

Feminism in Modern Japan
Citizenship, Embodiment and Sexuality

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7 Liberation

Liberation from the toilet

According to the masculine consciousness which shapes our understanding of sexuality, men are unable to see a woman as an integrated whole who has both the emotional quality of gentleness and the sexuality which is the physical expression of this gentleness. As far as men are concerned, a woman is split into two images – either the expression of maternal love: a 'mother', or a vessel for the management of lust: a 'toilet'.¹

Tanaka Mitsui's manifesto for the group *Tatakau Onna* (Fighting Women) in 1970 was a sign that women wanted to find new ways of participating in political activity. They wanted to be active as women, and they were ready to fight for the issues which stirred them: they were opposed to attempts to change Japan's abortion law; they were concerned with Japan's place in the international relations and the political economy of East Asia at the height of the cold war; they supported the struggle of the farming women of Kitafuji who were trying to stop the encroachment of military bases on their land; and they supported immigrants from other Asian countries in their struggles against the Japanese Department of Immigration.

Tanaka's article, 'Liberation from the Toilet', provided an impassioned condemnation of the conventions of sexual behaviour whereby women were condemned to be 'mothers' or 'whores'. Despite her anger, however, what is striking about her article is that she is still willing to try to imagine a world where men and women would see sex as a means of communication – free of domination and subordination. She does not reject sexuality *per se* and does not reject heterosexuality. She is critical of the doctrines of 'free sex' which were apparently prevalent in New Left circles in Japan, as in the other industrialised countries. Her vision of free sexual communication between men and women is a long way from the commodified sexuality which was already becoming apparent in Japanese popular culture.

Tanaka's article was original and shocking in its diagnosis of the conventions of sexual behaviour in Japan, and in its analysis of the relationship between the suppression of women's sexuality, the distortion of masculine sexuality in its focus on the split figures of the 'mother' and the 'whore', and the ways in which this system upheld the patriarchal family system and the capitalist system.² In the following extract, she explains why sexuality is so important to an understanding of the subordination of women:

We want to clarify the most basic relationship of subordination – that between men and women – by clarifying sexuality, which forms the nucleus of our lives as human beings. By doing so, we hope to provide a standpoint from which to think through the liberation of women, to universalise the liberation of women as the liberation of all human beings.

Why, then, does the denial of sexuality form the nucleus of the structure of our psychology? It goes without saying that human consciousness is limited by our lives. We could add that human consciousness is further limited by the economic system which shapes our relationships with other human beings. For men, 'other human being' refers to 'woman'; for women, 'other human being' refers to 'man'. For human beings, who have the power to reproduce, the two terms which are in opposition to each other are 'man' and 'woman'. Humans, who can only live as individuals who are born alone and die alone, are thus doomed to live as isolated individuals, in search of a fantasy of otherness.

This fantasy is obtained through SEX. SEX is the basic means of communication between living things whereby they transcend their limitations as isolated individuals . . .

What does it mean to say that the structure of consciousness which denies sexuality is the very structure which intensifies the oppression of women?

What is this structure whereby women are oppressed as women; whereby women become supporters of this system of domination as women?

We also need to clarify how it is that the sexual relationship between men and women contributes to their integration into this system of domination and subordination.³

The language of the manifesto also reveals the continued influence of Marxist and New Left thought in Japan, in particular in its use of the thought of Engels and Lenin and in its attempt to understand the subordination of women in class terms. The New Left was one element of the context from which groups such as the Fighting Women were born.

Women and the New Left

As in the other postwar liberal democracies, the 1960s in Japan had seen new forms of left-wing political activism, often rejecting the methods and

emphases of the mainstream Communist and Socialist parties and labour unions. In Japan, such activism was forged in the demonstrations against the renewal of the US-Japan Security Treaty in 1960, and in a decade of radical student activism, followed by anti-Vietnam War protests and counter-cultural activity.

Although its postwar Constitution explicitly renounces the right to belligerence, Japan has played an important role in US military strategy through its provision of bases and support facilities. The end of the Allied Occupation had seen the signing of the San Francisco Peace Treaty and the US-Japan Security Treaty (*Nichi-Bei Ampo Jōyaku*, commonly abbreviated to *Ampo*) in 1951, to become effective in 1952. Under the provisions of the treaty, Japan has hosted US military facilities throughout the postwar period. The treaty came up for revision and renewal in 1960 and this became the focus of activity by the left-wing political parties, student groups and other citizens' organisations, including over forty women's groups.⁴ On 19 May 1960, the renewal and revision of the treaty was rammed through the Diet by Prime Minister Kishi Nobusuke and the ruling Liberal Democratic Party. The Socialist members, who had been blocking the passing of the Bill by preventing the Speaker from entering the House, were forcibly removed from the Diet building by police.

Anti-treaty activism initially focused on Japan's continued subordination to the United States under the treaty regime, but soon shifted to a focus on Japan's own democratic institutions. The Diet building, the Prime Minister's residence and the United States Embassy were surrounded by tens of thousands of demonstrators on a daily basis. Demonstrations against the renewed treaty were so intense that a proposed visit to Japan by President Eisenhower had to be cancelled. On 15 June 1960, protesters led by the *Zengakuren* student federation tried to crash through the barriers which kept them away from the Diet building itself. In the ensuing confusion, a 23-year-old female student, Kamba Michiko, was killed and several other demonstrators injured.⁵ These demonstrations could not, however, prevent the automatic ratification of the treaty on 19 June, one month after it had been forced through the House of Representatives. Kishi resigned soon after and was replaced by Ikeda Hayato.

In 1960, Prime Minister Ikeda promised that personal incomes would double within the decade. A plan prepared by the Economic Planning Agency projected an annual growth rate of at least 7.2 per cent. The economy actually grew at an average rate of 10.8 per cent through the decade and the income-doubling target was achieved well before the end of the 1960s. The spectacular economic growth was largely based on steel processing and manufacturing. The influence of the United States was crucial, for Japan provided bases for American military activity in

Korea in the 1950s and Vietnam in the 1960s, which acted as a stimulus to the Japanese economy. As New Left activists in Japan joined international protests against the Vietnam War, they were forced to consider the complicity of their own government. While some engaged in public protest, others provided underground support for US military personnel who deserted their posts while stationed in Japan.⁶

Student radicalism peaked in 1968 and 1969 in Japan, with study at several major universities being disrupted.⁷ Most women in the New Left and student left found that they were relegated to support activities in left-wing organisations. Indeed, the images of political activism deployed by the student activists are those of violent struggle. The clashes between demonstrators and police are documented in extensive collections of photographs. The photographic record celebrates the helmets worn by both student protestors and riot police, the barricades, and armed struggle. Although women did participate in these demonstrations, they only make limited appearances in the documentary records. The figures of Kamba Michiko, who died in the 1960 anti-treaty demonstrations, and Tokoro Mitsuho, who died of illness in her late twenties, appear as martyrs, along with a number of male students who died in violent confrontation with police. Women also appear in photographs of social activities in conjunction with the demonstrations and occupations of university campuses. Rarely, however, do women appear as political agents in these publications.⁸

Many women thus experienced similar contradictions to those of their sisters in America and France, quickly becoming disillusioned with the mainstream left's lack of awareness of gender issues. These experiences provided an added impetus for a feminist critique of politics. Women demonstrated alongside their male comrades, but often came to feel dissatisfied with their marginal role in these organisations. While some moved on to form 'women's liberation' groups, employing such methods as 'consciousness-raising',⁹ others attempted to think through the relationship between the issues surrounding the US-Japan Security Treaty, broader questions of the nature of the postwar Japanese polity, and different forms of discrimination – discrimination against indigenous minorities such as the Ainu, caste-based discrimination against the *Burakumin* outcaste group, discrimination against overseas residents in Japan, and sex- and class-based discrimination.

For some, the *Ampo* struggle was linked with opposition to American military bases on Japanese soil. In Kitafuji, at the foot of Mount Fuji, struggles against the appropriation of common land by US Forces and later by the Japanese *Jieitai* (Self-Defence Forces) were carried on for several decades. Years before the massive women-led protests against the US base at Greenham Common in Britain, the women of Kitafuji occupied

huts on the military practice grounds and employed various forms of active and passive resistance. The women of Kitafuji continued to provide inspiration for peace activists for some decades.¹⁰

Kitazawa Yōko has recently commented on her memories of the relationship between the student left, the women's movement, and connections with other parts of Asia:

The Women's Lib movement was certainly stimulated by what was happening in the United States, but we cannot forget what was happening in Japan at the time, namely the anti-Vietnam war movement, and the movements at Sanrizuka, against the construction of an international airport, and Kira-Fuji, against a Self-Defense Force base.

