192–7).

24 The reason activities at both companies and local communities are introduced as examples is to show the difference between the New Life Movement within a corporation and in a local area. Nihon Kōkan is chosen as it was the company which initiated activities of the New Life Movement with the APP and became a model for the other companies that joined the Movement later. Yet, the example of activities at Nihon Kōkan cannot provide sufficient insight into the later development of the New Life Movement, especially in relation to the Everyday Life School, which was essentially the Movement in local communities. Hence, it is necessary to provide examples of activities at the level of local communities in addition to ones at companies. However, in order to do so, it is also important to distinguish examples of activities in cities from those in rural areas. This is because activities in rural areas generally occurred in close relationship with postwar endeavours to improve everyday rural life. Here, as typically seen in the case analyzed below in Yamaguchi prefecture, not only local participants, but also local governments, played a significant role, while in the cities, as the example of Tokyo dealt with below shows, there were relatively few demands for improvement in everyday life from the residents. Hence the cases of Nihon Kōkan, Yamaguchi prefecture and Tokyo metropolitan area will be introduced.

25 Nihon Kōkan Ltd (in 1988 it changed its name into NKK) is a steelmaking and engineering company established in 1912. According to the company profile introduced by Tokyo Denryoku, it had 26,046 employees in 1957, and 13,000 of the total number worked on the Kawasaki site where the New Life Movement was operating. The authorized capital at that time was 1,500,000,000 yen, and the average monthly pay of employees was 28,131 yen (Tokyo Denryoku Kabushiki Kaisha 1959: 102). According to the current company profile on its website, the number of employees is 10,702 (accessed 31 March 01), and its authorized capital is 233,731,000,000 yen (accessed 31 March 01). The net sales in the tax year 2000 recorded 1,010,100,000,000 yen (accessed http://www.nkk.co.jp/company/data/main.html 18 September 01). NKK was merged with another large Japanese steelmaking company, Kawasaki Seitetsu, in September 2002, and the merged company was named JFE Holdings.

In the 1950s and 1960s, NKK was in a phase of expansion, as the new mills as well as the new Fukuyama site were built. By 1970, it had established businesses across three areas, namely steelmaking, heavy industry and shipbuilding. The period when the New Life Movement was introduced into Nihon Kōkan corresponds to the second and third periods of the modernization of the steel industry in the postwar era. During this period, production technology advanced and production output increased rapidly (Hasegawa 1996: 71–3).

26 For instance, one newsletter cartoon headed by the title ‘We shall design our lives to suit a new era’ compared a family with two children to one with six children. While portraying the severity of life with six children by pointing out the economic burdens of providing enough food and the endless restless life and sleepless nights, the family with two children was described in a brighter and happier way, with the father coming back home from work with a present and the mother reporting to him that their two children had studied hard that day (supposedly with the mother’s help). The story ended with the words of the mother with six children, saying that ‘I really envy your home, as you only have two children. I am so exhausted with my six’ (Shinseikatsu Undō Kyōkai 1958: 105).

27 At the Kawasaki factory, Kume Ai (a lawyer) and Yamamura Tamiko (Tokyo Metropolitan Office) were appointed as consultants with the others.

28 It should also be noted that the enthusiasm of the company was reflected in the budget allocated to the New Life Movement inside the company. The Nihon
Kōkan provided ten million yen for the movement, Hitachi Zōsen five million yen, Hokuriku Chitsugyo 0.3 million yen and Asō Sangyō 7.5 million yen (coal and chemical sectors in total). The Hitachi figure was for activities at only one factory (Shinseikatsu Undō Kyōkai 1958: 160).


30 Hitachi Zōsen is another celebrated example of the New Life Movement’s involvement with a large corporation. The New Life Association asked Kanda Michinori to write a detailed report about this relationship as it was seen as a model case (Shinseikatsu Undō Kyōkai 1958b: 6–68). Kunii Chōjirō, one of the key players of the postwar family planning movement, once said that ‘it was Hitachi and Toshiba, and not the Ministry of Health and Welfare, nor Koya Yoshio, nor the Japan Planned Parenthood Association, that made the Japanese birthrate lower’: this of course through the New Life Movement (Ōbayashi 1989: 221–2).

