PROBLEMATIZING POPULATION:
POLITICS OF BIRTH CONTROL AND EUGENICS IN INTERWAR JAPAN

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This dissertation aims to answer comprehensively the simple, yet significant question of why and how population became a political problem in interwar Japan (late 1910s - late 1930s). During Japan's interwar years, there was a growing call among social scientists, social reformers, and government elites to solve "population problem (*jinkō mondai*)." These Japanese intellectuals attributed the population problem in Mainland Japan (*naichi*) to a wide array of social ills including poverty, unemployment, and physical, mental, and moral degeneration, and considered various solutions to reform the *Japanese* population. The prevalence of this population discourse must be understood as an obvious symptom of the growing attention among contemporary Japanese intellectuals and bureaucrats to the population: the size and quality of the population became an object of knowledge and an objective of government. Moreover, the ambiguous, yet productive category of the Japanese population provides a revealing look at the complex social relations and colonial mobility in the Japanese Empire.

This dissertation focuses on modern governmentality and imperialism that were embedded in the interwar discourse of the population problem. Using Michel Foucault's conceptualization of discourse, I consider the population discourse to encompass different, or even conflicting agendas, languages, and movements that

shaped and reshaped the population problem. The close reading of the arguments of different population discourses, including Neo-Malthusianism, the proletarian birth control and eugenics movement, feminist advocacy for voluntary motherhood, and the government's investigation into population problems, reveals the distinctive nature of Japan's interwar period in two senses: 1) a dynamic space where various discourses on population issues—particularly, birth control, eugenics, and population policy—continuously interwove sexual and biological issues with politico-economic ones; and 2) a crucial stage for reconstructing Japanese modernity through integrating scientific progressivism, social reformism, and imperial nationalism.

In sum, in revisiting interwar Japan through the frames of governmentality and imperialism, my dissertation illuminates how the multiple discourses on population constituted and categorized desirable bodies to reproduce, and how these discourses intersected with modern subjectivities—namely, gender, nation, and class.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Born and raised in Seoul, South Korea, Sujin Lee attended Yonsei University in Seoul where she majored in History with a minor in Japanese Studies. After graduating with her BA in 2007, Lee entered a master's program at Yonsei University and received an MA in Japanese History in 2010. To deepen and broaden her understanding of modern Japanese history, Lee joined the graduate program in History at Cornell University in 2011 and received her PhD in August 2017. She is excited to begin her Postdoctoral Fellowship in the UCLA Terasaki Center for Japanese Studies from September 2017.

This dissertation is dedicated to my beloved family.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction:

The Politics of the Population Problem in Interwar Japan

> The advancement of hygiene and sanitation and welfare work in any country only increase its population problem. Population must then find its outlet through emigration or armed invasion of some other country. Each nation must control its population to the point where it will not be necessary to make aggression upon its neighbors.[1]

On March 14, 1922, Margaret Sanger, the founder of the American Birth Control League (founded in 1921), gave a public lecture at the YMCA hall in Tokyo. Sanger visited Japan on the invitation of *Kaizō-sha*, a publishing company in Tokyo, to propagate the concept and techniques of birth control. This initial plan for promoting birth control, however, was disrupted by the Japanese government; Sanger was permitted entry to Japan only under the condition that she would not give any public lectures on the use of contraceptives.[2] While bypassing this controversial subject, Sanger turned her attention to another timely issue, namely, population. In her first public lecture in Japan, entitled "War and Population," Sanger noted that the World War had broken out in 1914 mainly due to the rapid population growth in Germany. Her reasoning was that prewar German society, without any outlet for its surplus population, had resorted to expansionism. Sanger was strongly opposed to this militarist solution for domestic social problems, and advocated a peaceful,

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[1] Margaret Sanger, "War and Population," *The Birth Control Review* (June 1922): 10.

[2] The Home Ministry of Japan (*Naimu-shō*) initially refused to issue Sanger a visa on the grounds that foreigners who might disturb the public peace and corrupt public morals were forbidden from entering the country. However, through persuasion by the Vice Minister of the Foreign Office, Hanihara Masanao, who happened to be on the same ferry with Sanger on her way to Japan, the Home Ministry gave conditional approval for her entry and allowed her to offer public lectures on issues other than contraception. For the details of Sanger's visit to Japan, there are some contemporary accounts in *The Birth Control Review* as follows: "Margaret Sanger in Japan," *The Birth Control Review* (May 1922), and "Margaret Sanger in Japan," *The Birth Control Review* (June 1922).

fundamental panacea instead: controlling the size of the population.

Why did Sanger raise the question of overpopulation during her first visit to Japan? How did Japanese audiences respond to this warning sign about the growing population in Germany? In fact, it was neither coincidental nor surprising that Sanger associated the issue of overpopulation with expansionism and militarism as typified in Germany before the outbreak of World War I. Sanger's remark that "Japan has problems today which are becoming as great as those of Germany in 1914" clearly indicated that the population question should no longer be foreign to Japan.[3] For Sanger, who supported Neo-Malthusianism, which advocated birth control as a means of addressing overpopulation and its resultant social problems, the population question corresponded to the problem of overpopulation, which, she argued, would lead to domestic social problems as well as international conflicts.[4] Although she was forced to stay silent about birth control, which from her Neo-Malthusian view she believed was the ultimate solution for overpopulation, Sanger pointed to more fundamental questions: Why is birth control necessary, particularly in today's Japan? Why is the overflowing population an urgent problem?

Sanger's visit to Japan in 1922 had multiple repercussions on contemporary Japanese society. After giving several lectures in Tokyo, Kyoto, and Kobe for approximately one month, Sanger left for London, passing through colonial Korea and

[3] Sanger, "War and Population," 10.

[4] Neo-Malthusianism began to appear since the late 19th century. One of the pioneering advocates of Neo-Malthusianism was the Malthusian League, a British organization established in 1877. While these Neo-Malthusian advocates basically agreed to Malthus' principle of population, which presumed increasing imbalance between population growth and food supplies, Neo-Malthusianism differed from Malthus' theory of population in supporting contraception as a solution to overpopulation. Since the end of the First World War, some Japanese Fabianists and social reformists began to advocate Neo-Malthusianism by which they linked surplus population with widespread poverty and race regression as a causal relationship. I will delve into a Japanese Neo-Malthusian movement in Chapter 2.

China on her way to attend the Fifth International Neo-Malthusian and Birth Control Conference between July 11 and 14, 1922. The series of Sanger's lectures addressing the question of Japanese population unleashed public debates among Japanese intellectuals and social reformers over the question of population growth. Sexologist Yamamoto Senji, who served as Sanger's interpreter during her stay in Kyoto, later likened her visit to the Black Ships of the Taishō Era.[5] This metaphor of the Black Ships, however, is too simplistic to capture the different patterns of repercussion and the different attitudes toward modernity that each set of Black Ships brought about in Japanese society. While the Black Ships of 1853 were a trigger, if not a direct cause, of a complete overhaul of the existing political, economic, and social structures, the Black Ships of 1922 sparked a rethinking of population, sexual reproduction (*seishoku*), and motherhood as complex political and social problems. Moreover, whereas the former inspired the leaders of the Meiji Restoration to pursue the path toward modernization and Westernization, the latter were mostly welcomed by intellectuals, socialist activists, and social reformers who were tackling the various social issues—poverty, unemployment, physical and moral degeneration, poor living standards both in rural and urban areas, and so forth—that they considered the burdens of modernity. Given this, the issues and scope of debate on birth control heralded by Sanger's visit to Japan in 1922 went far beyond medical debates over the use of contraceptives. The introduction of birth control in the interwar period opened up a broader question of how to control, optimize, and govern the Japanese population.

[5] Yamamoto Senji, "Sanji chōsetsu, ketsuron, sono igō (Birth control, an epilogue, and an afterward)," in *Yamamoto Senji zenshū* (Yamamoto Senji collection) 3, ed. Toshiji Sasaki et al. (Tōkyō: Chōbunsha, 1979), 592. The original text was published in *Taiyō* (the Sun) in 1926.

My dissertation explores discourses on population at the historical intersection of the birth control and eugenic movements in Japan between the late 1910s and the late 1930s. As symbolized by the buzzword "population problem" (*jinkō mondai*) deployed by proponents of birth control and eugenics during Japan's interwar years, discussions among Japanese birth control advocates about eugenic contraception grew to address population issues. Discourses on population reveal how sexual reproduction was invariably represented as the focal point of politics. Feminists, Neo-Malthusian social reformists, proletarian activists, and government elites agreed—despite having different ideological and political agendas—on the need to control population size and improve its "quality." My dissertation argues that multiple discourses transformed the population into qualitatively and quantitatively categorized human bodies, and linked individual sexual reproduction to different political subjectivities along national, ethnic, economic, and sexual lines.

Michel Foucault's conceptualizations of "biopolitics" and "problematization" offer a way to approach various technologies for problematizing human populations and the government of human life. According to Foucault, "problematization" denotes the discursive process of presenting or representing certain things—for example, behaviors, phenomena, or processes—as a problem. Simultaneously, problematization is "an answer to a concrete situation which is real" rather than an illusory ideology.[6] Foucault thus brings to light the discursive structure of a certain problem which, in turn, reproduces social relations through a reordering of things as the problem. The

[6] Michel Foucault, "Concluding Remarks to the Seminar," in *Discourse and Truth: the Problematization of Parrhesia (six lectures given by Michel Foucault at the University of California at Berkley, October–November, 1983)*, Joseph Pearson ed., accessed May 12, 2015, http://foucault.info/documents/parrhesia/index.html.

question then arises, what things are to be problematized? Foucault's "biopolitics" is an example of problematizing life through the modern mode of government. According to Foucault, biopolitics is a new technology of power that "deals with the population, with the population as political problem, as a problem that is at once scientific and political, as a biological problem and as power's problem."[7] Put another way, biopolitics refers to different mechanisms—both disciplinary and regulatory—of the power to problematize a specific form of life, that is, the population.

The widespread use of *population problem*, regardless of the ambiguity of the term, typifies this biopolitical technology of power. Drawing upon Foucault's interlinked concepts, my dissertation delves into multiple mechanisms of power that problematize population. It should be noted that my goal is not to analyze demographic patterns in Japan during the interwar period in order to clarify *the real* population problem. Rather, my dissertation focuses on the discursive aspects of the population problem, in other words, the different languages, ideas, and movements that shaped the problem in a way that integrated biological dimensions of human life with social issues and political agendas. The "population problem" mainly, but not exclusively, referred to overpopulation (*kajō jinkō*) and was based on eighteenth-century Malthusian assumptions about future population growth forecasted to exceed limited food resources. Meanwhile, those who denied the Malthusian theory—whether they supported Marx's theory of population or a pronatalist policy—defined the population problem differently, and offered different solutions accordingly.

Foucault's conceptualization of biopolitics is, however, far from a versatile

[7] Michel Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures At the Collège De France, 1975-76,* trans. David Macey (New York: Picador, 2003), 279.

reference for capturing the complex picture of the politics of problematizing the population in interwar Japan. Instead of considering biopolitics as a master key that is applicable regardless of historical differences, my dissertation revisits Foucauldian biopolitics through the lens of the complexity and heterogeneity of birth control debates in Japan. In examining the relationship between knowledge and power, Foucault focuses on the nature of modern knowledge as a self-established form of truth that constitutes reality as well as individual subjectivity. Close scrutiny of the birth control movement in the interwar years, however, reveals how different or even conflicting ideas constitute multiple layers of truth; and, by looking at the historical context of interwar Japan, intervenes into the sweeping generalization of Foucauldian biopolitics. The significance of exploring these multiple layers of knowledge lies in their historical situatedness: knowledge production as a continuing and complex process within a given society.