... In that sense, the things taking place in Japan had more similarities with the movements of Asia than they did with their European counterparts. I think there are many similarities between the styles of fighting of women in Sanrizuka and liberation struggles in Asia or the Third World. The Japanese Women's Lib movement was stimulated by people in the United States, but it was not a simple import. From a woman's point of view, there were many similarities between Japan and the third world. This was a special characteristic of what happened here.¹¹

One of the earliest groups to attempt the ambitious project of understanding these multiple axes of discrimination was the *Shimryaku=Sabetsu to Tatakau Ajia Fujin Kaigi* (Conference of Asian Women Fighting Against Discrimination=Invasion, hereafter abbreviated to Asian Women's Conference). The name itself (like the names of so many groups of the time) reads like a manifesto rather than a mere label or tag. The group was launched at a weekend conference on 22-23 August 1970. The meeting discussed sexual discrimination, the relationship between the family system and the state, particularly in providing support for imperialism,¹² xenophobia, reports from Asian students in Japan, a report from the Buraku Liberation League on continued discrimination against outcasts, a report from the anti-base struggle in Kitafuji, and a report from the farmers' struggle in Narita against appropriation of their land for an airport.¹³ A statement issued in preparation for the formation of the group outlined their major concerns. First of all, they were interested in questioning the kind of 'women's liberation' which was possible under the postwar political system, and linking sexual discrimination with discrimination against the *Burakumin* outcaste group, Okinawans and Koreans. Secondly, they wanted to situate their own struggle in the broader context of their location in Asia. The United States and Japan were seen to be linked in a common imperialist project in Asia.¹⁴

A founder of the group, Iijima Aiko, has reflected that the women of the New Left had shifted from working under the guidance of their

male comrades, to becoming the subjects of their own struggle. It was necessary, comments Iijima, to recognise the similarities between sexual discrimination and other forms of discrimination. Women needed to understand that they were both oppressors and oppressed at the same time, and that they could only work to transform society by recognising this dual structure. The search for a unitary explanation for disparate forms of discrimination reflects the tenor of 1970s feminism.¹⁵

According to Iijima, while women had been politically active for much of the postwar period, they had rarely been active *as women*, and they had failed to challenge or transform the existing political system. Iijima, in particular, challenged the twin slogans of 'peace' (*heiwada*) and 'democracy' (*minshushugi*) which had been the catchphrases of the postwar period, choosing rather to focus on Japan's imbrication in US foreign policy in the region.¹⁶ The group was also interested in those who had fallen foul of Japan's immigration laws. Their first public meeting included reports from overseas students from a range of countries, and they joined other New Left groups in monitoring the Immigration Department's treatment of, for example, Taiwanese or Vietnamese students who would suffer political repression if forced to return to their home countries.¹⁷ Another group which attempted to think through the gendered dimensions of Japan's relationships with other countries in the Asian region was the Asian Women's Association (*Ajia no Onnatachi no Kai*), founded in 1977 (This group will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 9.)

While the sexism of men in the New Left was something that women's liberationists reacted against, there were elements of New Left activism which provided models for various progressive campaigns in the postwar period. Many of the newer leftist groups resisted any association with the more mainstream left-wing political parties, which came to be perceived as rigid in their conformity to party policies. Some groups consciously advocated loose alliances and new forms of demonstrations, such as sit-ins and teach-ins, which developed under the influence of the counter-culture movements of the Anglophone countries. An anti-Vietnam War group, *Behiren* (Peace for Vietnam Committee), was formed in 1965 and was active until the end of the Vietnam War. In addition to their sheltering of US army deserters within Japan, they attempted to speak directly to the American public through a full-page advertisement in the *New York Times*. *Behiren* also made good use of 'mini-komi' (mini communications), or alternative channels of communication.¹⁸

Another issue which interested New Left activists was the status of Okinawa. Okinawa prefecture is a group of islands between Kyūshū and Taiwan. What were then known as the Ryūkyū islands were annexed by Japan in the 1870s and remained under its control until the end of the

Second World War. While the Allies occupied mainland Japan from 1945 until 1952, Okinawa remained a US protectorate. Even after reversion to Japan in 1972, Okinawa still has a disproportionate number of US bases: 75 per cent of active US military bases on only 0.6 per cent of the total land mass of Japan.¹⁹ New Left interest in Okinawa in the 1970s focused on the labour conditions of local workers on the bases, and on the connection between these bases and US activities in Vietnam. In the 1990s, as we shall see in a later chapter, attention turned to the effects of bases on the local economy, the sex industry which has developed around the bases, and incidents of sexual violence against local women.

Also active in the early 1970s was the Red Army faction (*Sekigun-ha*). People were shocked by the hijacking of a Japanese airliner to North Korea, by televised news of armed fighting between the Red Army and police, and subsequent stories of murderous violence within the group itself, committed by both men and women.²⁰ Several women were prominent in the Red Army faction. In mentioning them here, I have no wish to suggest that what they did should be included in the history of feminism in Japan. It is true, however, that for women involved in the early women's liberation movement, the actions of the Red Army provided a backdrop to other political activities of the time, and their shock at the revelation of the activities of the women in the Red Army is an inextricable part of their memories of the early 1970s.²¹

Agora

One woman in Tokyo, Saitō Chiyō, had watched with concern the demonstrations in June 1960 against the Security Pact with the United States. Having lived through the Second World War and having witnessed the fire bombing of Tokyo, she abhorred anything which might lead to a revival of militarism.²² When female student Kamba Michiko died in the demonstration outside the Diet building on 15 June 1960, Saitō was moved to join the protests, despite problems in finding childcare for her young child. This experience radicalised her and revealed to her that it was impossible for women to take an active role in the world – through labour or political activity – while inadequate childcare facilities tied them to the home.²³ She embarked on a three-year campaign to establish a childcare centre in her area, in the course of which she met many other housewives. She also helped to establish the Bank of Creativity (*Ginō Ginkō*) and an organisation called *Agora* (from the Greek word for a public meeting place), so that women could employ their skills in the public sphere.

Eventually, *Agora* developed as a resource centre where women could engage in consciousness-raising and assertiveness training, and gather

information as a resource for feminist activity. The Bank of Creativity served as a kind of labour exchange. The first edition of the journal *Agora* appeared in 1972. It carried a collection of 'press clippings' from media reporting of women's issues for the year of 1971. These collections would become a regular part of the journal and an important resource for feminist campaigns. The journal also included a comprehensive investigation of the issue of so-called 'protective legislation', whereby women workers were prevented from engaging in night work and excessive overtime, and which provided for maternity leave and menstruation leave.²⁴ Another section included women's reflections on the conflicts involved in being a working mother, and a composition by a primary school child entitled 'Latchkey child' (*kagikko*). The issue of 'latchkey children', who returned home to an empty house to await their parents' return from work, was one which had the potential to arouse guilt in working mothers.²⁵

Agora grew out of the experiences of women themselves and evolved into a form which best suited their needs. By the 1980s, the organisation had groups all over Japan, each having developed to meet the needs of local women. The establishment of *Agora* reflects one pattern of involvement in feminist politics: a group of women meet to try to solve some problem close to their own lives – pollution, childcare, consumer issues, the usurpation of community land by military bases. Although they may not initially describe themselves as 'feminist', their experiences may lead them to a critique of gender relations in their society.

In later years, however, groups like *Agora* have come to be identified with a specific brand of feminism known as 'housewife feminism' (*shufu-gata feminizumu*). Contributors to the debates on housewife feminism either valorise the agency of women who achieve fulfilment outside of the employment patterns of the capitalist system, or criticise them for their complicity with capitalism and patriarchy in failing to challenge existing patterns of waged labour and domestic labour. This system locks men into exclusive commitment to paid labour, with women as supporters whose domestic labour facilitates their husbands' commitment to their employers but which relegates the women to the domestic sphere, with limited forays into part-time paid labour or part-time activism.²⁶

By the 1970s, Japan's economy was firmly established on the basis of spectacular growth, largely in steel processing and manufacturing. By 1978, 65 per cent of all working women were married, many of whom had returned to temporary or part-time labour in their late thirties or early forties, after child-rearing responsibilities eased.²⁷ Women's political activity in this period became more explicitly feminist – growing directly from their experiences of oppression as women, and challenging the identification of women with motherhood and the family.