Hitachi Zōsen is a shipbuilding company belonging to the Hitachi Corporation Group originally established in 1881. According to the current company profile on its website, the number of employees is 2,551, and the authorized capital is 50,294 million yen (on 31 March 2001) (http://www.hitachizosen.co.jp/company-overview/index-j.html accessed on 20 September 2001). Its company history states that around 1955 the Japanese shipbuilding industry entered a period of expansion, being stimulated by an increase in exports. Hitachi Zōsen was a key player in and beneficiary of this trend. Its launching achievement reached 26 ships (in total 240,000 tons), which ranked second in the world in 1957, while the total number of launches in Japan became the highest in the world (Hitachi Zōsen Kabushiki Kaisha 1985: 9).

The New Life Movement was first involved at the Innoshima site, which was located on the small island of Innoshima in the Inland Sea off the coast of Hiroshima. The city of Innoshima geographically dominates the whole island and this in turn is economically dominated by Hitachi. Of the 42,000 people on the island, Hitachi’s employees and their families numbered 17,000 which was about 40 percent of the whole population (Shinseikatsu Undō Kyōkai 1958: 6).

One of the main reasons that Hitachi Zōsen introduced the New Life Movement into the company’s human resources management policy was to calm down the labour struggles which had caused a severe, large-scale strike in the autumn of 1956. Observing the struggle, the Director of the Labour Management Department, newly transferred from a different site, decided to introduce the New Life Movement into the company’s policy of human resources management. According to the official document of the movement, the director thought:

Up till now, we have been promoting a safety campaign which largely contributes to the prevention of labour accidents. However, at the end of the day, the foundation of everyday life is ‘a good relationship between the married couple’. ‘Bright homes’ are quintessential in order to create ‘a bright work place’. Yet, this should not be attained through mere labour management policy. It needs to be done by creating a new human relationship or establishing a good human relationship through the New Life Movement and the safety campaign.

(Shinseikatsu Undō Kyōkai 1958: 7)

Hence, the New Life Movement was introduced into Hitachi Zōsen as a part of their human resources management policy. Again it placed family planning at the centre of the agenda, and gradually extended outwards to other issues such
as life-planning, budgeting, bookkeeping, hygiene, public morals and so on (Ajia Kazoku Keikaku Fukyu Kyokai 1959: 144–5). Some parts of the practical methodology were learnt from the experience of Nihon Kōkan. The unions did not welcome the Movement, but housewives did, as practical advice from instructors actually helped them manage their homes. The New Life Movement achieved a significant success in its first year at the Innoshima site of Hitachi Zōsen in terms of family planning as well as life-improvement, and faced with this situation, the unions accepted the Movement (Shinseikatsu Undō Kyokai 1958: 28–38). Eventually, its activities spilled over the whole island, going beyond the company scheme (Shinseikatsu Undō Kyokai 1958: 7).

31 The integration of the national and local movement occurred at last due to a request by the governor to promote the New Life Movement by merging it with the local ‘new-born movement’ (Nakahara 1992: 83).

32 The focus on agricultural production did not necessarily delimit the range of participants to men. For example, in an agriculture village in Toyama prefecture, as a part of the activities of the New Life Movement that was organized around a local women’s association, training courses in agricultural techniques for women were introduced. This attempt was welcomed by participants’ husbands and in-laws, and resulted in increased participation in the Movement (Shinseikatsu Undō Kyokai 1959: 129–36).

33 The New Life Movement in Yamaguchi also approached ‘working mothers’ in sectors other than agriculture. It even organized housewives working at fish-product factories into participants in activities of the Everyday Life School. Two factories agreed to cooperate and housewives hence could join activities during their working hours and still receive pay (Nakahara 1992: 87).

34 Ōno city in Fukui prefecture is another interesting example that the New Life Movement developed into a civil movement. The Everyday Life School in Ōno contributed to the establishment of the water protection association, which later brought about the legislation for groundwater protection (Takeda 2005).

35 The Tokyo New Life Movement Association was a private incorporated foundation and not a public organization. The Tokyo Metropolitan Office only provided support, including financial resources, in order to promote the Movement (Tokyo-to Shinseikatsu Undō Kyokai 1973: 8 and 14).