The history of population discourse in interwar Japan vividly illustrates the multi-layered aspects of modern knowledge; this does not necessarily reveal flaws in the logic of the population problem, but highlights the multiple reconfigurations of populations, reproduction, and women's bodies. Specifically, birth control advocates in Japan were largely divided into three groups: Neo-Malthusian social reformers, proletarian activists, and feminists. In addition, conflicting views on the population problem emerged among these birth control advocates, which essentially evolved into an argument between Marxist versus Malthusian approaches to population growth. It should be noted that, despite the multiplicity and cacophony of birth control movements, birth control advocates agreed upon the eugenic goal of improving the

quality of the population, as well as the politicization of human reproduction. Critical readings of birth control debates that addressed solutions to population issues provide a new understanding of eugenics—not as a racist pseudoscience but as the discursive mechanisms of ordering, regulating, and hierarchizing human bodies. Hence, my dissertation highlights the dynamics of birth control discourse, which ultimately led to the reconfiguration of population in terms of both quantity and quality, and made it a target of government.

In addition, the historical context of interwar Japan played an integral role in the formation of the multifaceted population discourse. The interwar period here is not simply a chronological notion that indicates a time between the two World Wars, but a distinctive time period during which Japan struggled to untangle a series of tensions—political, economic, ideological, interregional, and international—against the backdrop of a worldwide economic depression. During the interwar period, there was a growing call among politicians, bureaucrats, businessmen, journalists, and scholars to solve so-called *shakai mondai* (social problems). The notion of *shakai mondai* was a versatile code for those who characterized various symptoms of socioeconomic crises—such as poverty, unemployment, the urban-rural divide, class conflicts, resource shortages, and public health and hygiene issues—as the results of modernity, and thereby, as a pressing reason for reconstructing modernity. Solutions for reconstructing modernity, however, varied along political, ideological, and intellectual lines: from right-wing to left-wing intellectuals, from supporters of colonial expansion or militarism to those in favor of international cooperation and pacifism, and from liberal social reformers to

labor and socialist activists.[8]

It was this historical context in which different or even conflicting agendas, languages, and movements shaped and reshaped the "population problem." During the interwar period, discourses of the population problem, along with other *problems* of modernity, emerged against the backdrop of worsening economic conditions and rapid population growth in Mainland Japan (*naichi*). Japanese bureaucrats and intellectuals began to attribute the population problem to a wide array of social problems including poverty, unemployment, and physical, mental, and moral degeneration, and urged finding solutions that would reform the Japanese population. The category of population, however, was hardly self-evident. Who were counted as the "Japanese" population? Who were targeted as the main object of government by those who defined the population problem? The ambiguous yet productive nature of the category of the Japanese population typifies the interweaving of modern governmentality and imperialism. Various discourses on population issues—in particular, birth control, eugenics, and population policy—continuously redefined the population in both biological and political senses while the ambiguity embedded in the Japanese population due to complex social relations and colonial mobility in the Japanese

[8] Harry D. Harootunian sheds light on Japan's interwar experience of modernity through the lens of contemporary intellectuals. Harootunian particularly focuses on the "doubling" dimension of Japan's modernity, which refers to modernity—as it was invariably regarded by contemporary philosophers, sociologists, and critics—as constant conflicts between the spectacle of politico-economic transformation and the specter of historical and cultural patterns. This dissertation echoes Harootunian on his interpretation of modernity during the interwar period as a jarring, schizophrenic experience that often required the perfection of modernity in the 1920s and, later on, the overcoming of the modern. Birth control advocates who embraced various utopian visions—i.e., scientific progressivism, social reformism, and eugenics—in order to reconstruct modernity and bring it to completion typify this distinctive experience of *the modern* during the interwar period. Harry D, Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity: History, Culture, and Community In Interwar Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), xvi-xvii.

Empire remained unquestioned.

Since the 1990s, there has been a growing academic interest among historians of modern Japan in gender, sexual, and medical discourses. New approaches and perspectives such as women's history and the history of medicine have added to the diversity and heterogeneity of previously androcentric master narratives. The intersection of politics and sexuality, and politics and medicine that have often been overlooked in the grand narratives of modern Japanese history have gradually come to the forefront in both English- and Japanese-language scholarship since the 1990s. Against this backdrop, some pioneering studies have delved into the political dimensions of birth control to address questions of sexuality and reproduction within the broader contexts of modern Japanese society.

The history of birth control in modern Japan has been studied mainly by historians of gender, women, and medicine, and include Fujime Yuki (1997), Sabine Frühstück (2003), and Ogino Miho (2008).[9] Fujime, in her comprehensive analysis of sex and gender systems in modern Japan, locates the prewar history of birth control movements within long-term conflicts between state power and individual sexual freedom. Although she narrowly defines power and sex in relation to the modern state and women's sexuality, respectively, she rightly argues that sex has been consistently

[9] Fujime Yuki, *Sei no rekishigaku: kōshō seido, dataizai taisei kara baishun bōshihō, yūsei hogohō taisei e* (The history of sex: From the system of legal prostitution and criminalized abortion to the system of the law forbidding prostitution and the Eugenics Protection Law) (Tokyo: Fuji Shuppan, 1997); Sabine Frühstück, *Colonizing Sex: Sexology and Social Control In Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Ogino Miho, *Kazoku Keikaku eno Michi: Kindai Nihon no Seishoku o meguru seiji* (The Road to Family Planning: The Politics of Reproduction in Modern Japan) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2008). There are other scholarly works authored by non-historians on the issue of birth control, such as pro-birth control gynecologist Ōta Tenrei's *Nihon sanji chōsetsu hyakunenshi* (One hundred years of birth control in Japan) (Tokyo: Shuppan Kagaku Sōgō Kenkyūjo, 1976) and political scientist Tiana Norgren's *Abortion before Birth Control: The Politics of Reproduction In Postwar Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

the target of state control, regulation, and exploitation throughout modern Japan. Meanwhile, Sabine Frühstück's *Colonizing Sex: Sexology and Social Control In Modern Japan* focuses on social discourses and knowledge production of sexuality. Frühstück broadens the notion of power to include social control of sex, and emphasizes the intellectuals' roles in normalizing and regulating sexual behaviors such as artificial birth control. While Fujime associates birth control with the expression of sexual self-determinism against state power, Frühstück highlights how such political significations are constructed and pedagogized through sexual discourses. In contrast to these two researchers who address the question of control in the politics of birth control, Ogino Miho brings new light to Japanese citizens' responses to the political and social control of individuals' reproductive bodies. In *Kazoku Keikaku e no Michi* (The Road to Family Planning), Ogino considers birth control both as biopolitical technology and as individuals' sexual practice, and examines the often-overlooked fissures between discourse and practice in the politics of reproduction. Despite different understandings of power and agency in the politics of birth control, however, Fujime, Frühstück, and Ogino all agree with the underlying premise that the history of birth control must be examined as a part of the politics of women's bodies and sexuality in modern Japan.

This premise opens up other crucial questions regarding the target and the goal of the political, social, and technological control of sex and reproduction: Are women's bodies and sexuality the only target of the political and social control of sex? Where is the boundary drawn between those whose sexual and reproductive practices are governed and those who are excluded from the government of sex? What is the

fundamental goal of various attempts to manage, control, and regulate individuals' sexual and reproductive behaviors? Despite such excellent work by scholars about birth control in Japan, the history of birth control in modern Japan has been narrowly confined to the history of *female* sexuality. To answer the above questions, the politics of population—both the target and the goal of the modern government—should be an integral part of the history of birth control. In other words, birth control is not merely one of the themes of women's history, it intersects with broader questions of biopolitics as well.

When it comes to the history of population control and population discourses in modern Japan, some excellent work in Japanese-language scholarship has been done by scholars such as Fujino Yutaka (1998), Sugita Naho (2010), and Takaoka Hiroyuki (2011).[10] First, Fujino focuses on the close ties between fascism and eugenics, and argues that eugenic ideas that had been promoted mainly through social movements and intellectual discussions during the interwar period culminated in the institutionalization of eugenics under Japan's military-fascist regime. It should be noted that Fujino maintains a critical distance from the conventional understanding of eugenics as merely negative, and as repeatedly identified with the Holocaust under the Nazi regime. Instead, he does not overlook the twofold—positive and negative—nature of eugenics and clearly shows how eugenic ideas, particularly a positive eugenics that encourages reproduction among those with desired traits, was integrated

[10] Fujino Yutaka, *Nihon fashizumu to yūsei shisō* (Fascism and eugenic ideas in Japan) (Kyoto-shi: Kamogawa Shuppan, 1998); Sugita Naho, *Yūsei yūkyo to shakai seisaku: jinkō mondai no Nihonteki tenkai* (Eugenics, euthenics and social policy: the development of population problem in Japan) (Kyoto-shi: Hōritsu Bunkasha, 2013); Takaoka Hiroyuki. *Sōryokusen taisei to fukushi kokka: senjiki Nihon no shakai kaikaku kōsō* (Total war system to the welfare state: Japan's wartime plan for social reform) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2011).

into Japan's wartime population policy.[11] Meanwhile, although Takaoka also traces the development of wartime population policy, the difference between Fujino and Takaoka is clear: Unlike Fujino, who characterizes wartime Japan as a fascist regime, Takaoka defines it as "social state" (*shakai kokka*). This social state, marked by the government's active intervention into population control, challenges not only an easy association between fascism and eugenics, but also an ironic continuity between the wartime fascist regime and the postwar welfare state. My dissertation echoes Takaoka in his characterization of the wartime regime as a social state, but my focus turns to the interwar period during which the Japanese government and power elites had already begun to draw a blueprint for a comprehensive population policy. Furthermore, the discourse of population control and management was not necessarily monopolized by the government. As mentioned above, intellectuals and social activists had taken the initiative in population discourses since the early 1920s. Sugita's research on population discourses among Japanese sociologists, eugenicists, and social policy experts between the 1920s and 1970s clearly demonstrates the intellectuals' role in enmeshing population issues in the web of multiple social problems during the interwar years. While agreeing with Sugita on the importance of so-called bottom-up biopolitics in interwar Japan, my dissertation broadens the scope of population

[11] For the history of eugenics in prewar and wartime Japan, see Suzuki Zenji, *Nihon no yūseigaku: sono shisō to undō no kiseki* (Japanese eugenics: eugenic thought and the eugenics movement) (Tokyo: Sankyō Shuppan, 1983); Sumiko Otsubo et al, "Eugenics in Japan: Some Ironies of Modernity, 1883-1945," *Science in Context* 11, no. 3-4 (1998): 545-565; Yōko Matsubara, "The enactment of Japan's sterilization laws in the 1940s: A prelude to postwar eugenic policy," *Historia Scientiarum* 8 (1998): 187-201; Jennifer Robertson, "Blood Talks: Eugenic Modernity and the Creation of New Japanese," *History and Anthropology* 13, no. 3 (2002): 191-216; Sumiko Otsubo, "Between Two Worlds: Yamanouchi Shigeo and Eugenics in Early Twentieth-Century Japan." *Annals of Science* 62, no. 2 (2005): 205-231.

discourses to include social activism and medical technologies such as birth control movements and contraceptive devices; and moreover, I examine both the mutual influence and the tension between knowledge production about the population problem and the government's population policies.