From Women to Women

The first publication to come out of the women's liberation movement in Japan was a translated collection of documents from the women's liberation movement in the United States. It included the labour movement song 'Bread and Roses'; an article about the song; an article by Marge Piercy; and an interview with Charlotte Bunch-Weekes.²⁸ The first women's liberation demonstration in Japan was held on 21 October 1970 to mark an International Day for Peace. On 14 November, a one-day symposium on women's liberation was held, and the proceedings of this 'Women's Liberation Debate' were published in 1971. A participant remembers the attendance of women from their teens to their sixties, and that the seven-hour discussion covered issues of work, motherhood, femininity and sexuality.²⁹ While the first had been sponsored by the publisher responsible for the proceedings, another symposium, in May 1972, can perhaps more properly be called the first autonomous 'Women's Liberation Conference' in Japan.³⁰

Another early collection of translated works was called *Onna kara Omatachi e* (From Women to Women). A group of women who called themselves the 'Wolf Group' were responsible for translating a series of essays which had appeared in the United States under the title *Women's Liberation: Notes from the Second Year*.³¹ After the publication of this volume, the group also established their own journal, 'From Women to Women', which lasted for three issues. Contributors included some women who were active in feminist groups, in academia and in the media in subsequent years. Akiyama Yōko established *Feminern Press* and wrote about women's issues in China, including a pioneering pamphlet about the Chinese writer Ding Ling. Matsui Yayori was a member of the editorial staff of the prestigious *Asahi* newspaper and founder of the Asian Women's Association. A woman who was known under the pseudonym 'Enoki Misako' went on to found the sensationalist women's group *Chippren*. Others were active in publishing and the media. One member of the Wolf Group was involved in a pioneering sex discrimination case against the broadcasting company *Nihon Terebi*. Another member of the group became involved in the journal *Onna: Erosu* (Woman: Eros), to be discussed below.

Feminern Press

The women's liberationists did not simply want to introduce Euro-American feminist ideas into Japan, they also wanted to participate in a dialogue with women from other parts of the world. *Feminern Press*

was created for the purpose of disseminating information about Japan in English, trying to fill the huge gap between the knowledge women in Japan had about the West and the lack of knowledge about Japan to be found in other countries. 'Feminern' denoted 'Feminist International', modelled on the phrase 'Commintern' for the 'Communist International'.

The first publication was Akiyama Yōko's *The Hidden Sun: Women in Japan*. 'The Hidden Sun' refers, of course, to Hiratsuka Raichō's poetic manifesto from the first edition of the *Bluestocking* journal. The text of this pamphlet was reprinted in 1973 by the *International Socialist Review*. Later publications included Akiyama Yōko's pamphlet on the Chinese writer Ding Ling, Katie Currin's pamphlet on 'Women and Chinese Revolution', and Carter Aiko's 'On Being a Woman in Japan'.³²

The second publication was Tanaka Kazuko's *A Short History of the Women's Movement in Modern Japan*.³³ The copy I have is the 1977 edition, which bears a rising sun flag with a raised fist in the middle of the big-logical symbol for woman. Under the flag are Raichō's words: 'Originally Woman was the Sun' (Figure 7). The first pages include a photograph of some 1970s women's liberationists proudly raising a lantern bearing the character for woman (*Onna*), and the caption, 'These women of the 70s are shouting "We're proud to be women" ...'. Next is a photograph of the Bluestockings, described as a 'consciousness-raising meeting', and then the cover of the first issue of *Seiō* magazine, and a photograph of women at the first women's liberation weekend in the Japan Alps in August 1971. The contemporary photographs are by Matsumoto Michiko, who documented the early days of women's liberation in Japan.³⁴

The difficulties involved in presenting images of women in the public sphere are dramatised through one taken at the first women's liberation weekend. Matsumoto's photograph shows a group of naked women, enjoying the environment of the Japan Alps at the height of summer. The lower part of each woman's body is blacked out, due to regulations which prevented the display of pubic hair in photographs. The caption reads: 'Feeling free, / everyone suddenly, spontaneously / felt like running naked / through the fields / like in primitive days. / Unfortunately, / because of the Japanese "obscenity laws", / they are not allowed / to be so liberated / in this pamphlet.' While this relatively innocent photograph of women and by women had to be censored, a huge industry was developing which thrived on the commodification of images of women's bodies.³⁵

In just fifty-six pages, the pamphlet surveys the history of feminism in Japan: from the 'freedom and popular rights' movement of the 1880s and the socialist movement of the early 1900s, to the most recent developments in women's liberation. In the description of the contemporary

A SHORT HISTORY OF

THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN MODERN JAPAN

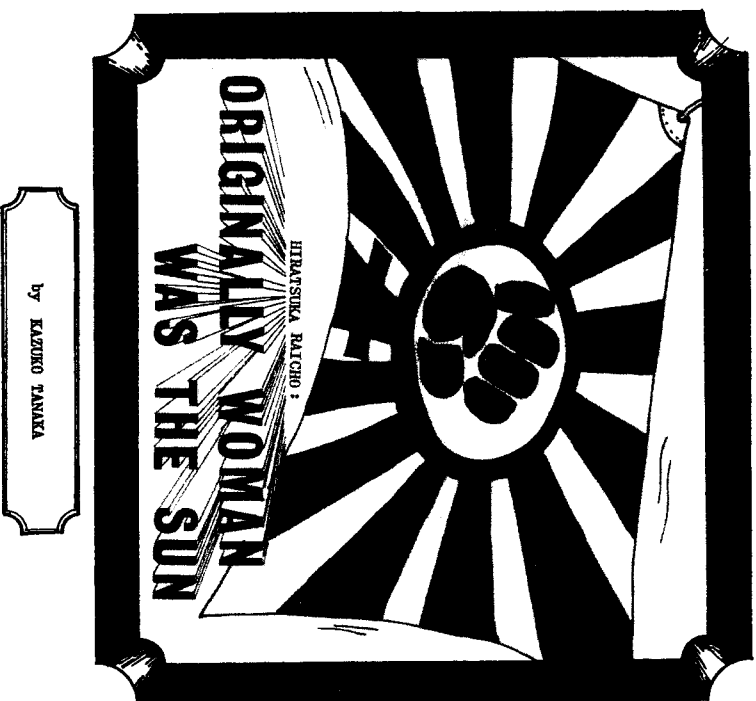


Figure 7.1 Cover of Tanaka Kazuko's *A Short History of the Women's Movement in Modern Japan* (Tokyo: Feminist Press, 3rd edn, 1997, artist unknown)

women's liberation movement, the influence of the rifts in the left following the *Ampo* demonstrations in 1960 and 1970 is apparent. Tanaka Kazuko is at pains to distinguish the movement from earlier women's groups, which had been subsumed under mainstream left-wing organisations and had become subject to the splits and factions of those organisations:

The nature of the contemporary Women's Liberation Movement can be seen in its aim, which is to bring about social reform based upon the reform of individuals. The Women's Liberation Movement makes the following criticism of the women's movement up to this time: they relied too much on the organisation itself and put all their energy into broadening their membership instead of pursuing the objectives of their movements; they blunted the self-awareness of the individual movement members and the awareness of their role as members; the result – they were unable to make an effective attack on sexual discrimination, which had become more and more complicated and invisible. Therefore, the Women's Liberation Movement advocates non-reliance on the existing organisations, will carry out the aims of the movement using the small groups as the individual units, and above all, will aim at establishing the clear self-identity of the individual as the movement's first step.³⁶

Consciousness-raising is advocated as a method for women to 'recognise themselves as the victims of sexual discrimination', and to 'hack their way through today's conditions – the conservative views which confine women in the conventional sex-roles and which are still spread through every kind of means and media'.³⁷ The women's liberation movement is defined as being autonomous from class-based political movements. Men of the New Left are criticised as being similar to the men of earlier leftist movements who trivialised women's demands.³⁸

Fourth, the Women's Liberation Movement has made 'sexual liberation' the central point of its theory. It insists that the 'double structure of rule' means that 'the ruling power has been accomplishing its class will by the control and oppression by the male sex of the female sex'. In brief, 'sex has existed as a fundamental means of human subordination', so, recovering, with their own hands, their sexual power, which has been stolen from them and controlled by the system and by men, is a very important objective for women and for the Women's Liberation Movement. According to such an interpretation, the Women's Liberation groups are now promoting the diffusion of knowledge about contraceptive pills, which permit women to manage their own sexual activities, and the removal of the government ban on the sale of these pills. At the same time, they have initiated activities against the revision of the Eugenic Protection Law, which aims at depriving women of the freedom to have abortions.³⁹

In addition to a bibliography of works on feminism in Japan, the pamphlet includes contact details for the Shinjuku Women's Liberation Centre, a women's coffee shop, the International Women's Year Action Group in Tokyo,⁴⁰ and other women's groups in Sapporo and Osaka.

Fighting Women

The *Tanaka Oma* (Fighting Women) group was formed in the early 1970s to combat conservative moves to amend those clauses in the

abortion law which allowed pregnancies to be terminated on the grounds that the child's welfare would be affected for 'economic reasons'. Members experimented with communal living and communal childcare. This group was largely responsible for the first women's liberation weekend camp, in August 1971, which attracted around 300 women from all over Japan.⁴¹ The second weekend camp was held in September 1972, and the third in August 1973.