36 The Tokyo New Life Movement Council was re-organized into the Tokyo New Life Movement Association (an incorporated foundation) due to a request from the Metropolitan Assembly in 1961. The request was made as the Council was a voluntary organization that was not officially recognized, despite having received financial support from the budget of the Metropolitan authority (Tokyo-to Shinseikatsu Undō Kyokai 1973: 15).

37 The government interest in the New Life Movement can be observed in the public survey conducted by the former Prime Minister’s Office (Sōriifu) (Sōriifu Daijin Kanbō Shingikai 1955).

6 Reproduction in the period of economic stagnation

1 In 1977, a student of a prestigious private school in Tokyo, many of whose graduates had successfully entered the University of Tokyo, was murdered by his own father. The student had been behaving violently for many years towards his parents, and according to the father, the parents were ‘driven’ to murder their son as a last-ditch effort. The 1980 incident is often recalled as the ‘metal baseball bat case’, in which a prep school student beat his parents to death with a metal baseball bat while they were sleeping. The abuse case happened at a private boarding yacht school, to which ‘children with problematic behaviours’ were sent by their
parents in order to moderate their behaviour. The case came under police investigation due to the death of a pupil during training, and soon the frequent use of physical punishment and bullying of pupils at school was revealed. The school headmaster was prosecuted, together with six coaches, for inflicting bodily injury resulting in death (Hisatke, Kainô, Wakao and Yoshida 1997: 127–8).

It must be noted here that the Japanese criminal code had more severely sanctioned the murder of a parent or parent-in-law by their children under Article 200 before the 1995 revision. The article was removed in 1995, and there is no longer any evident difference in sanctions due to the familial relationships between the murdered and the murderer.

2 Bogenbyô, literally meaning ‘illness originated in mother’, is the title of a book written by a paediatrician. The book made the best-seller list in 1979. According to the author, particular types of illness such as bronchial asthma, stuttering and anorexia increased among children after 1955. He suggests in the book that these diseases were induced by the psychological instability of children caused by indulgence and excess intervention in children’s lives by mothers (Matsumura 1985: 263–5; Ochiai 1997a: 68–70).

3 Interestingly, light was shed on domestic violence between couples much later (in the 1990s) than violent acts against parents by children. This by no means indicates that domestic violence between couples had scarcely happened prior to the 1990s. The main point here is simply that domestic violence became more clearly and publicly recognized as a serious social problem from the late 1990s onwards, through the passing of the Law for the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the Protection of Victims (Haigûsha kara no Bôryoku no Bôshi oyobi Higaisha no Hogo ni kansuru Hôritsu).

4 Inspired by the development of women’s studies in the US, Japanese female academics, often involved in the women’s liberation movement, started to commit themselves to women’s studies in the late 1970s. In 1974, Inoue Teruko and Fujieda Mieko started to teach women’s studies at higher education level. In 1977, the Japan Women’s Studies Research Group was organized, and the first book that carried ‘women’s studies’ in its title, co-authored by Hara Hiroko and Iwao Sumiko, both of whom are now involved in the Advisory Council for Gender-Equality, was published. In the next year, a conference of the International Women’s Studies Association was held in Tokyo (Akiyama, Ikleda and Inoue 1996: 58–60).

5 The English translation of kateinai rikon, domestic divorce, might sound odd to non-Japanese speakers. It signifies a situation in which a couple has lost commitment, contact and communications between them, including sexual intercourse, yet remain married.

6 A TV drama series called Kinyo’bi no Tsuma-tachi e (To Wives on Friday). The first series was broadcast in 1983. Characters of the first series were evidently portrayed as though they belonged to the generation of student protests and women’s liberation, hence, one of the New Family. In total, three series were produced, all based on the theme of extra-marital relationships.

7 Ueno (1994) introduces a survey result regarding extra-marital relationships conducted in a magazine to which housewives contributed their writings. According to the survey, one out of every six married women has experienced an extra-marital relationship. Interestingly, they did not feel guilty about their ‘infidelity’, which rarely resulted in divorce (241–2).

8 Hanako is an archetypal name for Japanese girls. The magazine Hanako was established in 1987 by a major information publisher, Recruit. It is exclusively published in the Tokyo metropolitan area, and each issue generally features one particular area/town of the Tokyo metropolitan area, providing detailed
information on shops and restaurants. Later, a sister version based in the Kansai area was published.