My dissertation has two ultimate goals: the reappraisal of interwar Japan through the lenses of biopolitics and imperialism, and the dissection of the politics of reproduction by means of an interdisciplinary research project. Firstly, my dissertation aims to contribute to the reappraisal of Japan's interwar period as a crucial stage for reorganizing Japanese modernity by attempting different solutions for the population problem. Interwar discourses surrounding the population problem demonstrate the entanglement of birth control, eugenics, the working-class movement, and migration and colonial policies. As seen above, despite such pioneering work on birth control and population discourses by Japanese-history scholars, some of the crucial questions that intersect with or intervene directly in the grand narratives of modern Japanese history—in particular, nation- and empire-building, capitalism, and class conflicts—remain unexamined. Key questions by which this dissertation attempts to fill the gaps in the history of reproduction and sexuality in modern Japan include the following: How *essential* was sexual reproduction in nation-building, empire-building, and capitalist production? What were the roles of population categorization in forming and representing both national and imperial subjects? What were the effects of the interplay between scientific progressivism, social reformism, and imperialism on the emergence of population control policies? Put more fundamentally, *why and how did population become a political problem in modern Japan?*

Secondly, my dissertation attempts to contribute to a methodological dialogue between modern Japanese history, gender and sexuality studies, and Science and Technology Studies (STS). In recent years, there has been a growing interest in family planning, reproductive health, and demography in colonial and postcolonial East Asia.[12] The increasing scholarly interest in population and reproduction in East Asian history shows how interdisciplinary efforts can be fruitful in decentering the master narratives of Western science and historicism, and enriching our understanding of population control and reproductive science as a political project of modern East Asian countries including Japan, Korea, China, and Taiwan. My dissertation also attempts to be part of a productive interdisciplinary dialogue by opening up a series of questions regarding birth control, contraceptive technologies, eugenics, and population discourses that have been marginalized in the field of modern Japanese history. In revisiting interwar Japan through the interwoven frames of biopolitics and

[12] *East Asian Science, Technology and Society* (EASTS), which itself is an outcome of interdisciplinary and transnational efforts, sheds light on population control as a politico-economic issue in Asia during the Cold War era (1950s-1970s) in a recent special issue (2016). This dissertation also pursues the goal of what Aya Homei and Yu-Ling Huang aimed for as articulated in their co-authored introduction of that special issue: an "understanding of fertility reduction being deployed under the name of population control within the context of nation-states in Asia." Aya Homei et al., "Population Control in Cold War Asia: An Introduction." *East Asian Science, Technology and Society* 10, no. 4 (2016): 344. In addition, pioneering works that attempt an interdisciplinary approach to birth control and family planning policy in modern and contemporary East Asia include: Wen-Hua Kuo, "When State and Policies Reproduce Each Other: Making Taiwan a Population, Control Policy, Making Population Control Policy for Taiwan," in *Historical Perspectives on East Asian Science, Technology, and Medicine*, ed. K. L. Chan et al., (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 2002), 121–137; Susan Greenhalgh et al., *Governing China's Population: From Leninist to Neoliberal Biopolitics* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005); Susan Greenhalgh, "Missile Science, Population Science: The Origins of China's One-Child Policy," *The China Quarterly* 182 (2005): 253-276; John P. DiMoia, *Reconstructing Bodies: Biomedicine, Health, and Nation Building In South Korea Since 1945* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013); Junjie Chen, "Globalizing, Reproducing, and Civilizing Rural Subjects: Population Control Policy and Constructions of Rural Identity in China," in *Reproduction, Globalization, and the State: New Theoretical and Ethnographic Perspectives*, ed. Carol H. Browner et al., (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011), 38–52; and Aya Homei, "The Science of Population and Birth Control in Post-War Japan," in *Science, Technology, and Medicine in the Modern Japanese Empire*, ed. David G. Wittner et al., (London: Routledge, 2016), 227–243.

imperialism, my dissertation illuminates how the multiple discourses on population constituted and categorized which bodies should be reproduced, and how these discourses intersected with modern subjectivities—namely, gender, nation, and class.

My dissertation is organized into 6 chapters including this introduction. The purpose of chapters 2, 3, and 4 is to explore the ways in which various birth-control-movement groups—Neo-Malthusianists, Proletarian activists, and Feminists—represented sexuality and reproduction based upon their different definitions of the population problem. Chapter 2 focuses on Japanese Neo-Malthusianists who actively addressed the population problem during the interwar years. With the rise of Neo-Malthusianism, discussion of the population problem had been growing among Japanese social reformers and intellectuals since the late 1910s. The crux of the Neo-Malthusian idea was that various social evils including poverty and unemployment were caused by overpopulation. The move to control individual reproduction was based upon the premise that uncontrolled individual sexuality was the root cause of humanity's social and biological deterioration. Another key concept for Neo-Malthusian groups was eugenics, which, they believed, could maintain both the ideal population size and the ideal qualities of the population. Chapter 2 dissects the discursive structure of the population problem through the close reading of the arguments of Neo-Malthusian activists, including *Nihon Sanji Chōsetsu Kenkyūkai* (the Japanese Society for the Study of Birth Control), the first birth control advocacy group in Japan, and Abe Isoo (1865-1949), one of the leading figures in Japan's birth control movements.

Chapter 3 traces the social and intellectual history of the proletarian birth-

control movement in interwar Japan. Since the early 1920s in Japan, the influx of contraceptive technology ushered in a new way of thinking about human reproduction. Previously a matter of uncontrolled nature, human reproduction became an issue linked to controllable bodies. Rethinking reproduction on the basis of scientific authority gave socialist intellectuals and proletarian activists a new strategy for class struggle. By integrating scientific knowledge and technology regarding birth control into the proletarian movement, pro-birth-control class activists strove to challenge the capitalist representation of surplus labor and thus, ultimately, overturn the exploitation of workers. The history of the pro-birth-control proletarian movement is largely divided into three periods: the first period (1922-1924) was characterized by sexologist Yamamoto Senji (1889-1929)'s efforts for sexual enlightenment and the founding of the *Sanji Seigen Kenkyūkai* (the Birth Control Research Society); the second period (1925-1929) involved the justification of birth control based on the Marxist critique of capitalism; and the third period (1930-1933) brought clinic-based, practical actions for propagating contraception and eugenics. This chapter concludes that, although the movement faded away into history, the genealogy of the Japanese proletarian birth-control movement offers a still valid question about the complex and interconnected relations between human reproduction, capitalist economy, and reproductive science.

The goal of Chapter 4 is to delve into the multifaceted meanings of motherhood in Japanese feminists' advocacy for birth control during the interwar period. Feminists' arguments for the practice of birth control mainly adopted the notion of voluntary motherhood to link the empowerment of women with women's

free choice in reproduction. Although the political representation of motherhood was commonly shared by pro-birth-control feminists, there were also differences among feminist voices, depending on different ideological views toward the politico-economic system. Hence, the feminist debate on birth control was hardly limited to women's issues isolated from the social structure, but was embedded in the contemporary social context. Simultaneously, the context was reconfigured as a series of problems related to questions of women, reproduction, and population. Two prominent Japanese feminists, Yamakawa Kikue (1890-1980) and Ishimoto Shizue (1897-2001), illustrate this multiple, conflicting nature of the birth control debate. By focusing on Yamakawa's advocacy for a "birth strike" and Ishimoto's "eugenic feminism," Chapter 4 explores the politicization of reproduction, or conversely the sexualization of the politico-economic system.

Chapter 5 turns to the roles of governmental elites in the development of population policies during the interwar period. Compared to birth control advocacy groups who had been raising population issues since the late 1910s, the Japanese government was a latecomer to discourses about the population problem. It was not until the late 1920s that the Japanese government began to realize the importance of comprehensive governmental control of the population and to institutionalize population studies against the backdrop of economic depression and the rise in agrarian and industrial disputes. The trajectory of interwar population policies reveals the leading role of elites in designing and establishing a comprehensive and scientific approach to controlling, optimizing, and managing the Japanese population. Furthermore, the fact that government elites embraced imperialism as part of their

solution to the population problems in the metropole sheds new light on the governmentality of an imperial nation-state. Through the lenses of different discourses of population control that were developed by governmental elites in Mainland Japan, this chapter will delve into the complex relationship between metropolitan governmentality and colonial expansion. In particular, this chapter will focus on two interwar research organizations—*Jinkō Shokuryō Mondai Chōsakai* (the Population and Food Problems Investigation Committee, established in 1927) and *Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūkai* (the Institute for the Research of Population Problems, established in 1933); and on two power elites—diplomat and agricultural economist Nitobe Inazō (1862-1933) and bureaucrat and social reformer Nagai Tōru (1878-1973).

This dissertation concludes with some reflections on the interwar history of Japan. The multifaceted discourse of the population problem contributes to a fresh understanding of interwar Japanese society in two senses: at the micro level, different languages, technologies, and movements addressed the population problem while invariably endorsing a eugenic vision for the improvement of the population's quality. At the macro level, this heterogeneous realm of the population discourse in Mainland Japan can be situated in the transnational discourse of problematizing populations, as well as in the interlinking relationship between governmentality in the metropole and colonial expansion. The reappraisal of interwar Japan with a focus on the problematization of the population is a first step toward understanding the lingering impacts of the interwar population discourse on the politics of population and reproduction under the total war mobilization regime and in postwar Japanese society. Such a diachronic understanding can answer more thoroughly the overarching

question of this dissertation: Why and how does population matter in modern Japan?

CHAPTER 2

The Population Problem:

Neo-Malthusian Reconfiguration of Sexual Reproduction

Technologies of the Population Problem

> Birth Control, in the last analysis, is the only way for Japan to meet the problem presented by a growing population and a static food supply. A thorough investigation of the increase in population, of the possibilities of emigration in various directions, and of the question of importing food, leads to the conclusion that Japan must regulate her population, whether it is moral or immoral to do so [*sic*].[13]

In July 1922, the Japanese birth control advocate Baron Ishimoto Keikichi submitted a report titled "The Population Problem in Japan" at the Fifth International Neo-Malthusian and Birth Control Conference in London. The Fifth Conference was groundbreaking in various ways. Delegates from Non-Western countries, namely, Japan and India, attended the conference for the first time. Previously, International Neo-Malthusian Conference had included only European and American representatives since the first International meeting at the turn of the twentieth century in Paris. In addition, the issues addressed at the Fifth Conference were much broader than those covered in preceding neo-Malthusian conferences. Delegates and presenters from different countries interwove neo-Malthusian theories with various political, economic, social, and eugenic concerns, and advocated birth control as a solution to the multiple problems presumably caused by overpopulation.[14]

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[13] International Birth Control Conference, *Report of the Fifth International Neo-Malthusian and Birth Control Conference, Kingsway Hall, London, July 11th to 14th, 1922* (London: W. Heinemann, 1922), 75.