The Shinjuku Women's Liberation Centre was established in September 1972 and was active until 1977.⁴² It had two purposes: to serve as a centre for feminist activities, and to provide a refuge and referral centre for women in need of help. From October 1972 they produced a journal, *Kono Michi Hitosaji*.⁴³ On 15 October 1972, women from all over the country demonstrated against the proposed changes to the Eugenic Protection Law. Further demonstrations were held in 1973 when the amendments were once again submitted to the Diet. Other actions concentrated on localised issues, such as the banning of prams from the platforms of the national railway stations, and on international issues, such as the trips of Japanese men to South Korea as tourists and customers of the prostitution industry ('*kisaeng* tourism').⁴⁴

Countless small groups were formed in the 1970s, and their roneced newsletters formed the basis of *mini-komi* (mini communications), providing an alternative to the *masu-komi* (mass communications) which had no place for discussion of women's issues - except in a sensational or patronising manner.⁴⁵ The term '*umman ribu*' (women's lib) became a focus of attention in the mass media - but was often the butt of ridicule. An article in the *Asahi* newspaper on 4 October 1970 foreshadowed the patterns of reporting on women's liberation and feminist actions. 'Women's Liberation' appears in English, but the Japanese transliteration is abbreviated to '*Umanan Ribu*' (Women's Lib). A further heading describes the women as 'brave micro-mini-skirted beauties'.⁴⁶ For others, however, *umman ribu* had more positive connotations. In 1977, a woman called Kobayashi Noriko undertook a solo crossing of the Pacific in a yacht called 'Lib' (*Ribu-go*).⁴⁷

It is no accident that the 1970s flowering of feminist activity roughly coincided with similar activities in Europe, the United States and Australia. In all of the advanced capitalist nations, women were experiencing the contradictions of an education which seemed to promise self-fulfilment, and a labour market based on inequalities of class and gender.⁴⁸ In Japan, too, many women had become disillusioned with left-wing politics which ignored or dismissed feminist demands. If Japanese women turned to the United States and Europe for theoretical tools to explain their situation, this was because they were experiencing similar contradictions.

Several feminist classics were translated into Japanese in the 1970s, including Margaret Mead's *Male and Female*, Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*, Kate Miller's *Sexual Politics*, Germaine Greer's *The Female Eunuch*, and Shulamith Firestone's *The Dialectic of Sex*.

Liberating the body

One of the women who had appeared in Matsumoto Michiko's photographs of the women's liberation weekends was Tanaka Mitsu. Yet another side of this celebration of women's bodies appears in a later reflection by Tanaka:

At the time of the women's liberation weekend camp, there was the event of everyone naked at the top of the mountain. Even now, when I look at that photo, it seems so funny. To tell the truth, I didn't really want to do anything like take my clothes off. Me, who's scared of seeing my frail body reflected in the bathwater at the public bath. It was ridiculous to think that I could be naked out of doors, in the middle of the day, where other people could see me... Nevertheless, I took part. Of course it wasn't a 'compulsory' part of the movement. If being weak was something to be embarrassed about, then I even had the masochistic thought that maybe I should have been hiding my face. Anyway, as I wouldn't have done anything I really didn't want to do, there must have been some reason. That's what I remember. In the photo, I'm the only one who's naked with sunglasses on. I'd been wearing the sunglasses since before I took my clothes off; suddenly I just couldn't take them off. I felt pathetic standing there naked with my sunglasses on, and kept meaning to take them off. However, I just kept wearing them right to the end... That feeling of venturing to take my clothes off, but keeping the sunglasses on; it just stares out at you from that picture.⁴⁹

In this extraordinary article, Tanaka denies the possibility of discovering a singular, authentic truth from the body. Every experience which is narrated in this article points to a conflicted and contradictory experience of the body. In the following excerpt, it is impossible not to be reminded of French sociologist Bourdieu's comments about the habitus, and about the training of the body.⁵⁰ Tanaka manages to de-naturalise the feminine training which is usually invisible, and also links this training to debates about women's liberation and about other political issues:

I had just been involved with the women's liberation movement for only a short time, and would generally sit on the floor with my legs crossed. However, when an attractive man walked into the room, I found myself sitting 'properly' with my legs tucked under me. I'm not exactly saying that crossed legs equals 'revolutionary', and sitting 'properly' equals reactionary... but behind my changing from sitting comfortably to sitting properly was (another) self who wanted to be seen as 'feminine' by men. If I had consciously asked myself at that time whether I

should sit with my legs crossed or sit properly, then there is a self who would have answered, you should sit comfortably. But that's not the truth. My real feeling at that time was to change my seating posture . . . A lot of what we consciously think is just the tip of the iceberg . . . For women, what makes up our unconscious is the notion of femininity. Even though we might say that the idea that women should be feminine is just a superficial idea. But even though it's just a superficial idea, it has become seeped in our flesh as women, it has become an 'unconscious' consciousness. This is the present I live in, with two selves. One self has had the idea that men like women to be feminine imprinted on the body. Another self rejects femininity.⁵¹

Other parts of the article focus on bodily presentation, and make surprising links between the very personal issues of bodily experience and bodily presentation and other issues of political philosophy. A woman who has argued against the women's liberationists in very conventional Marxist language is castigated for wearing pink nail polish. But this is not simply an attack on another woman for her false consciousness in painting her nails. Rather, the Marxist jargon which decorates this woman's speech is seen as superficial, a mere decoration. For explaining women's current situation, Marxist jargon is as useless and superficial as nail polish.⁵²

After a long disquisition on virginity and femininity, further surprising links are made. There is a fairly conventional discussion of the fact that a woman's body, in particular her virginity, is a kind of property. However, different bodies have different values, and this depends on class position. The virginity of the crown princess Michiko would be worth much more than that of any 'ordinary' woman.⁵³ It is the difference between a diamond ring and cheap costume jewellery. Nevertheless, what really matters is the appearance of virginity. If one looks virginal in a wedding dress, that is all that really matters. In another reference to contemporary political issues, this is said to be just like the difference between having an army and having a self-defence force. In other words, to have a constitution which renounces militarism and then call the army a self-defence force is just like dressing a non-virgin in a wedding dress and calling her a virgin because she's wearing a white dress.

Another section makes reference to a comment, attributed to the French film director Jean-Luc Godard, that Vietnam was everywhere, even in the bedroom. Tanaka wonders whether you can think about Vietnam while having an orgasm! Even though she concludes that these two thoughts cannot co-exist, she does understand that protesting about the Vietnam War is part of the self that enters the bedroom. Tanaka's writings thus leap from the most intimate discussion of bodily experience, to the political issues which concerned leftist thinkers of the time: the Emperor system, Japan's military alliance with the United States, and

Japan's imbrication in the military activities of the United States in Vietnam. Finally, however, she rejects the attitude of always seeking men's approval, which she dramatised so effectively in her anecdote about her anxieties about her bodily presentation.

Woman and Eros

The journal *Onna Erosu* (Woman: Eros) was established in November 1973 and produced seventeen issues before folding in 1982 due to financial difficulties. It was started by Saeiki Yoko, Yoshizumi Kazue, Miki Soko and Funamoto Erni. It was published by the publisher Shakai Hyoron Sha and thus had quite reasonable distribution, unlike most of the roneeod newsletters which went under the name of 'mini-komi'.

The journal provided a forum for the discussion of marriage, sexuality, prostitution, labour and politics from a literary and theoretical perspective.⁵⁴ One of the editors, Funamoto Erni, remembers that the first edition came out around the time that Kate Millet's *Sexual Politics* was translated into Japanese.⁵⁵ The first edition challenged the institution of marriage. Subsequent editions focused on living outside the institution of marriage, bringing women's liberation into the workplace, women's bodies, the situation of housewives, images of women, prostitution, the political system, destroying the family system, and sexuality. In the final edition, Yoshizumi Kazue set out her vision of what the journal had tried to achieve over nearly a decade:

We have been feeling our way and have taken the first step in liberating sexuality, which is the power which animates the fundamental life force (Eros). Right up to this final issue, we still believe that we can only find this power in women's everyday lives. This is the principle which has guided *Onna Erosu*. In the pages of the magazine, we have not sought to affirm an identity through a victim consciousness. We have rather attempted to create a liberated space where women could transform themselves and express themselves with courage, to bring the experiences and the fruits of the struggles of women as a group into the minds of our readers. We wanted to create a space where, through trying out various practices, we could extend a hand to others in order to create a better world for women.⁵⁶

Wonderful Women

Sexuality was thus a major focus of the women's liberationists of the 1970s, but for many activists, this still meant mainly heterosexuality. An examination of such journals as *From Women to Women* and *Onna Erosu* reveals a few articles on the experiences of lesbians. Nevertheless,

lesbians reported that they often felt marginalised from 'mainstream' feminist groups and activities.⁵⁷ Radical lesbian groups were formed in the 1970s. One group established a lesbian feminist LF Centre, which ran consciousness-raising and self-defence classes, while publications such as *Sakurashii Omatashi* (Wonderful Women) and *Za Daiku* (The Dyke) attempted to retrieve a history of lesbians in Japan,⁵⁸ a significant gap in accounts of Japanese feminism until recently.⁵⁹ Lesbian feminist groups also created spaces and events where women could socialise with each other.