9 IPP merged with a special public corporation, the Institute of Research on Social Policy (Tokushū Hōjin Shakai Hoshō Kenkyūjo), and became the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research (Kokuritsu Shakai Hoshō Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūjo, IPSS) in 1996. The reason for the merger was twofold. Firstly, the issues relating to population and social security had become more closely related due to the falling birth rates, ageing and slowdown of economic growth, and the Ministry of Health and Welfare reorganized its research organization according to the transition. Secondly, the streamlining of numerous special corporations was a focus of the administrative reforms in the 1990s. In the reorganization of the national bureaucracy in 2001, IPSS was redefined as a research organization tasked with the planning and drafting of national policies of the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (Kōsei Rōdō Shō) (http://www.ipss.go.jp/Japanese/jap/enkaku.html accessed on 20 June 2003).

10 Funabashi observes that the second point arises as a logical consequence of the upbringing of respondents who were in the age group of 25 to 39 in 1995. According to her, women in this generation received education based on, in the institutional sense, at least, though not in the practical sense, gender equality. At the same time, however, they did not have role models in terms of professional and economic activities, as their mothers were mostly housewives, and hence the women were not strongly motivated to continue their working lives. Yet they also witnessed their mothers’ isolation and emotional and physical struggles in taking sole responsibility for child-caring and domestic duties. As a result, these women began to wish for a happy home in which they could concentrate on bringing up children well with cooperation and support from their partner (Funabashi 2000: 62–3).

11 Seichō ni Ie was a religious cult group established in 1927, in which Japanese indigenous beliefs, Confucianism, Buddhism, and Christianity were intricately combined. It collected believers from farmers, labourers and women who suffered from contradictions derived from industrialization and modernization. Consequently, it had a basis in anti-modernization, anti-science and anti-rationalism. It also functioned as part of a national religious suasion organization set up to support the Emperor system in the prewar period. According to the beliefs of this cult, human bodies are vehicles to carry trinity, which is composed of cosmos, life and God, and human sufferings are only relieved in pre-determined harmony with the trinity, in their words, ‘great life’. In such a doctrine, abortion is an act of interruption of the ‘great life’, and hence creates misfortune for future generations (Mizoguchi 1991: 76–80). It is well known that Seichō no Ie started the practice of commemorating aborted foetuses (mizuko kuyō), which grew into a big business, exploiting the sense of guilt experienced by many women.

12 Murakami Masakuni was arrested for a corruption charge in 2000, and found guilty of the charge at Tokyo District Court in May 2003.

13 The Japanese phrase for the slogan is ‘Um umanai wa watashi ga kimeru’. The Japanese term ‘watashi’ is a subjective pronoun used by a woman, or by a person using the very polite form of the pronoun. In writing, a Chinese character meaning ‘women’ was intentionally employed for ‘watashi’, which was differentiated from the ordinary usage of the character.

14 Although the image of the Chūpiren today dominates the popular understanding of the women’s liberation movement in early 1970s in Japan due to its PR strategies that effectively manipulated the mass media, the movement actually subsumes many different groups with different thoughts and agendas. Many ex-activists and feminists point out that there were fundamental differences between

15 Besides women’s liberation movements and disabled groups, the National Research Centre for Genetics (Kokuritsu Idengaku Kenkyūjo) and JPPF expressed their opposition towards the bill (Shudō 1996: 264), and in this respect, there were discrepancies between the Ministry of Health and Welfare and other groups concerning family planning and control of the quality of the national population.

16 This incident is generally known as the Fujimi Sanfujinka Byōin case.

17 It needs to be noted that popular attitudes of Japanese women towards contraceptive pills have been ambiguous. On the one hand, there were certain demands and activities for lifting the restriction on contraceptive pills, as has been demonstrated by the activities of the Chūpiren in the early 1970s. On the other hand, many women expressed their unease and discomfort regarding contraceptive pills. For some women who joined the anti-revision movements in the 1970s and 1980s, contraceptive pills were too ‘unnatural’ to take regularly. There was also an argument that contraceptive pills did not enhance women’s reproductive freedom, as they merely contributed to increasing women’s availability for men’s sexual desires. The public polls actually reflect these different feelings towards the contraceptive pills. According to the survey results conducted by the Mainichi Family Planning Survey, ‘nearly half of respondents are undecided about the issue, and the rate of pill supporters is declining steadily’. Moreover, ‘even the people supporting the pill are not eager to try it personally. In 1992, when asked about their personal intention to use the pill, 63 percent of the pill supporters replied they did not want to use even the low-dose pill, while only 6.9 percent answered that they would consider using it’ (Ogino 1994: 84–5).