[14] The First International Neo-Malthusian Conference was held in Paris in August 1900. Under the leadership of a French educator Paul Robin, Neo-Malthusianists from France, England, Holland, and Germany gathered at the First Conference. The subsequent three conferences were held in Belgium in

After the Great War, Neo-Malthusianism was undergoing marked changes by both extending the meaning of *international* to include the non-Western world, and by redefining *population problem* as a complex web of interlinked issues. Baron Ishimoto's report on population growth in Japan exemplifies both aspects of this shifting context. In his report, Ishimoto emphasized the fact that Japanese population increased by 600,000 to 700,000 each year although there was little hope of increasing the food supply. Like many contemporary Neo-Malthusianists, Ishimoto believed that birth control was the most effective solution to overpopulation. Thus, Ishimoto's conceptualization of population problem, as well as its solution followed the Neo-Malthusian model. In essence, Ishimoto had translated the Neo-Malthusian discourse of population problem, which had been percolating in Western countries since the 1880s, into the post-Great War Japanese society.

This chapter focuses on Japanese Neo-Malthusianists who actively tackled population problem (*jinkō mondai*) during the interwar years. Since the late 1910s, Japanese social reformers and intellectuals increasingly expressed their concerns about the population problem. In early twentieth Century Japan, the population problem mainly, but not exclusively, referred to overpopulation (*kajō jinkō*) which was based on eighteenth-century Malthusian assumptions about future population growth

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September 1905, in Hague in July 1910, and in Dresden in September 1911. The number of participating countries increased to include Belgium, Sweden, Spain, Hungary, Switzerland, and the United States. Particularly, the Fourth Conference in which two American attendees participated for the first time marked an extension of the previously, primarily European Conference, to include the United States. In a similar vein, the Fifth Conference extended the meaning of the word "international" by including delegates from Asian countries. For a brief history of the International Neo-Malthusian and Birth Control Conference, see Margaret Sanger, "Introduction to Proceedings of the Sixth International Neo-Malthusian and Birth Control Conference" (Sep 1925), *The Public Papers of Margaret Sanger: Web Edition*, accessed May 2, 2016, https://www.nyu.edu/projects/sanger/webedition/app/documents/show.php?sangerDoc=213109.xml.

forecasted to exceed limited food resources. The main goal of this chapter is to analyze the discursive formation of the population problem as it was articulated in Japan. I am interested in how population problem discourse reconfigured sexual reproduction, national and international politics, and capitalism through Japanese Neo-Malthusian birth control advocacy. Here, I deliberately use the term *discourse* to mark the population problem, as neither a real phenomenon nor as a false image, but rather as the dominant way of thematizing, ordering, and fashioning human life in early twentieth Century Japan.[15]

As stated in Introduction, Foucault's conceptualization of "biopolitics" and "problematization" offers a way to approach various technologies of problematizing human populations and the government of human life. Drawing upon Foucault's interlinked concepts, this chapter characterizes the "population problem" in the interwar years as the biopolitical technology of power and delves into the dual mechanism of the population problem addressed by Japanese Neo-Malthusian advocates. Specifically, I focus on the population problem constructed as a multifaceted question of population, and birth control as a panacea for the population problem.

Forming the Population Problem, Reforming the Population

World War I brought about political, economic, and ideological changes in

[15] The notion of discourse is used here to emphasize the structure of statements regarding population. The population problem neither presents a real problem, nor invents a lie about the reality. It is discursive in terms that it constitutes a certain problem on a specific object, namely population, while in practice population is materialized in relation to something else, such as the socioeconomic problems, reproduction, and individual sexual lives. Michel Foucault's open-ended definition of discourse as "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak" illuminates these simultaneously intra and extralinguistic, and productive characters of discourse. Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith (London: Tavistock Publications, 1972), 49.

Japan as well as in Europe. Between 1914 and 1918, the Japanese economy underwent a temporary boom due to a growing demand for Japanese products in the absence of European products. While this temporary increase in demand caused an increase in Japanese workers' incomes, this increase in workers' wages did not necessarily elevate their standard of living. The general level of prices for goods, particularly food prices, increased more than enough to offset any wage increases.[16] Furthermore, wartime inflation was followed by nation-wide postwar economic hardship, symbolized by the rice riots of 1918. The riots, which ignited in fishing villages of Toyama Prefecture and rapidly spread nation-wide, illustrate the devastating effects of inflation, and the social and political contradictions growing in the post-World War I Japan.[17]

World War I also had a global effect on the overhaul of Western modernity, mainly anchored in European civilization, individualism, materialistic values, and Social Darwinism. Since the Meiji period in the mid-19th Century, Western modernity had been an ideal widely shared by leading Japanese politicians and intellectuals. The educator and writer, Fukuzawa Yūkichi's exhortation to "leave Asia and enter Europe (*datsu-A nyū-Ō*)" illustrates the dominant Western-centrism in Meiji Japanese

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[16] For the wartime economic boom and the rise in grain price after World War I, see Andrew Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 139-144; Kozo Yamamura, "The Japanese Economy, 1911-1930: Concentration, Conflicts, and Crises," in *Japan In Crisis: Essays On Taishō Democracy*, ed. Bernard S. Silberman et al. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), 299-328; Takafusa Nakamura, *Economic Growth in Prewar Japan* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 144-156.

[17] The rice riots of 1918 were a series of nationwide riots against the high price of rice. As wartime inflation caused the price of rice almost double in many areas, the urban and the rural poor rose up against the rice merchants and jostled with the police. The rice riots exemplify how class conflict came to the fore in Japan since late 1910s and how it emerged particularly in the form of food crisis. Andrew Gordon, *Labor and Imperial Democracy In Prewar Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 60-61; Mikiso Hane, *Peasants, Rebels, Women, and Outcastes: The Underside of Modern Japan* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), 160-161.

thought.[18] However, the so-called Great War had a great impact on the prevailing pursuit of Western modernity among many Japanese intellectuals. These intellectuals began to reconsider the values of civilization and reorient Japan to a new form of modernity.

In this post-World War I context, the population problem was raised mainly by social reformers and social scientists. It should be noted that there had been intellectual interest in population growth and reproductive control since the Meiji period. The Malthusian theory of population was first introduced to Japanese readers with the translation of *An Essay on the Principle of Population* in 1877.[19] In 1903, Oguri Sadao, a politician and a businessman who once ran a pharmaceutical company, co-authored *The Practical Theory of Social Reforms* (*Shakai Kairyō Jitsuron*) in which Oguri examined the Neo-Malthusian birth control movement in Britain in the 1870s.[20] Although Malthusian theory and Neo-Malthusianism had been discussed since the early years of the Meiji era, the issue of population was recontextualized amid the ruins of the Great War. As mentioned above, in the late 1910s, worsening

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[18] Leading Japanese intellectuals in the Meiji period (1868-1912) pursued "civilization and enlightenment (*bunmei kaika*)" following the Western path of modernization. Kenneth B. Pyle names this Western-centered modern thought "Meiji conservatism," and enumerates the main themes of Meiji conservatism as a negative view of Japan's tradition, stress on Western culture as the universal path of human development, commitment to utilitarian knowledge including science and technology, and a new vision of "self" and humanity. Fukuzawa Yūkichi (1835-1901), a prominent Meiji writer and a member of *Meirokusha*, led the formation of Meiji thought. Fukuzawa's well-known slogan "leave Asian and enter Europe" typifies the idealization of Western modernity by mapping a dichotomous world. Kenneth B. Pyle, "Meiji Conservatism," in *Modern Japanese Thought*, ed., Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi (U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 98-146.

[19] Ōshima Sadamasu (1845-1906), a translator of various European economists' work and a founder of the Society for National Economy (*Kokka Keizai-kai*), translated *An Essay on the Principle of Population* (originally published in 1798) written by Thomas Robert Malthus and published it with the title of *Marusasu Jinkōron yōryaku* (A summary of Malthusian theory of population) in 1877.

[20] In the book *The Practical Theory of Social Reforms*, Oguri translated the concept of contraception to avoid having a large family into *ninshin seigen* (literally, pregnancy control) and discussed the necessity and methods of contraception. Oguri's work was the first to use the concept of contraception in Japan. Ogino, *Kazoku Keikaku eno Michi*, 17-18.

economic conditions and a growing skepticism toward Western modernity contributed to the realization that the population was the root cause of a wide array of social problems. Moreover, many agreed that particular efforts should be made to solve the population problem at a social and policy level.

The population problem was a complex and multifaceted question. Japanese social reformers and social scientists defined the population problem in varied ways and offered a number of different solutions. For example, those who pursued the reconstruction (*kaizō*) of Western civilization in Japan raised the population problem on eugenic grounds and proposed to reform Japanese society through the improvement of population quality.[21] Meanwhile, those who emphasized the economic effects of population policies denounced Neo-Malthusian support for birth control and justified calls for increasing both the size and the quality of the Japanese population on national-economic grounds. These different ways of configuring the population problem preceded a series of 1920s debates about the population problem—debates which essentially evolved into an argument between Marxist versus Malthusian

[21] The term "reconstruction (*Kaizō*)" emerged among Japanese intellectuals who demanded the reconsideration of Western liberalism and the reorganization of Japanese society after World War I. Most prominently, a general magazine *Kaizō* began to be published in April 1919 under the leadership of the journalist, Yamamoto Sanehiko. The magazine *Kaizō* claimed to advocate social and economic reform from a socialist view against the background of the postwar economic depression, the growing political and class conflicts, and the worldwide rise of socialism. The *Kaizō* group actively introduced some contemporary Western reformist thoughts. On the invitation of the *Kaizō* group, a British philosopher Bertrand Russell (1872-1970) who argued for the reconstruction of economic structure and philosophy of life in his book *Principles of Social Reconstruction* (London: G. Allen & Unwin ltd, 1916) visited Japan in July 1922 to give a lecture on the reconstruction of civilization. After Russell, the *Kaizō* group also invited Albert Einstein, George Bernard Shaw, and Margaret Sanger who promoted the need for reconstruction based on pacifism, social reformism, and feminism. In light of this, the term reconstruction implies the worldwide resonance of the reexamination of Western modernity in the post-World War I. Peter Duus et al., "Socialism, Liberalism, and Marxism, 1901-31," in *Modern Japanese Thought*, 179; Seki Chūka. *Zasshi kaizō No Yonjūnen* (Forty years of *Kaizo* (Reconstruction)) (Tokyo: Kōwadō, 1977), 16-79.

approaches to population growth.[22] However, these contending definitions of the population problem laid the ground for the succeeding population debates in terms of a reordering of the Japanese population: formulating the population question as a dual problem, namely, a problem of quantity and quality, and positioning the population within the complex web of social and biological relations.

Saito Itsuki, an officer of the Department of Home Affairs, was one of the leading figures who problematized the population immediately after the end of World War I. In 1919, Saito wrote a series of articles titled "the Study of Eugenics (*Yūshu-ron*)" in the magazine *Society and Relief* (*Shakai to kyūsai*).[23] In these articles, Saito reconsidered the dominant ideologies of Western modernity including materialism, laissez-faire individualism, and social Darwinism – ideas which, Saito argued, threatened human civilization. In opposition to these destructive modern values, Saito emphasized an "organically coexisting (*yūkiteki kyōson*)" community comprised of individuals, nations, and humankind to reconstruct civilization. The idea of an "organic coexistence" was premised on the assumption that human bodies signified biological commonality and a biological connection between universal communities and particular individuals. Saito further claimed that the reconstruction of civilization should be based on national, regional and individual reforms. The representation of the organic relationship between particular and universal bodies justified the need for eugenic intervention in population control. In Saito's view, eugenics would function to improve individual life, which would ultimately lead to the improvement of humanity.