It was not until the 1980s that publications about lesbians appeared on the mass market. One of the first accessible publications on lesbians in postwar Japan was not produced by a feminist group but by the progressive left-wing journal *Takarajima* in 1987. *Takarajima* took the form of a series of special editions, each focusing on a particular topical issue. The issue on lesbians was called 'The Story of Women who Love Women', and included a series of 'coming out stories' and the results of a survey of lesbians. It also continued the project of attempting to recover a history of lesbians in Japan, with stories on Yuasa Masako, the erstwhile lover of communist writer Miyamoto [Chūjō] Yuriko, the flirtation between Hiratsuka Raichō and fellow Bluestocking Orake Kazuo [Kōkichi], and the relationship between novelist Yoshiya Nobuko and her partner Kadoma Chiyo. In the early 1990s, controversy was created by Kakefuda Hiroko's book, *On Being Lesbian*, and she was brave enough to be interviewed in the mass media.⁶⁰

The new Bluestockings

Other writers also showed an interest in discovering Japan's own feminist tradition, with one journal, *Feminist*, using the subtitle 'The New Seitō' ('the new Bluestocking journal'). The editor was Atsumi Ikuko, then professor of English literature at the prestigious private college *Aoyama Gakuin*, and a noted feminist poet and translator.⁶¹ *Feminist* first appeared in 1977. Atsumi was able to draw on, and help to construct, a tradition of Japanese feminism. The title of the journal was an important intervention. The Japanese transliteration of the English word 'feminist' (*feminisuto*) was a familiar word to most educated people in Japan. Its connotation, however, was rather distinctive. The word had come to be used to describe a man who was kind to women, rather than a campaigner for women's political rights. By naming their journal *Feminist*, Atsumi and her colleagues reclaimed the word itself, and reclaimed the concept of women's militancy as political agents engaged in a project of social transformation. At the same time, the name linked them with similar movements in other countries, and perhaps distanced them from some

of the negative connotations apparent in sensational media portrayals of the women's liberationists who were trivialised by the label '*umman ribu*'. In other interventions, the feminists of the 1970s reclaimed the use of the word '*onna*' (woman), rather than using the euphemistic '*nyūjin*' (lady), or the more formal Sino-Japanese compound '*josei*' (female).

The first edition of *Feminist* opened with a poem which acknowledged the new feminists' debt to the original Bluestockings of the early twentieth century. This generation of feminists, however, has 'torn' stockings. Whereas Hiratsuka Raichō had rejected the imagery of woman as the passive moon, preferring to identify with the more powerful image of the sun, Atsumi's poem positions women as powerful observers from a spaceship, looking down on the earth. This elevated position also brings 'the independent women of all countries' into view. This global perspective is also reflected in the first editorial, and in the contents of subsequent editions of the journal.

As if burning.

I rode on the spaceship 'Sisterhood'

With the independent women of all countries

And I could see the distortions of the World.

I want to see even more clearly

With my own eyes I want to see the dark side of the world

This is our departure!

Even with our torn stockings

We are beautiful.

The editorial also refers to the earlier generation of feminists:

In Japan, sixty-six years have passed since Hiratsuka Raichō wrote in the pages of the Bluestockings journal, 'In the beginning woman was the sun...'; a declaration of women's need for spiritual independence. Although there may be some criticism of the Bluestockings, we wish as part of a worldwide movement, to go beyond ideology, and recover the existence of women who have been hidden – in the Japanese context, we wish to carry on the spirit of the Bluestockings. We have started from a rejection of relationships based on conflict and subordination. We are interested in the relationship between Japan and other countries, and intend to monitor the conditions of women in Japan and other countries.⁶²

The contents included articles about the Japanese situation, translations from overseas, advertisements for the works of feminist historian Takamure Itsue and the facsimile edition of the early journal *Seitō* (Bluestocking).

The other feature of *Feminist* is its unselfconsciousness blending of Japanese and non-Japanese elements. The works of Betty Friedan, Elizabeth Reid, Adrienne Rich, Sylvia Plath and Kate Millet sit side-by-side with those of Hiratsuka Raichō and Takamure Itsue. *Feminist* also saw itself as being part of an international network of feminism and

issued several English editions. The journal also had representatives in the United States, Australia and the Netherlands. In addition to translations of works from English and other European languages, it carried reports on women's issues and feminist movements from around the world, and contributed to the development of women's studies in Japan. *Feminist No.* 5 included a series of articles reflecting on women's studies, and each edition contained academic articles on feminist research into literature, linguistics, popular culture, history and anthropology.⁶³

Feminist presented a glossier image than previous feminist journals and attempted to reach a broader audience. It carried advertisements for department stores, cosmetics and fashion items. Some of these advertisements consciously played on a current media label for women who did not know their proper place, '*Tenderu Onna*' (Flying Women). The cover of each edition carried a photograph of a prominent woman. Conceptual artist Ono Yōko was on the cover of the first edition. Subsequent editions carried portraits of such women as designer Ishioka Eiko, parliamentarian Ichikawa Fusae, bureaucrat Akamatsu Ryōko, Socialist Diet member Tanaka Sumiko, management consultant Saisho Yuriko, director of the National Women's Education Centre Naita Yōko, and journalist Kanamori Toshie. While *Feminist* attempted to bring the techniques of mass marketing to the dissemination of feminist ideas, the mainstream media were also affected by feminism in some ways. The magazine *Mao* (More) was modelled on the American *Cosmopolitan*. *Kurovassan* (Croissant) also treated feminist ideas rather more seriously than some more mainstream women's magazines, but still had a heavy emphasis on consumerism.

Women's studies

As we have seen in earlier chapters, those who worked for the improvement of women's situation in the early twentieth century were also led into research in what was then called '*jiyin mondai*' (the woman question). Many of these came from a socialist perspective. Hosoi Wakizō wrote about factory workers. Women in the labour movement, such as Tatewaki Sadyo and Maruoka Hideko, wrote about working women and rural women. Takamura Issue retreated to her 'house in the woods' and embarked on a lifelong mission to retrieve the history of women in Japan.⁶⁴ The current wave of women's studies in Japan can be traced to the women's liberation movements which grew out of the New Left activism of the 1970s, and the broader reformist feminist movements. By the end of the 1970s, several women's studies associations had been established within Japan.⁶⁵

Although there are now several such associations, and a number of academic women's studies journals, most teachers of women's studies are on the fringes of the academy, reflecting the already marginal place of women in tertiary institutions. Women academics are more likely to be in part-time, casual or untenured positions, and women's studies courses are generally isolated subjects, with few co-ordinated interdisciplinary programs and as yet no university which provides a major in women's studies. As in many other countries, such courses survive through the dedication of groups of feminist researchers who find solidarity in networks which cross several institutions and which may bring together academics, activists, journalists, women in the law and other professions, and freelance writers and researchers. The women's universities, such as Ochanomizu University, Japan Women's University and Tokyo Women's University, have provided a rather more hospitable environment for academic women's studies.

In addition to women's studies based, rather precariously, in the academy, there is also a range of community-based, or grass-roots, women's studies activity, which often takes the form of the production of newsletters, journals or monographs on a collaborative basis. Women's history, in particular, has developed such grass-roots ways of writing history, while other community-based research is tied to specific issues, such as sexual harassment, domestic violence, the situation of immigrant workers, or support for claims for compensation by women subject to forced military prostitution in the Second World War. The local women's centres which were established in many local government areas during the International Women's Decade also host adult education classes on women's studies and women's history, and provide a focus for local study groups.