18 Due to the lobbying activities of women’s groups, an additional resolution was passed at the House of Councillors. The resolution requires the national government to carry out the comprehensive examination and implementation of policies concerning women’s health from the perspective of reproductive health/rights. Yet, details of ‘the comprehensive examination and implementation’ were not decided.

19 The translation of Article 14 of the Mother’s Body Protection Law is as follows:

A doctor specified by each College of Physicians found in each prefectural division as an incorporated association (hereafter, a specified doctor) is able to conduct artificial abortions that fall under one of the following provisions, with the consent of the person concerned or her spouse.

1 A woman whose health may be seriously harmed by continuation of pregnancy and child birth due to physical and economic reasons.

2 A woman who has conceived after being subject to sexual assault or intimidation, or due to sexual intercourse happening while she is unable to resist or refuse.

20 The Japanese term ‘danjo kyōdō sankaku’ is literally translated into English as ‘joint participation of men and women’, and there is, therefore, a clear twist of meaning observed between the Japanese term and its official translation ‘gender-equality’. Ōsawa explains the background to these language politics in a dialogue with Ueno Chizuko, where it is indicated that there is a high degree of allergy to the Japanese term ‘byōdō’, a Japanese term commonly used as an equivalent to the English word ‘equality’, among the bureaucratic and business circles. Yet, according to her, this was a necessary concession to overcome opposition, in
particular from the LDP, in order to institutionalize the politics for gender equality within national politics, and that the governmental action plan for gender equality published in 2000 defines ‘danjo kyōdō sankaku’ as the achievement of a genuine equality between women and men (Ueno and Ōsawa 2001: 16–22). In this sense, it is evident that there has been a series of political negotiations concerning the definition of the term.

21 The quote is based on a tentative translation of the Basic Law for a Gender-Equal Society in English posted on the Gender Information site organized by the Gender Equality Bureau, Cabinet Office. Some minor changes have been made in the translation where considered necessary.

22 Harada lists a series of measures relating to the role of housewives introduced in the 1980s, as follows: the legal share of inheritance for wives prescribed in the civil code (1980); special tax reduction for income through part-time work (1984); the right for the basic pension for housewives (1985); the introduction of Special Spouse Tax Deduction for income tax and gift tax (1985 and 1987) (Harada 1991: 50).

Conclusion

1 I owe this term to a comment made by Professor Arthur Stockwin on my presentation at the Joint East Asian Studies Conference held at the University of Edinburgh (3 April 2001).

2 Eugenics itself is often categorized into two, positive eugenics and negative eugenics. While negative eugenics is to prohibit ‘socially unworthy’ people from reproducing, positive eugenics is to encourage ‘socially worthy’ people to reproduce more. Examples of positive eugenics are the policies encouraging marriage among a certain group of people in Nazi Germany or prewar Japan, and an example of negative eugenics is, needless to say, the legislation of sterilization laws.

3 It was in 1953 that the electrical appliances industry started the large-scale promotion of home appliances by naming the year ‘the first year of electrification’. According to Kanō, electrical appliances from hoovers and washing machines to toasters and rice cookers were often advertised as implements for a ‘rational life’ or even for the liberation of women. For example, one advertisement of washing machines produced by Toshiba said, ‘how can housewives enjoy spare time for reading? The shortest way is to rationalize time that is spent for doing the washing’ (Kanō 1987: 33).

The desire for electrical appliances drove housewives to join the savings movement that the New Life Movement also promoted enthusiastically, and even to start taking jobs in the labour market in order to earn spare money. Kanō comments on the changes caused by electrification:

In short, in the then value system in which ‘convenience’ and ‘rationality’ was highly appreciated, the reduction of domestic labour and ‘electrified life’ as a concrete image of the former, were values that everybody desired at any cost.

(Kanō 1987: 47)
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