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[22] For history of the population debate in Japan between 1920s and the mid-1930s, see Sugita Naho, *Jinkō, kazoku, seimei to shakai seisaku: Nihon no keiken* (Population, family, and life and social policy: Japan's experiences) (Kyoto-shi: Hōritsu Bunkasha, 2010), 14-37.

[23] Saito Itsuki, "Yūshu-ron kenkyū," *Shakai to Kyūsai* 3, no.1-3 (1919).

In Saito's schema, the significant question is what is the relation between the organic community and the population. Saito saw the population as the practical domain of organic bodies because the population problem was characterized as rife with socioeconomic problems. Saito's understanding of "socioeconomic" can be easily inferred from his favorable appraisal of Malthusian theory. According to Saito, Malthus changed the focus of the population problem from the prosperity of the ruling class to the welfare of the people. Saito also endorsed Malthusian theory for shifting the emphasis on the political and commercial aspects of the population problem to socioeconomic concerns.[24] Although Malthusian theory was proven false by the declining rate of child births in many European countries since the late 19th century, Saito highlighted the continuing validity of Malthusianism in tackling the physical and mental degeneration caused by World War I. Hence, Saito turned to a quality-based population policy instead of the existing quantity-based population policy. Saito wrote:

> Now the population problem is a problem of social policy. This problem is a matter of improving the quality of the population, and reducing or extinguishing the population with undesirable qualities. The population problem is also a matter of increasing the population of good qualities. The focus of the population problem, now, turns to the quality of the population. Whereas those who are considered desirable to reproduce are a superior type, those who are not welcomed by their neighbors are subjected to annihilation for the benefits of social progress and nation-building.[25]

In light of this, Saito's conceptualization of the "population problem" was hardly the simple diagnosis of excess population growth. From Saito's point of view, the population problem primarily referred to the problem of quality and thus his solution

[24] Ibid., 13.
[25] Ibid., 14-5.

aimed at increasing "the population of good qualities." Nevertheless, Saito's stress on the qualitative aspects of the population does not simply mean a complete shift in focus from quantity to quality. Rather, Saito's emphasis on quality is emblematic of a reordering of the population question as a dual problem, that is, a problem of quantity and quality. The ways in which Saito addressed this dual problem were selective and hierarchical. Saito emphasized a new morality of "encouraging a certain type of people to realize the responsibility to reproduce while controlling the reproduction of the other type for racial betterment."[26] For Saito, eugenics was the discursive technology of problematizing the population; this "discursive technology" called the population into question based on hereditary and social distinctions, and rationalized the social control of the population for the benefits of the organic community.

Saito's redefinition of the population problem exemplifies how post-World War I discourse reconfigured the population in Japan. An emphasis on socioeconomic and eugenic aspects of the population was shared by most social reformers and scholars regardless of their different understandings of the population problem. For example, Takano Iwasaburō, a social statistician of Tokyo Imperial University and a founding member of the Ōhara Institute for Social Research (*Ōhara shakai mondai kenkyūjo*), raised the population question on economic grounds, and advocated both an increase in the size of the population and an improvement in population quality. In 1918, Takano highlighted the destructive effects of World War I on the Japanese population size and national economy in his article "Economic views on the

[26] Ibid., 15.

population growth (*Jinkō zōka no keizaiteki kansatsu*)."[27] Reflecting on the economic and population crisis in the post-World War I Europe, Takano called for the formulations of population policy along with measures aimed at boosting the national economy. Takano advocated a policy encouraging population growth for the benefit of the nation, particularly for industrial development. Here, Takano stressed that economic growth was both a result of population growth and an essential condition for increasing the population size. Thus, Takano shed light on the connection between the national economy and population growth.

Takano distanced himself from Neo-Malthusianism while advocating population growth. He did not overlook the fact that in the late 1920s the population of Mainland Japan (*naichi*) was exhibiting patterns of growth quite different from contemporary European nations. Relatively speaking, Japan experienced a high population growth rate compared to Europe, as well as higher birth and death rates.[28] How did Takano rationalize his support for population growth even though the Japanese population continued to increase? Takano pursued population growth to both increase the size of the population and to improve the population quality. The virtuous circle of population growth can be seen in Takano's claim that,

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[27] Takano Iwasaburō, "Jinkō zōka no keizaiteki kansatsu (Economic Views on the Population Growth)," *Kokka gakkai zasshi* (The journal of the association of political and social sciences) 32, no. 7 (1918): 38-47.

[28] In August 1918, Takano gave two lectures under the titles of "The Population policy of Japan (*honpō no jinkō seisaku*)" and "Quantity or quality (*ryō ka shitsu ka*)" at the Social Policy Conference (*Shakai seisaku gakkai*) in Sapporo. In these lectures, Takano commented on the distinct pattern of Mainland Japanese population growth which differed from its counterparts in European countries. Takano reported that the population of Japan increased by 1.5% every year even though the death rate reached 20%. Takano specifically expressed concern about the high mortality rate of children, women, and youths. Takano Iwasaburō, "Honpō no jinkō seisaku (The population policy of Japan)," *Kokka gakkai zasshi* 32, no. 10 (1918): 142.

> It should be noted that the population growth refers to quality improvement as well as an increase in quantity. We must find ways to improve the health, knowledge, and morality of the population. The right path to do so is the fair distribution of wealth and the improvement of living standards. In much the same way, the economic progress conditions population increase. Population growth is both quality-wise and quantity-wise conditioned by economic progress.[29]

Like Saito, Takano reconfigured the population problem as including both quantitative and qualitative components. Despite their different approaches to population policy—for example, Saito called for the reduction of the Japanese population while Takano advocated population growth—Saito and Takano agreed upon the reordering of the population on eugenic grounds. Furthermore, these two intellectuals agreed that Japan needed an effective national policy to manage the population. For example, Takano's critique of the heretofore "lack of attention to the qualitative dimension of the population" and his demand for "a plan for the qualitative improvement of the population within the broader scope of social policy including better livelihoods, nutritional improvement, and moral advancement" correspond well to Saito's emphasis on "the quality of the population."[30] These two leading figures exemplify the shifting understanding of the population in the post-World War I Japan. Questioning the population was a way of objectifying, reordering, and controlling the population. The population problem was hardly a real problem; it was a discourse that raised a series of issues and reproduced human relations which are mediated by the population.

The emerging discourse of the population problem in the late 1910s laid the

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[29] Ibid., 41-2.
[30] Takano Iwasaburō, "Ryō ka shitsu ka (Quantity or quality)," *Kokka gakkai zasshi* 32, no. 11 (1918): 145.

ground for further discussions of the specifics of population control. In the following decade, social reformers and intellectuals who embraced Neo-Malthusianism and eugenics began discussing birth control as a way of improving the quality of the population, as well as a way of controlling population size. During this process, the population problem became interwoven with reproductive science and technology, and various political mechanisms of subjectification by which individuals would implement reproductive techniques in daily lives. In the rest of this chapter, I will explore how Japanese Neo-Malthusian birth control advocates addressed the Japanese population problem and redefined individual reproduction within the broader scope of population control, politico-economic relations, and racial betterment.

Birth Control: A Neo-Malthusian Panacea for Overpopulation

The first birth control movement group in Japan, *Nihon Sanji Chōsetsu Kenkyūkai* (The Japanese Society for the Study of Birth Control, hereafter *Chōsetsukai*) was founded in Tokyo, in May 1922. Its members included Baron Ishimoto Keikichi, Baroness and feminist Ishimoto Shizue, socialist and feminist Yamamoto Kikue, the physicians Kaji Tokijirō and Majima Kan, Christian socialist and Waseda University professor Abe Isoo, and the labor activists Matsuoka Komakichi, and Suzuki Bunji. These founding members of *Chōsetsukai* concentrated primarily on promoting birth control in Japanese society through a magazine, titled "*Shōkazoku* (the Small Family, which was suspended after the publication of the first issue)" and a series of pamphlets.[31] Considering that abortion was prohibited by

[31] The first and last issue of the magazine *shōkazoku* (published on May 13, 1922) was reprinted in *Sei to seishoku no jinken mondai shiryō shūsei*, vol. 14, 576-580. The pamphlets published by *Chōsetsukai*

criminal law and that the use of contraception went against sexual norms of the time, support for birth control was highly radical.[32] Margaret Sanger's visit to Japan between March and April, 1922, provided an opportunity to raise the radical issue of birth control in public. When Sanger, the founder of the American Birth Control League, visited Japan, she gave several lectures on the population problem and the need for birth control. As an American activist, Sanger's presence in Japan had social ramifications.[33] One month after Sanger headed for Korea and China to lecture about the benefits of birth control, *Chōsetsukai* was founded by Japanese social reformers and labor activists who were sympathetic to Sanger's call to make birth control available in Japan.

It should be noted, however, that the birth control movements in Japan were also a product of the ongoing attention to the population problem which had been discussed by intellectuals since the late 1910s. Particularly, birth control activists, who embraced Neo-Malthusian ideas, actively focused on the "problem" of overpopulation. For these Japanese Neo-Malthusianists, overpopulation was the population problem, and also the root cause of various social ills including poverty, hereditary diseases, and moral degeneration. Neo-Malthusianists advocated the practice of contraception as a

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include Ishimoto Shizue, *Sanji seigen ron o sho hōmen yori kansatsu shi te* (A general observation of the arguments for birth control) (October 1922); Ishimoto Keikichi, *Waga jinkō mondai to sanji chōsetsu ron* (An essay on population problem and birth control) (December 1922); Matsumura Shōnen, *Seibutsu gaku jō yori mi ta sanji chōsetsu ron* (Birth control from biological perspective) (March 1923). The three pamphlets were reprinted *in Sei to Seishoku No Jinken Mondai Shiryō Shūsei*, vol. 2.

[32] In Japan, the state prohibition of abortion began right after the Meiji Restoration of 1868. Both the practice of abortion and the sale of abortion drugs by midwives were prohibited under the proclamation of the Great Council of the State (*Daijō-kan*) in 1868. Later, an abortion law was included in the 1880 Criminal Law, which was revised in 1907 to increase penalties against both women who underwent abortion and abortion providers. Ogino, *Kazoku keikaku e no michi,* 6; Ayako Kano, *Japanese Feminist Debates: A Century of Contention of Sex, Love, and Labor* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2016), 87.

[33] For more on the social impact of Sanger's visit, particularly on the increase in public interest in birth control in Japan, see Ōta, *Nihon sanji chōsetsu hyakunenshi*; Ogino, *"Kazoku keikaku" e no michi.*

panacea for all these intertwined problems; they saw contraception as a way of controlling individual sexual reproduction and ultimately, as a way of reducing population growth.