Other publications try to bridge the perceived gap between academic research and feminist activism. While the publications of the *Nihon Jōseigaku Kenkyū Kai* (Japan Women's Studies Association) are probably rather firmly on the academic side of the divide,⁶⁶ the journal *Jūgoshi Nōwa* (Notes for a History of the Homefront) is of interest to both feminist historians and activists (Figure 7.2). The group which produced this journal called themselves *Jōsei no Ima o Tōu Kai* (Women Questioning the Present). These women were particularly interested in recovering the history of how women had experienced the Second World War.⁶⁷ Although Japanese women had often been presented as innocent victims of the militarisation of Japanese society during the war, this group of feminist historians also considered the question of the complicity of ordinary people in Japan's military activities. They did not, however, stop with an examination of the gendered history of the Second World War, but also considered the legacy of the wartime experience in postwar Japan. True

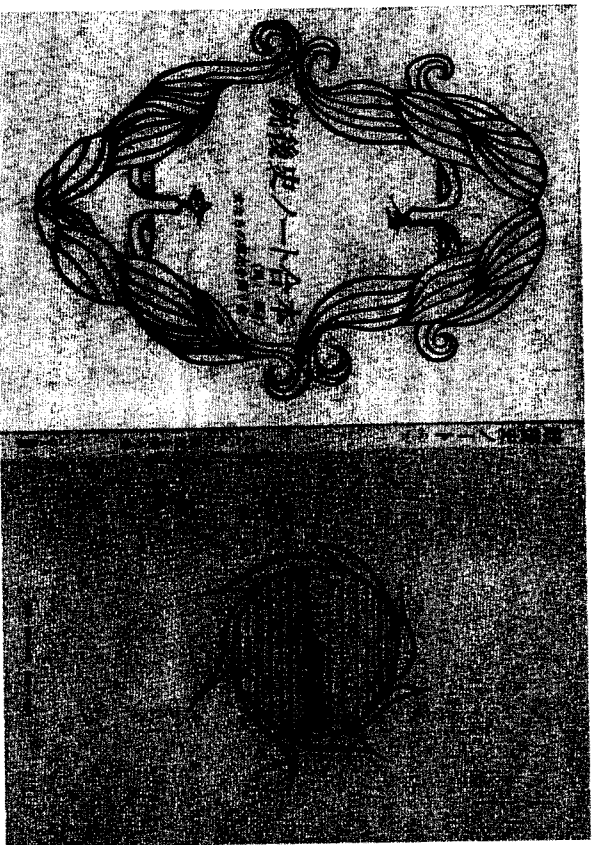


Figure 7.2 Cover of 1983 boxed edition of first three issues of *jūgoshi Nōta* (artist unknown); the gun is a literalisation of the meaning of the word *jūgo* ('homefront', but literally 'behind the guns')

to the name of 'Women Questioning the Present', they came full circle with the final edition of the journal in 1996 (Figure 7.3). They chose to bring twenty years of feminist research to a close with an edition which focused on the period of student left activism and women's liberation which had given birth to the group. While they had started with an exploration of the experiences of their mothers, a generation before, they brought their researches to an end with a consideration of the days of their own youth. Although the 'present' that they examined was continually receding into the past, their research continued to be informed by contemporary political issues at the time of their writing.⁶⁸

The Asian Women's Association also contributed to the development of feminist history with an activist emphasis through its journal *Ajia to Yosei Kaihō* (Asian Women's Liberation). Like *Feminist*, it tried to integrate feminist groups in Japan into international channels of communication by producing regular English-language editions.

Fighting for reproductive control

* As we have seen, reproductive control was a major focus of feminist activity in the 1970s. Control of citizens' reproductive capacity had been a



Figure 7.3 Cover of final edition of *jūgoshi Nōta*, 1996, including a photograph by Matsumoto Michiko of the 1973 women's liberation weekend

major concern of both the imperial state from 1890 to 1945 and the post-war Japanese state. Regulations on the restriction of abortion were first enacted as early as 1868, the first year of the Meiji regime. Abortion was designated a crime in the Criminal Code of 1882, and this was carried over into the revised Penal Code of 1907.⁶⁹ During the wartime period, reproductive control was linked with eugenic imperatives under the National Eugenic Law (*Kokumin Yūsei Hō*) of 1940. While the wartime regime had been interested in the production of large numbers of healthy subjects under the slogan of *umeyo fuyaseyo*' (Bear children and multiply), ideas of birth control were revived at the end of the war. In November 1945, the Birth Control Alliance (*Sanjū Seigan Dōmei*) was formed.

In November 1946, 'Recommendations for a New Basic Population Policy' (*Shin Yinkō Sessaku Kihon Hōshin ni Kansuru Kengian*) were introduced by a private organisation, the Committee for Population Policy Research of the Institute for Population Issues (*Yinkō Mondai Kenkyūkai, yinkō Sessaku Iinkai*).⁷⁰ A new abortion law, the *Yūsei Hogo Hō* (Eugenic Protection Law), was passed in 1947, to become effective in June 1948. This law was a revision of the wartime *Kokumin Yūsei Hō*. For most of the postwar period, abortion has been relatively easily available, because of a clause of the Eugenic Protection Law which allows abortion on

'economic grounds'. This is thanks to the May 1949 revision of the *Yūzei Hogo Hō*, which allowed for abortion in cases where the mother's physical condition or economic circumstances meant that continuing the pregnancy or giving birth would endanger the mother's health.⁷¹ In April 1949, the Ministry of Health authorised the use of contraceptive drugs such as spermicides, and devices such as condoms and diaphragms. The use of intrauterine devices had been banned since 1931.⁷² A revision of the law in 1952 allowed abortions solely on the recommendation of a doctor, without reference to the Eugenic Protection Board of Examiners, and also included an amendment proposing the teaching of birth control.⁷³

The family planning movement, which had begun in the prewar period before suffering repression in the 1930s, was revived in the aftermath of the Second World War. Margaret Sanger visited Japan again in 1952. Despite these developments, Japan has seen regular attempts by conservatives to smash the regulations which allowed relatively liberal access to abortion. A quasi-religious group, *Seichō no Ie* (The House of Growth), began in the late 1950s and launched the Cherish Life Movement (*Inochi o Taisetsu ni Suru Undō*) in 1962 with various Catholic organisations, and campaigns for revision of the Eugenic Protection Law. In practice, abortion is fairly easily available in Japan, but feminists have resisted not only the eugenic philosophy of the various versions of the laws which regulate abortion, but also the philosophy which affirms that decisions about reproductive control are a matter of government policy rather than a matter for individual self-determination. It was exactly these issues of bodily autonomy which concerned women's liberationists.

These women were galvanised by attempts in 1972, 1973 and 1974 to remove the 'economic reasons' clause from the Eugenic Protection Law. Although they were successful in forestalling its removal, they actually wanted more radical reform. They resisted the logic of a law which placed ultimate control of women's reproductive capacity in the hands of the state, demanded the removal of the crime of abortion from the Criminal Code, and challenged the eugenic emphasis of the Law. This was linked to broader issues of women's bodily autonomy.

In the media, groups such as the Fighting Women group have been overshadowed by the more sensational *Chūjūren* (Alliance for Abortion and the Pill). Its leader, 'Enoki Misako', had briefly been involved with the group which had produced *From Women to Women* and which had been responsible for some members experimenting with the use of the contraceptive pill.⁷⁴ *Chūjūren* challenged sexual double standards and demanded access to the pill and to safe abortion on demand. They were catapulted into the international media through their practice of

public embarrassment of men who had been guilty of infidelity. Their guerrilla tactics were enacted in a costume which included pink crash helmets.

While subsequent commentators, including myself, have lamented the inordinate media attention paid to this sensationalist group, some aspects of their actions are worthy of mention. By challenging the sexual double standard, they can be seen to be aligning themselves with one strand of feminism which stretched back to the British suffragists. Their pink helmets are likely to have been a parody of the crash helmets worn by the student left in demonstrations. Their demands for safe access to abortion and the contraceptive pill reflected their desire to see women have autonomous control over their own bodies, their own sexuality and their own reproductive capacity, demands which have been echoed by women's groups in subsequent decades. Women's groups in Japan and other countries have, in subsequent decades, often been reluctant to endorse the contraceptive pill because of the lack of research into its side effects before its implementation in Europe and North America. However, the reluctance of some individuals to use this particular form of contraception does not affect the basic principle that women should be allowed to make their own choices on contraception and other reproductive matters.

Several attempts to remove the 'economic reasons' clause from the Eugenic Protection Law have been successfully blocked in the postwar years. What has remained from these campaigns is an interest in providing women with access to knowledge about their own bodies and reproductive functions, so that they can make informed choices about sexuality, contraception and reproduction. In the 1970s, some women associated with the women's liberation movement started to talk about producing a Japanese translation of the American women's liberation classic, *Our Bodies, Our Selves*. It was not until the 1980s, however, that a group associated with the Shōkadō Women's Bookstore in Kyoto was able to tackle this work in earnest. The translation, or rather adaptation, which included a wealth of information about health facilities in Japan, finally appeared in 1988.⁷⁵

The issue of reproductive control also reminded women of the need to engage with state institutions. While many pursued liberation at an individual level, by engaging in consciousness-raising around themes of sexuality, the body and ideology, a strong strand of reformism also developed. Women demanded institutional changes, such as an Equal Opportunity Act and reform of the education system, in the hope that the guarantees of equality encoded in the Constitution could be translated into reality. Women's under-representation in the élite national

universities which feed graduates into public administration and the management sectors of large corporations is one of the factors contributing to the relative lack of women in decision-making positions in government, the civil service and private industry.

International Women's Year in 1975, and the ensuing International Decade for Women, had an incalculable effect on Japanese feminist politics. Such groups as the International Women's Year Action Group were able to combine domestic political activity with international pressure through forums such as the International Women's Decade conferences at Copenhagen, Mexico and Nairobi. A large number of the Action Group's members were educated working women, such as teachers and public servants, and their activities were closely related to these sectors' concerns, with publications on non-sexist education, family law, the problems of working women, and divorce. The group also showed considerable skill in attracting media attention through demonstrations and sit-ins, and challenged the very conventions of the media representation of women.⁷⁶ The activities of the reformist feminists will be surveyed in the next chapter.

NOTES

- 1 Tanaka Mitsuru, 'Benjo kara no Kaihō', statement prepared for *Tatakan Omma* (Fighting Women), September 1970, reproduced in Inoue Teruko et al. (eds), *Nihon no Feminizumu I: Ribu to Feminizumu*, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1994, pp. 39–57.
- 2 I will return to Tanaka's analysis in Chapter 9, in a discussion of the attempts of feminists in the 1990s to come to terms with the structures of state management of sexuality which gave rise to the use of military prostheses in the Second World War.
- 3 Tanaka, 'Benjo kara no Kaihō', pp. 39–57.
- 4 For women's participation in the anti-*Ampo* demonstrations, see *Jūgoshi Nōto: Sengo-ken*, No. 5, June 1990.
- 5 George R. Packard, *Protest in Tokyo: The Security Treaty Crisis of 1960*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1966, *passim*; Yoshikuni Igarashi, *Bodies of Memory: Narratives of War in Postwar Japanese Culture, 1945–1970*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2000, pp. 132–43.
- 6 Sakamoto Yoshie, 'Jimmin no Umi' no naka ni Dassō Hei tachi wa ita – Beheiren Dassō Hei Enjo Katsudō no koto', *Jūgoshi Nōto: Sengo-ken*, No. 8, 1996, pp. 172–5.
- 7 For discussion of the student left, see Murō Ichiryō and Inoue Reiko, 'The New Left, Part 2', *Ampo: Japan-Asia Quarterly Review*, Vol. 17, No. 3, 1985.
- 8 See, for example, Abe Kōzō, Hosono Takeo (eds), *Zengakuren: Okoru Wakamono*, Kyoto: Ryōkufūsha, 1960.
- 9 Tanaka, Kazuko, 'The New Feminist Movement in Japan, 1970–1990', in Kumiko Fujimura-Fanselow and Atsuko Kameda (eds), *Japanese Women: New Feminist Perspectives on the Past, Present and Future*, New York: The Feminist Press, 1995, pp. 343–52; Funamoto Emi, Satō Chiyō and Fukuda Mitsuko, 'Agora to Erosu: Sengo Feminizumu Zasshi no Nagare o Miru', *Agora*, No. 250, 10 June 1999, p. 10.
- 10 Andō Toshiko, *Kirafuji no Omma Tachi*, Tokyo: Shakai Hyōronsha, 1982; Leonie Caldicott, 'At the Foot of the Mountain: The Shibokusa Women of Mount Fuji', in Lynne Jones (ed.), *Keeping the Peace*, London: Women's Press, 1983.
- 11 Kitazawa Yoko, Matsui Yayori and Yunomae Tomoko, 'The Women's Movement: Progress and Obstacles', in Ampo: Japan-Asia Quarterly Review (eds), *Voices from the Japanese Women's Movement*, New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1996, pp. 27–8.
- 12 Feminist and left-wing writers on Japanese history, as we have seen, often point to the mobilisation of familial ideology under the so-called 'household' (*ie*) system in the service of the imperial state, and the gendered meanings of subjecthood under this system.
- 13 Women from Shibokusa (to the north of Mount Fuji) were engaged in demonstrations against the use by US military bases of what had formerly been common rural land. The people of the Sanrizuka area of Narita in Chiba prefecture were protesting the use of farming land for a proposed new international airport (the present Tokyo International Airport).
- 14 Akiyo Mizoguchi et al. (eds), *Shiryō Nihon Uman Ribu Shi*, Kyōto: Shōkadō, 1992, Vol. 1, pp. 20, 33.
- 15 Mizoguchi et al., *Shiryō Nihon Uman Ribu Shi*, Vol. 1, p. 19.
- 16 *Ibid.*, p. 37.
- 17 *Ibid.*, pp. 38–39.
- 18 Thomas Havens, *Fire across the Sea: The Vietnam War and Japan, 1965–1975*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1987, *passim*. The full name of the group is *Betonamu ni Herida o Shinin Rengō* (People's Organisation for Peace in Vietnam).
- 19 Takasato Suzyo, *Okimawa no Onnatachi: Josei no Jinken to Kichi Guntai*, Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 1996, p. 135.
- 20 On women involved with the Red Army faction, see Patricia G. Steinhoff, 'Three Women who Loved the Left: Radical Women in the Japanese Red Army Movement', in Anne E. Imamura (ed.), *Re-Imaging Japanese Women*, Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 301–23.
- 21 Akiyama Yoko, *Ribu Shishi Nōto: Onnatachi no Jidai Kara*, Tokyo: Imupakuro Shuppankai, 1993, p. 11.
- 22 Author's interview with Satō Chiyō, January 1987. Satō's thoughts on pacifism and feminism, and her experiences during the Second World War, are related in her 'Feminism to Sensō', *Agora*, No. 24, May 1981.
- 23 cf. Sylvia Lawson's discussion of the difficulties of women with children exercising the rights of citizenship: Sylvia Lawson, 'La Citoyenne, 1967', in Drusilla Modjeska (ed.), *Inner Cities: Australian Women's Memory of Place*, Melbourne: Penguin Australia, pp. 99–108. I am indebted to Susan Sheridan for this reference.

- 24 This issue will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter, in the context of debates on the introduction of equal employment opportunity legislation.
- 25 *Agora*, No. 1, 15 February 1972, reissued in facsimile edition in February 1997, in commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of *Agora*.
- 26 On the debates on 'housewife feminism', see Tomoko Nakamatsu, "'Part-Timers'" in the Public Sphere: Married Women, Part-Time Work and Activism', in Vera Mackie (ed.), *Feminism and the State in Modern Japan*, Melbourne: Japanese Studies Centre, 1995.
- 27 Ohashi Terue, 'The Reality of Female Labour in Japan', *Feminist International*, No. 2, Tokyo, 1980, pp. 17–22; Kaiji Etsuko, 'The Invisible Proletariat: Working Women in Japan', *Social Praxis*, 1973, pp. 375–87.
- 28 *Josei Kaihō Undō Shiryō I: Amerika-hen*, cited in Akiyama, *Ribu Shishi Nōto*.
- 29 Akiyama, *Ribu Shishi Nōto*, p. 9; *Sei Sabetsu e no Kokuhatsu: Umanan Ribu wa Shachō Suru*, Tokyo: Aki Shobō, 1971.
- 30 Akiyama, *Ribu Shishi Nōto*, p. 11.
- 31 The name of the group, *Uruju no Kai*, was a Japanese phonetic transliteration of the name 'Woolf group', for Virginia Woolf. As the Japanese script did not distinguish between 'Woolf' and 'Wolf', the women were pleased for the name of their group to be a pun on the name of the feminist writer and the animal.
- 32 Akiyama, *Ribu Shishi Nōto*, p. 150.
- 33 Tanaka Kazuko, *A Short History of the Women's Movement in Modern Japan*, Tokyo: Feminern Press, 1974 (subsequent references in this chapter are to 3rd edn, published 1977). *A Short History* was adapted and translated from a section of Kamchika Ichiko, *Josei Shisō Shi*, Tokyo: Aki Shobō, rev. edn, 1974. Figure 7 shows the cover of the volume, artist unknown.
- 34 See Matsumoto Michiko, *Nobiyakana Onnatachi: Matsumoto Michiko Shashinshū*, Tokyo: Hanashi no Tokushū, 1978.
- 35 On the regulations prohibiting representation of pubic hair, and their subsequent repeal, see Anne Allison, *Permitted and Prohibited Desires: Mothers, Comics, and Censorship in Japan*, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1996, pp. 147–175. On later controversies about the representation of sexuality in popular culture, see Sharon Kinsella, *Adult Manga: Culture and Power in Contemporary Japanese Society*, Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 2000.
- 36 Tanaka, *A Short History*, p. 47.
- 37 *ibid.*, p. 47.
- 38 *ibid.*, p. 48.
- 39 *ibid.*, pp. 48–9. The sections in quotation marks come from Gurrupu Taikanu Onna, 'Naze Sei no Kaihō ka: Josei Kaihō e no Mondai Teiki', in *Sei Sabetsu e no Kokuhatsu*, p. 139.
- 40 This group will be discussed in Chapter 8.
- 41 Akiyama, *Ribu Shishi Nōto*, p. 10.
- 42 Aoki Yayoi, *Josei: sono sei no shinwa*, Tokyo: Orijin Shuppan, 1982, p. 55.
- 43 Kanō Mikiyo et al., 'Zadankai: Ribusen o Taguri Yosete Miru', *Jūgoshi Nōto: Sengo-hen*, No. 8, July 1996, pp. 204–5.
- 44 Akiyama, *Ribu Shishi Nōto*, p. 12.
- 45 Sandra Buckley and Vera Mackie, 'Women in the New Japanese State', in Gavan McCormack and Yoshio Sugimoto (eds), *Democracy in Contemporary*