Chōsetsukai, hence, appeared at the intersection between the post-World War I discourse of the population problem and the growing birth control movements worldwide. Despite different political views among its founding members, *Chōsetsukai* formally adopted a Neo-Malthusian rationale for supporting birth control.[34] Particularly, Ishimoto Shizue, who played a leading role in organizing the group, explained the pressing need for birth control in contemporary Japan, by emphasizing Neo-Malthusian warnings about overpopulation. The following prospectus shows how *Chōsetsukai* raised the question of overpopulation on multiple levels, ranging from individual human to a nation.

> The fact that the population in Japan has increased by more or less 700,000 every year both causes a fierce competition for survival domestically, and complicates foreign relations. Moreover, even at an individual level, the excess of births results in the world's highest mortality rate as well as various women's illnesses. Ultimately, high birth rates pose significant mental and financial burdens, and prevent the betterment of children and women. Moreover, it is evident that late marriages, aimed at preventing such burdens, may result in a series of inhumane outcomes such as illegitimate children, infanticide, and abortion. It is also necessary to prevent men and women with hereditary defects from having children.[35]

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[34] Not all of the founding members of *Chōsetsukai* supported the basic idea of overpopulation. For example, Yamakawa Kikue criticized Malthusian understandings of excess population and argued that poverty was caused by the unfair distribution of wealth under capitalism. *Chōsetsukai* was based on an unstable cooperation among activists with differing political positions. In Chapter 4, I will discuss, in more detail, the different views of birth control of the two feminist members of *Chōsetsukai*, Yamakawa Kikue and Ishimoto Shizue.

[35] Nihon Sanji Chōsetsu Kenkyūkai, *Sanji chōsetsu kenkyūkai shui-sho* (A prospectus for sanji chōsetsu kenkyūkai, July 1922). The prospectus is reprinted in *Sei to seishoku no jinken mondai shiryō shūsei* (A collection of documents on sexual and reproductive rights), vol. 2., ed. Ogino Miho et al. (Tōkyō: Fuji Shuppan, 2000), 201.

As illustrated in this prospectus, *Chōsetsukai* provided three main reasons for encouraging the use of birth control measures: namely, to solve the domestic overpopulation problem, to protect and improve maternal health, and to produce healthy offspring. *Chōsetsukai* argued that overpopulation was particularly troubling because a surplus population would cause physical and mental degeneration and drastically reduce the standard of living. In other words, population quantity and quality were not mutually exclusive. Population quantity and quality were interdependent within the discursive construction of the population problem. In addition to the question of quantity and quality, *Chōsetsukai* also linked the population as a universal form of life with individual bodies. Moving beyond discourses which ascribed overpopulation to uncontrolled or irresponsible fertile bodies, *Chōsetsukai* also argued that individual people were the victims of the problems caused by overpopulation. *Chōsetsukai*'s discursive technology of individualization had two main effects—it reframed the population problem on an individual level and it redefined individual reproduction as an object of social control. Insofar as the population problem was inseparably linked with individual sexual reproduction, the use of birth control was a justifiable measure for limiting population growth and thereby raising population quality.

Therefore, the founding members of *Chōsetsukai* promoted birth control as a panacea for all the ills caused by the population problem. These leading birth control activists extended the meaning of contraception, from a means of reproductive control, to include the technology of population control. The Neo-Malthusian theory of the

population problem thus was based on this discursive link between sexual reproduction and the population. This link was repeatedly emphasized in *Chōsetsukai*'s discussions of birth control as a tool necessary for intervening unchecked fertility and overpopulation. However, the question of why individual births were necessarily related to the population size, or how the control of individual reproduction was linked to overall population control remained unexamined in Neo-Malthusian discussions. This silence unveils the discursive structure of the population problem. Put another way, there was a naturalized realm that mediated between individuals and the population, as well as sexual reproduction and the quantity and quality of the population. That naturalized realm is Japan as a nation-state.

For *Chōsetsukai*, the population problem was enclosed by a national border, that is, it was a nationalized problem. Given the national border implicit in the definition of the population, overpopulation was premised not simply on an imbalance between food production and a population size, but, more fundamentally, on the border of the nation-state within which food production and the population was reified. The following argument by Baron Ishimoto, who was one of the founding members of *Chōsetsukai*, illustrates the "nationality" of the population problem.

> Although the Japanese staple food is rice, the current rice production is not enough to meet the demand of the population. As a result, millions of *koku* of rice are being imported from foreign countries every year. According to the census reported last year, the Japanese population increases every year by six to seven hundred thousand. The gist of the problem is how to deal with our suffering from overpopulation as the population continues to overflow.[36]

[36] Ishimoto Keikichi, *Waga jinkō mondai to sanji chōsetsu ron* (Nihon Sanji Chōsetsu Kenkyūkai, 1922), reprinted in *Sei to Seishoku No Jinken Mondai Shiryō Shūsei* 2, 160-169.

Baron Ishimoto employs classical Malthusian understandings of an imbalance in the growth rate between population and food resources to describe the population crisis in Japan. As seen in Baron Ishimoto's argument, the population problem was put in brackets, that is, "Japan." The national census that Ishimoto refers to above, was conducted for the first time in Mainland Japan in 1920.[37] The population, a quantified and massified form of life reified through statistics, essentially takes the form of state knowledge. Foucault rephrases statistics as the "science of the state."[38] By tracing the origin of the term "statistics," Foucault points out that the modern nation-state assigns politico-economic values to life, and thereby the population emerges through the governmental technology of the nation-state. Baron Ishimoto's concern about Japanese population growth and rice production rates in Japan exemplifies the inseparable relationship between the population and the nation-state. In other words, the population does not simply refer to those who dwell within the national border, but a particular form of life mediated by the nation-state.

Moreover, the population as a national subject also materialized through excluding "others." Baron Ishimoto enumerated various possible ways of tackling the population problem: overseas migration, food imports from foreign countries, and

[37] The national census since 1920 can be accessed online (https://www.e-stat.go.jp/SG1/estat/GL02100104.do?tocd=00200521). Meanwhile, the first population census in the Japanese empire was conducted in Taiwan in 1905. This fact illuminates how the governmental technologies in the colonies created the knowledge of empire. As for the historical trajectory of census in the Japanese empire, see Irene B. Taeuber and Edwin G. Beal, "The Demographic Heritage of the Japanese Empire, "*Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 237 (1945): 64-71.
[38] Michel Foucault, "Governmentality," in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality: with Two Lectures by and an Interview with Michel Foucault*, ed. Graham Burchell et al. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 99.

birth control.[39] Critically examining the migration situation of the Japanese people between 1917 and 1919, and comparing rice production and consumption data for Mainland Japan, Baron Ishimoto concluded that overseas migration and food imports would not mitigate the imbalance between population growth and food production. It should be noted that Baron Ishimoto naturalized Mainland Japan as a single entity and the Japanese people as homogenous national subjects while overlooking the complex social relations that reproduced Japan as an imperialist nation.[40] The fact that population growth was simply considered a natural increase measured by calculating birth-death ratios typifies Japanese Neo-Malthusianists' blindness towards the impact of the complex social relations of an imperialist nation. In other words, in the representation of a homogenous nation, population mobility—particularly, the movement of people between Japan proper and the colonies—became invisible.[41] In the same vein, Baron Ishimoto also used rice production data from only Mainland

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[39] Ishimoto Keikichi, *Waga jinkō mondai*, 161-162.

[40] I borrowed the term "imperialist nation" from Naoki Sakai who characterized the nature of the Japanese state in the prewar period as an imperialist nation and a multiethnic nation-state. The notion of imperialist nation sheds new light on both the particular and the universal, or national and imperial forms of polity in the Japanese empire, and provides a window into the rhetoric of multiethnic empire utilized by Kyoto School intellectuals. While Sakai dissects this rhetorical exposition of the multiethnic community in the 1930s, what Sakai calls "imperial nationalism," I focus on how the Neo-Malthusian intellectuals' silence about multiethnic social relations was constantly produced and reproduced in the Japanese empire in the 1920s, to highlight their "indifferent" imperial nationalism. Naoki Sakai, *Translation and Subjectivity: On Japan and Cultural Nationalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 115; Naoki Sakai, "Subject and Substratum: on Japanese Imperial Nationalism," *Cultural Studies* 14 (2000), 462–530.

[41] According to the national census of Japan in 1920, there were 42,492 immigrants from the Japanese colonies and 35,563 foreigners. The total population of Mainland Japan including Hokkaidō and Okinawa was 55,884,932 people. The population of Japanese settlers in Korea and Taiwan was larger than the population of colonial people in the metropole by the early 1920s. For instance, there were 347,850 Japanese settlers in Korea in 1920. This ongoing migration within the Japanese empire was completely absent from Ishimoto's accounts. "Taishō 9 nen kokusei chōsa," accessed July 20, 2015, https://www.e-stat.go.jp/SG1/estat/GL08020101.do?_toGL08020101_&tstatCode=000001036875&requestSender=search); Chōsen sōtokufu, *Chōsen sōtokufu tōkei nenpo taishō 9 nendo*, vol.1 (1921): 44-5, accessed July 20, 2015, http://kindai.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/974937

Japan when he applied Malthusian theory to Japanese society; he neglect to consider the inflow of Korean and Taiwanese grains, which had helped supply the Japanese market since the mid-1910s.[42] The population problem was thus a discourse that ignored politico-economic relations between Japan proper and her colonies. In effect, the population problem discourse obliterated the social reality of Japan as an imperialist nation.[43]

For *Chōsetsukai*, the nation-state was both a discursive intermediary between the population and individual bodies and a regime that could govern the population legitimately. Since its foundation, *Chōsetsukai* emphasized the role of state policy in addressing the population problem. The members of *Chōsetsukai* argued that poverty relief efforts were inadequate because the fundamental cause of overpopulation and its attended problems—for example, poverty, and physical and mental degeneration—was unchecked human reproduction.[44] Hence, *Chōsetsukai* supported a thorough and systemic way to encourage the use of birth control on an individual level. For example, Matsumura Shōnen, a professor in the Department of Agriculture at Hokkaidō Imperial University, claimed that it was *inhumane* to aid degenerates with inferior genetic traits or criminal tendencies. For Matsumura, charity work only aggravated counter-selection tendencies and increased the burden placed on the

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[42] Yujiro Hayami et al., "Korean Rice, Taiwan Rice, and Japanese Agricultural Stagnation: An Economic Consequence of Colonialism," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 84 (4), Oxford University Press (1970): 571.

[43] As an exception, Baron Ishimoto mentioned Korean workers when addressing competition in the labor market. The reduction of labor market competition between Korean and Japanese workers into a mere quantitative problem of labor supply and wages reveals his complete lack of awareness of Japan as an imperialist nation. In other words, Ishimoto naturalized the Japan's population presence inside a well-defined border while neglecting the historical condition of Japan as the imperialist nation. Ishimoto Keikichi, *Waga jinkō mondai*, 163.

[44] Ishimoto, *Sanji seigen ron o sho hōmen yori kansatsu shi te*, (Nihon Sanji Chōsetsu Kenkyūkai, 1922), reprinted in *Sei to Seishoku No Jinken Mondai Shiryō Shūsei* 2, 81.

government and society overall.[45] Instead of aid, Matsumura endorsed birth control as a humane and eugenically beneficial way of reducing unwanted offspring. Particularly, Matsumura argued that state should take an active role. In an article titled "Birth Control from a Biological Perspective," Matsumura explained,

> Birth control is not something an individual can practice alone, because it is crucial to national welfare. Hence, the government needs to come up with a way of [promoting] the use of birth control. I believe it is necessary to establish a national childcare institution. … At the same time, the government should be vigilant and, for the benefit of the nation and on eugenic grounds, look into prohibiting the reproduction of people who have genetic diseases or disabilities, and those who are idiots. Once the government begins to provide childcare in an ideal way, it will also be able to study the issues of overpopulation and migration in earnest.[46]

As revealed in Matsumura's argument, the *Chōsetsukai*'s Neo-Malthusian advocates preceded the Japanese government in their calls for state intervention in individual's sexual reproduction. It was only after the enactment of the National Eugenic Law in 1940 that the Japanese government withdrew its longstanding pronatalist policy of "give birth and multiply (*Umeyo fuyaseyo*)" and approved the forced sterilization of particular types of population.[47] What does *Chōsetsukai*'s demand for the institutionalization of eugenic birth control mean within the broader

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[45] Matsumura Shōnen, *Seibutsu gaku jō yori mi ta sanji chōsetsu ron* (Nihon Sanji Chōsetsu Kenkyūkai, 1923), reprinted in *Sei to Seishoku No Jinken Mondai Shiryō Shūsei* 2, 179.

[46] Ibid., 183.

[47] Matsubara Yōko points out that the National Eugenic Law in 1940 pursued the goal of "population reinforcement" rather than the "sterilization of inferiors." In regard to this, the state approved the compulsory sterilization of eugenically unfit types only to the extent that the implementation of eugenic policy did not contradict with the pronatalist population policy. I will delve further into the state's population policy in relation to discussions of the population problem in Chapter 5. Matsubara Yōko, "Nihon: Sengo no yūsei hogo-hō to iu na no danshu-hō (Japan: The Sterilization Law known as the postwar Eugenic Protection Act)," *Yūseigaku to ningen shakai: seimei kagaku no seiki wa doko e mukau no ka* (Eugenics and human society: Where will the century of life science head to?), ed. Yonemoto Shōhei et al. (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2000), 180-83.

history of the Japanese state's governing the population? As already stated, *Chōsetsukai* attempted to problematize the population while assuming "the population" existed within specific national borders, and thereby, discursively redefined the biological identity of the population to be within Mainland Japan. Therefore, individuals' use of birth control was linked to the population size and quality. Furthermore, individuals were saddled with the responsibility for reforming his or her body "for the sake of" Japanese bodies. In light of this, Neo-Malthusian arguments for birth control and eugenics redefined the nation-state as a "biological community." This eugenic-nationalist conceptualization of the biological community rationalized the link between particular and universal bodies, and stressed individuals' reproductive responsibility to contribute to national and racial betterment.

Morality, Economy, and Nationality of Reproduction: Abe Isoo's Neo-Malthusian Claim

The members of *Chōsetsukai* disbanded in less than one year after the group was founded. Although *Chōsetsukai* formally adopted Neo-Malthusian logic to justify its birth control agenda, the group was a relatively loose organization whose members had different ideological views on overpopulation in Japan. For the most part, *Chōsetsukai*'s members were split between Neo-Malthusian versus Marxist approaches. After *Chōsetsukai* dissolved, most of the group's Neo-Malthusian members continued to be involved in the birth control movements in various ways. For example, Ishimoto Shizue co-founded the Japan Birth Control League (*Nihon Sanji Chōsetsu Renmei*) in 1931, and then the Women's Birth Control League of Japan (*Nihon Sanji Chōsetsu Fujin Domei*) in 1932. She opened a birth control clinic in

Tokyo in 1934 to disseminate information about effective contraceptive technologies to the public. The physician Majima Kan also opened a birth control clinic in Tokyo in 1923 and a consultation center in 1926 under the name of the Beloved Child and Woman Association (*Aiji Jōsei Kyōkai*) to reach out to people looking for more information about contraception methods—Majima also offered contraceptive devices at a reasonable cost.[48]

A Christian socialist and a professor of economics at Waseda University, Abe Isoo (1865-1949) was one of the prominent Neo-Malthusian advocates who continued to be involved in birth control movements during the interwar years. During his life, Abe was engaged in a wide range of social and political activities: he co-founded the Japanese Fabian Society in 1924 and the Social Masses Party (*Shakai Taishū tō*) in 1926, and participated in the movement to abolish licensed prostitution and the labor movement.[49] Various political and social movements which Abe participated in reveals his consistent concern with the redistribution of wealth, social reforms, and poor relief. Given the trajectory of political careers, Abe's leading role in the birth control movements may seem irrelevant to the goal of social reform. However, Abe had an abiding interest in sexual and reproductive issues, as seen in his involvement in social movements in favor of the abolition of licensed prostitution, his support for

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[48] Ishimoto Shizue and Majima Kan co-founded the Japan Birth Control League *(Nihon Sanji Chōsetsu Renmei)* in 1931, but the group soon disbanded due to conflicting interests between Ishimoto and Majima. The decisive reason for the conflict was the Dutch pessary invented by Majima. Ishimoto criticized Majima for commercializing the birth control movements and taking advantage of the group to advertise his Dutch pessary. Ogino, *Kazoku keikaku e no michi*, 55.

[49] For more on Abe's involvement in various political and social movements, see Elise K. Tipton, "In a house divided: the Japanese Christian socialist Abe Isoo," in *Nation and Nationalism in Japan*, ed. Sandra Wilson (London: Routledge Curzon, 2002), 81-96; Masako Gavin, "Anti-Japanese Sentiment and the Responses of Two Meiji Intellectuals," *East Asia* 21 no. 3 (2004): 23-36; Masako Gavin, "Abe Isoo and Kawakami Hajime in Interwar Japan: Economic Reform or Revolution?" *East Asia* 28 no.1 (2011): 57-74; Frühstück, *Colonizing Sex*, 103-51.

artificial birth control and the repeal of the anti-abortion law. From Abe's Neo-Malthusian perspective, the population was part of the foundation of the capitalist economy, domestic politics and international relations. Thus, for Abe, human reproduction was an important politico-economic problem.

As a Neo-Malthusian, Abe focused mainly on the moral, economic, and political justification for the use of birth control in contemporary Japan. In cooperation with other birth control advocates and medical practitioners, Abe co-organized birth control advocacy groups, published books, magazines and other materials to disseminate information about contraception, and gave public lectures about birth control and sexual reproduction. He cooperated with other birth control advocates who held different and sometimes conflicting ideological positions. After the dissolution of *Chōsetsukai*, Abe joined Yamamoto Senji and Koike Shirō in publishing a magazine *Sanji Chōsetsu Hyōron* (*Birth Control Review*, hereafter *Hyōron*) in 1925. Although both Yamamoto and Koike were opposed to the Neo-Malthusian views on the Japanese population problem from a Marxist perspective, the conflicting opinions in the *Hyōron* nonetheless all agreed on the pressing need of birth control.[50] After the *Hyōron*, Abe took the lead in publishing another magazine *Sanji Seigen Hyōron* (Birth Limitation Review) between 1929 and 1931 and continued his campaign for birth

[50] A socialist, biologist, and labor activist Yamamoto Senji took a leading role in publishing the *Hyōron*. In many articles in this magazine, Yamamoto criticized Neo-Malthusian ideas and argued that poverty was caused by the unfair distribution of wealth under capitalist system, and concluded that birth control would not reduce the population growth. The fact that the *Hyōron* contained both Marxist and Malthusian perspectives suggests that the *Hyōron* facilitated an open discussion about the essence of the population problem among birth control advocates insofar as he or she could justify the use of birth control. I will examine a proletarian birth control leader, Yamamoto Senji and his involvement in publishing the *Hyōron* in Chapter 3.

control.[51] Although the main channel for the birth control movements was changed repeatedly over time, Abe constantly worked to rationalize the need for birth control within shifting contemporary political and economic contexts. Abe justified the use of birth control in three main ways. Namely, birth control was a new morality, it provided a key solution to class conflict under capitalism, and it was necessary for the development of peaceful international relations.

Firstly, Abe assigned a moral value to birth control at an individual level. Against some intellectuals' denunciation of birth control on moral grounds, Abe reconfigured birth control as the new morality of responsible parents.[52] Here, the term "morality" specifically referred to the social norms of marriage and sex. According to Abe, the old morality of marriage focused solely on procreation, but the new morality should acknowledge human sexual desire in a loving relationship. Thus Abe's new morality worked to normalize sexual desire by distinguishing sex from procreation. However, this radical understanding of sex and procreation by no means aimed at sexual liberation. Abe's assertion that "leaving procreation to the nature is a big sin. A parent has a huge responsibility for controlling reproduction artificially and have a

[51] The original title of the magazine *Sanji Seigen Hyōron* was *Sanji Seigen* which began publishing in 1928. The title was changed after *Sanji Seigen Fukyūkai* (the Birth Control Promotion Association) founded by Abe became a publisher. In 1931, the title was changed to *Sanji Chōsetsu* again, and the magazine eventually ceased publishing in 1933. Ogino, *Kazoku keikaku e no michi*, 47-48.

[52] In comparison with Western countries where Christian sexual norms were dominant, Japan was relatively free from religious sexual morality. However, there was still opposition to birth control on moral grounds among Japanese intellectuals, even among those who were sympathetic to Malthusian theory of population growth. For example, an educator and a professor of Waseda University, Sugiyama Shigeyoshi, agreed with Malthus' view of overpopulation, but denounced birth control as "immoral." Instead, Sugiyama suggested migration to neighboring colonies including Japanese colonies and the increase in food production. Sugiyama's objection to birth control was premised on the existing moral values attached to sex and reproduction. Sugiyama Shigeyoshi, *Shokuryō mondai no kaiketsu toshite sanji seigen no kachi* (The value of birth control as a solution to food problem) (Bunmei kyōkai, 1926).

child only when they want one"[53] suggests an obvious premise for the divorce between sex and procreation: selective reproduction on eugenic grounds. In other words, Abe's new morality described the eugenically desirable roles of parents who were deemed responsible for producing and raising physically and mentally healthy children.

As seen above, Abe's moral justification of birth control was also an attempt to moralize scientific knowledge. In other words, scientific knowledge and morality worked to redefine each other. Birth control and eugenics were incorporated into the realm of moral responsibility as ethical practices shifted away from "natural reproduction" towards the "responsible and artificial" production of desirable descendants. In the same vein, Abe's emphasis on the "hygiene of sexual desire (*seiyoku eisei*)" also exemplifies this reconfiguration of morality and science. Criticizing bourgeois intellectuals who objected to sex education on conventional moral grounds, Abe stressed the need for teaching hygienic sexual desire to help men moderate their sexual desires and prevent syphilis among the youth.[54] Here, hygiene specifically referred to the reproductive health of parents or potential parents, and this specific definition presumed that a hygienic sexual life was a condition for producing and fostering healthy children. Thus, in Abe's schema, scientific reproduction—that is, the use of reproductive technologies like birth control, eugenics, and sexual hygiene—and parental morality worked to mutually reinforce each other.