- Japan*, Sydney: Hale & Remonger, p. 181; Vera Mackie, 'Feminism and the Media in Japan', *Japanese Studies*, August 1992, *passim*.
- 46 'Umanan Ribu: Dansei Tengoku ni Jōriku', *Asahi Shinbun*, 4 October 1970, cited in Akiyama, *Ribu Shishi Nōto*. Apparently, women's liberationists started to ban male journalists from entering their meetings because of the negative reporting. Funamoto et al., 'Agora to Erosu', p. 11.
- 47 Funamoto et al., 'Agora to Erosu', p. 13.
- 48 Most young people in Japan go as far as senior high school: 95 per cent of girls and 93 per cent of boys advance to senior high school from middle school. Although the numbers of males and females going on to higher education are roughly equal, women are disproportionately represented in two-year colleges. In 1980, women made up 91 per cent of the student population in junior colleges, but only 31 per cent of students at four-year universities. Most students at junior colleges study home economics (24.3 per cent), education (22.6 per cent) and humanities (18.2 per cent), with only 6.5 per cent in technical and industrial arts. At four-year universities, female students are concentrated in humanities (35.9 per cent), social sciences (16.4 per cent), education (16.1 per cent) and social welfare (9.3 per cent), while male students can be found in social sciences (46.3 per cent) and technical and industrial arts (25.7 per cent). This streaming into different kinds of institutions and disciplines affects the likelihood of gaining employment in a prestigious occupation. Mary C. Brinton, *Women and the Economic Miracle: Gender and Work in Postwar Japan*, Berkeley: University of California, 1993, pp. 202–3.
- 49 Tanaka Mitsuru, 'Wakatte Moraō to Omou wa Kojiki no Kokoro', *Inochi no Onnatachi e*, 1972, reproduced in Inoue Teruko et al. (eds), *Nihon no Feminizumu I: Ribu to Feminizumu*, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1994, pp. 59–60.
- 50 Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984, p. 218; Phillip Hancock et al., *The Body, Culture and Society: An Introduction*, Buckingham: Open University Press, 2000, p. 98.
- 51 Tanaka Mitsuru, 'Wakatte Moraō to Omou wa Kojiki no Kokoro', p. 63. In formal situations, it is normal to sit on *tatami* mats on the floor, with legs tucked under one's body. To sit on the floor with legs crossed would be marked as a masculine style of sitting. In Japan, as in other cultures, 'masculine' forms of deportment involve spreading the limbs and taking up space, while 'feminine' forms involve keeping the limbs close to the body and making little encroachment onto surrounding space.
- 52 Tanaka Mitsuru, 'Wakatte Moraō to Omou wa Kojiki no Kokoro', pp. 63–4.
- 53 Michiko is the wife of Akihito, then crown prince. At the time of writing, Akihito is Emperor and Michiko Empress.
- 54 The final issue focused on pacifism and women's liberation. *Onna Erosu*, No. 17, 1982. See also Funamoto et al., 'Agora to Erosu', pp. 2–46.
- 55 Funamoto et al., 'Agora to Erosu', p. 9.
- 56 *ibid.*, pp. 14–15.
- 57 See the discussion of the LF Centre in Vera Mackie, 'Women's Groups in Japan', *Feminist International*, No. 2, 1980.

- ✓ 58 *The Dyke*, No. 2, June 1978, pp. 3-9.
- 59 Jennifer Robertson, 'Doing and Undoing "Female" and "Male" in Japan: The Takarazuka Revue', in Take Sugiyama Lebra (ed.), *Japanese Social Organization*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 1992; Jennifer Robertson, 'Gender-Bending in Paradise: Doing "Female" and "Male" in Japan', *Gender*, No. 5, Summer; Jennifer Robertson, 'The Politics of Androgyny in Japan: Sexuality and Subversion in the Theater and Beyond', *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 19, No. 3, August 1992; Sharon Chalmers, 'Inside/Outside Circles of Silence: Creating Lesbian Space in Japanese Society', in Vera Mackie (ed.), *Feminism and the State in Modern Japan*, Melbourne: Japanese Studies Centre, 1995; Sharon Chalmers, 'Inside/Outside Circles of Silence: Lesbian Subjectivities in Contemporary Japan', unpublished doctoral dissertation, Griffith University, 1997; Sharon Chalmers, *Emerging Lesbian Voices from Japan*, London: Routledge Curzon, 2002.
- 60 *Takarajima*, No. 64, 25 May 1987. Kakefuda Hiroko, *Rezubian de aru to iu Koto*, Tokyo: Kawade Shobo, 1992.
- 61 Kenneth Rexroth and Atsumi Ikuo (eds), *Women Poets of Japan*, New York: New Directions, 1977.
- 62 *Feminist*, No. 1, August 1977.
- 63 *Feminist*, No. 5, April 1978, pp. 3-25.
- 64 Hosoi Wakizō, *Yokō Aishi*, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1954 [1925]; Takamura Issue, *Takamura Issue Zenshū*, Tokyo: Rironsha, 1966-67, 10 vols, ed. by Hashimoto Kenzō; Takamura Issue, *Josei no Rekishi*, Tokyo: Kōdansha Bunkō, 1972, 2 vols; Maruoka Hideko, *Nihon Nōson Fujin Mondai*, Tokyo: Kōyō Shoin, 1937.
- 65 Fujieda Mioko and Kunitiko Fujimura-Fanselow, 'Women's Studies: An Overview', in Fujimura-Fanselow and Kameda (eds), *Japanese Women*, pp. 172-3. In the year 2000, women were 7.35 per cent of university presidents, 7.90 per cent of full professors, 13.12 per cent of assistant professors, 18.80 per cent of lecturers, and 19.99 per cent of assistants.
- 66 *Agora*, No. 173, April 1992, pp. 32-3. The Japan Women's Studies Association, established in 1977, publishes a monthly newsletter, and a yearly report, *Joseigaku Nempo*. The association published a collection of women's studies research in the 1980s: Joseigaku Kenkyūkai (eds), *Kōza Joseigaku*, Tokyo: Keisō Shūbo, 1984-86, 4 vols. See also the journal *Joseigaku Kenkyū* (Women's Studies Research).
- 67 *Jūgoshi Nōto*, Nos 1-10, 1977-85. See Figure 8, the cover of the boxed edition of the first three issues of the journal *Jūgoshi Nōto*, 1983, artist unknown. The illustrations show not only some feminine figures encircling the title of the journal but also a gun, which is a literalisation of the meaning of the word *jūgo* ('homefront', but literally 'behind the guns').
- 68 *Jūgoshi Nōto Sengo Hen*, Nos 1-8, 1986-96. Figure 9 shows the cover of the final edition of the journal in 1996, 'From *Zenkkyōō* to Women's Lib'. The cover includes one of Matsumoto Michiko's photographs of the early days of women's liberation. For further discussion of the historical consciousness of the *Jūgoshi Nōto* Collective, see Vera Mackie, 'Women Questioning the Present: the *Jūgoshi Nōto* Collective', in Janice Brown and Sonja Arntzen

- (eds), *Across Time and Genre: Japanese Women's Texts*, Edmonton: University of Alberta, in press.
- 69 Sōgō Joseishi Kenkyūkai (eds), *Nihon Josei no Rekishi: Sei. Kazoku*, Tokyo: Kadokawa Sensho, 1992, pp. 176-8; Tama Yasuko, 'The Logic of Abortion: Japanese Debates on the Legitimacy of Abortion as Seen in Post-World War II Newspapers', *US-Japan Women's Journal*, English Supplement, No. 7, 1994, pp. 6-7.
- 70 Tama, 'The Logic of Abortion', p. 10.
- 71 *ibid.*, p. 13.
- 72 *ibid.*, pp. 14, 19.
- 73 *ibid.*, pp. 15-16.
- 74 'Enoki Misako' was apparently a pseudonym. She published a book on the contraceptive pill under this name. Enoki Misako, *Piru*, Tokyo: Karuchaa Shuppansha, 1973.
- 75 See Akiyama Yōko's account of her encounter with *Our Bodies, Our Selves* and her initial interest in producing a translation. Akiyama, *Ribu Shishi Nōto*, pp. 154-70. The Japanese adaptation appeared from the Shōkadō feminist bookseller and publisher: *Karada: Washitachi jishin*, Kyoto: Shōkadō, 1988; see a discussion of the difficulties of finding suitable language for the description of women's bodies and reproductive capacities, and some translated excerpts, in Sandra Buckley, *Broken Silence: Voices of Japanese Feminism*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997, pp. 213-25.
- 76 English Discussion Society, *Japanese Women Now*, Kyoto: Shōkadō, 1992, pp. 86-94.