It should be noted that eugenics served as a particularly ambiguous criterion

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[53] Abe Isoo et al., *Sanji seigen no riron to jissai* (The theory and reality of birth control) (shakai mondai sōsho 5, May 1925), 8.
[54] Ibid., 23-24.

for categorizing desirable and undesirable types of procreation. Abe assumed that certain types of people with genetic or social diseases needed to control reproduction. People considered unfit for reproduction included those who are in poverty, commit a crime, have a disability, or lack education according to Abe. The following statement reveals the ambiguous categorization of pathological types and an intermingling of genetic and social traits.

> If we approve the use of birth control to prevent bad hereditary traits, we should also do the same with regard to living difficulties. Needless to say, people with a disability or low intelligence should not enter into society. There are certain kinds of social diseases in addition to bad hereditary traits. As already stated, lack of education is a terrifying social disease. Insofar as the poor give births to many children, it is impossible for them to provide their children with enough education. … In this light, there is no difference between having many disabled children and having many ignorant and uneducated children join society. Furthermore, it is often the case that many uneducated people produce criminals. These people need to use birth control to ease their economic difficulties. They should give birth to children they can afford to educate sufficiently.[55]

The ambiguous nature of eugenics hardly undermined the scientific credibility of desirable and undesirable traits. Eugenics was a polysemic idea of biological hierarchy. Abe marked the undesirable types of people based on this productive technology of human representation. So-called unfit types included people with either genetically or socially inferior traits. Differences between genetic and social categories were of little importance to Abe. Since individual bodies were the sites where these different categories intersected.[56]

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[55] Ibid., 57-58.

[56] Similarly, another Christian socialist, Kagawa Toyohiko (1888-1960) also integrated eugenics into the social reform of the poor. Like Abe, Kagawa was an omnipresent figure in Japanese social and political movements, including the Friends of Jesus movement, social reform for the poor, the labor and

Eugenics did not prove whether genetic or social factors played a key role in determining the reproductive fitness of individuals. Instead, eugenics problematized individual human bodies and prescribed birth control as a preventive medicine. In other words, eugenics focused on preventing undesirable bodies. "Undesirable bodies" were not provable, but only preventable.

In addition to defining population quality on eugenic grounds, Abe also justified the use of birth control to reduce the population size. This is connected to Abe's view that birth control could be a key solution to class conflict in capitalist societies. As mentioned previously, Abe considered the poor unfit to reproduce offspring because they lacked the economic ability to educate their children. For Abe, the problem of poverty was not merely an individual difficulty, but, more importantly, a general problem of the proletarian class. Neo-Malthusian understandings of the poverty of the proletariat were completely dependent on the theory of overpopulation. Like other Japanese Neo-Malthusianists, Abe associated poverty with rates of human reproduction which exceeded the available resources. However, Abe was distinctive in his particular focus on labor issues—like unemployment, low wages, and exploitative labor conditions—which plagued Japan's system of capitalism. In essence, Abe's understanding of labor issues was that "the population problem lies at the core of the

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peasant union movements, social relief work, and the consumer cooperative union movement. Kagawa lived in a slum in Shinkawa, Kobe for five years, beginning in 1909, with the aim of evangelizing the poor as well as reforming them. His experiences in the Kobe slums were later vividly recollected in a series of his novels and essays, including *A Study of the Psychology of the Poor* (*hinmin shinri no kenkyū*, 1915) and a trilogy of autobiographical novels *Crossing the Deathline* (*shisen o koete,* 1920-24), in which Kagawa defined the poor as a physically, mentally, and morally degenerate type of man. He not only scientifically observed impoverished people, but also used the goals of racial reform to justify public intervention into their lives. With regard to Kagawa Toyohiko's lifelong career, see Waichiro Yonezawa, *Kagawa Toyohiko* (Tokyo: Nichigai Asoshiētsu, 1992).

labor problems."[57] The following statement clearly shows how Abe reduced various labor issues to fit inside the overarching population problem by using the language of Neo-Malthusianism.

> Although workers are humans with freedom and independence, they must sell their labor power which they possess in order to make a living. … Furthermore, as far as labor is a commodity (*urimono*), it will inevitably obey the so called principle of supply and demand in economics. As the number of workers grows, the labor power will increase accordingly. [Then,] the value of the labor power, that is, wages will necessarily fall. Therefore, if the population of workers were not limited, it would not be conceivable to expect the wage increase. As matters stand today, the workers at all times outnumber what the capitalists demand.[58]

While Abe adopted the Marxist vocabulary of capitalism and class conflict, his solution to economic inequality did not attempt to demystify the logic of the free market. Abe's critique of capitalism failed to challenge the accumulation of surplus labor and the inevitably precarious position of the workers, which Marx identifies as a fundamental principle of capitalism.[59] According to Marx, insofar as an excess population of workers, or a "reserve army" is required for capitalist accumulation, regardless of the market demands for labor, the natural law of wages along with the

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[57] Abe Isoo, *Seikatsu mondai kara mita sanji chōsetsu* (Birth control from a livelihood perspective) (Tokyodō, 1931), 126. According to the preface, *Seikatsu mondai kara mita sanji chōsetsu* was the second edition of *Sanji seigen ron* (the theory of birth control) written by Abe in 1922. When the first edition was published, around 7,000 copies were sold. Although the first edition was lost after the Great Kantō earthquake of 1923, Abe published the second edition in 1931 after revising the sections on the population problem in rural areas and the labor problem. Abe also updated information on colonial policy in the second edition.

[58] Ibid., 125.

[59] Marx points out the intrinsic characteristics of capitalist accumulation and argues that "it is capitalist accumulation itself that constantly produces, and produces indeed in direct relation with its own energy and extent, a relatively redundant working population, i.e. a population which is superfluous to capital's average requirements for its own valorization, and is therefore a surplus population." Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, Ben Fowkes trans. (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books in association with New Left Review, 1976), 782.

ratio of the working population is nothing more than an economic fiction.[60] In light of this, Abe's inquiry into the labor problem developed within a dogmatic framework of economics which assumed a fixed amount of capital and a mathematical formula of supply and demand. This blind obedience to the laws of capitalist economy is what Georg Lukács calls "reification," the naturalization of commodified human relations into "objective laws" of social formation in capitalism.[61] In Abe's reified views, capitalist social relations which quantify human labor as well as mechanisms which determine the value of labor power remained unquestioned. It is as if low wages are necessary by-products of a surplus supply of labor. Thus, Abe's solution did not challenge the assumed laws of capitalism. Rather, Abe rationalized the unevenness between workers and capitalists by disciplining workers' bodies.[62]

Furthermore, Abe's legitimization of capitalist natural law proceeded to a claim in favor of birth control as an alternative to improving the social and economic status of the working class. Abe assumed that "the system of the reserve army naturally arises out of overpopulation"[63] in his reformist claim. In other words, since the excessive reproduction of the working class was the root cause of the surplus labor

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[60] Ibid., 790-1.
[61] Georg Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1971), 94.
[62] Abe's reifed idea of capitalism resonates with other contemporary socialists who approached the problems accompanying rapid industrialization during the 1920-30s through social reforms. For instance, Kawakami Hajime, a leading advocate of Marxism during this period, initially deemed Marxism a science for redistributing limited amounts of wealth. Kawakami promoted the ethical aspects of Marxist thought as a solution to social problems, without denouncing the capitalist economy itself. However, Kawakami's earlier position of advocating moral reforms was later drastically altered, and he became an advocate of radical Marxism. Kawakami disagreed with Abe's promotion of birth control on the basis of New-Malthusianism. During the interwar era, Kawakami emphasized an approach for fundamentally transforming the structure of the capitalist system. Masako Gavin, "Poverty and Its Possible Cures: Abe Isoo and Kawakami Hajime," *East Asia* 24, no. 1 (2007): 28-31; Gail Bernstein, "Kawakami Hajime: A Japanese Marxist in Search of the Way," in *Japan in Crisis: Essays on Taisho Democracy*, ed. Harry D. Harootunian, et al. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), 88-89.
[63] Abe, *Seikatsu mondai kara mita sanji chōsetsu*, 133-134.

population, birth control would solve the difficulties of the working class. Abe's presentation of birth control as a "self-help" solution served to naturalize the reconfiguration of class conflict as an individual reproductive problem. Furthermore, Abe's "birth-control" solution transformed individual workers into autonomous subjects who should improve their status through their own efforts (*jirikiteki*).[64] This discursive link between reproductive control and individual autonomy exemplifies Foucault's "technologies of the self." Dissecting the mechanisms of modern knowledge, Foucault highlights "technologies of the self" which "permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and ways of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality."[65] Abe's justification of birth control was not simply an attempt to solve the labor problem. More fundamentally, Abe was suggesting a way of constructing a self who could problematize its own body, identify itself with the population, control sexuality and reproduction.

Lastly, Abe also justified birth control in terms of its impact on international relations. After World War I, there was considerable intellectual reflection among

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[64] Abe's emphasis on individual autonomy in solving living difficulties can also be found in his discussion of the need for birth control for the relief of the poor class (*hinmin kaikyū*). According to Abe's definition, the poor class consisted of people who earned less than the minimum cost of living. Abe neglected to examine conceptual relation between the poor class and the working class. Abe argued that social work (*shakai jigyō*), which had been ameliorating living difficulties of the poor class, was merely a makeshift measure. Instead, Abe called for two thoroughgoing solutions: namely, national welfare to institutionally guarantee a minimum income for the poor, and birth control by which individual poor people could help themselves. In comparison with income guarantees, which he considered as the reliance upon others (*tarikiteki*), Abe viewed birth control as an effective measure by one's own efforts (*jirikiteki*). Ibid., 109-110.

[65] Michel Foucault, "Technologies of the Self," In *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault*, ed. Luther H. Martin et al., (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 18.

Neo-Malthusian advocates on the connection between population and international affairs. For example, when Margaret Sanger visited Japan in March 1922, the first lecture she gave was about "war and population." This lecture, in which Sanger highlighted the Great War as an outlet for the overflowing population in Germany, epitomized Neo-Malthusian views on the causal link between population growth and international conflicts.[66] Abe's understanding of overpopulation, within the context of international affairs, followed this Neo-Malthusian idea. Abe expressed his concern that "Japan currently suffers from overpopulation. Many knotty issues in international relations will arise as the population overflow continues."[67] The "knotty issues" which Abe referred to included international conflicts over migration, which could eventually lead to war. The following statement explicitly shows how Abe associated overpopulation with military expansionism.

> The Japanese population increases by six to seven hundred thousand each year. Although we always explain to the world that the Japanese people are, by no means, a warlike race, the Western countries have anxieties about the population growth in Japan. How can we get rid of the population surplus? If we find outlets for the surplus population, where are these outlets? Manchuria, Mongolia, or Siberia? Wherever the outlet is, the Western countries will gaze at that region insofar as Japan tries to expand her territory under an aggressive policy. … Is

[66] For example, Margeret Sanger paid particular attention to the prewar situation in Germany where there was no outlet for the growing population except for the war. Sanger then switched her attention to the contemporary population issue in Japan that paralleled prewar Germany. By defining the population of Japan as "a problem," Sanger asserted that the rational, as well as the humanitarian, solution for overpopulation in the contemporary Japan had to be liberating motherhood from being breeding machines rather than resorting to migration or war. For Sanger, "free motherhood" referred to the use of birth control upon which "international brotherhood and international emancipation" depended. Sanger, "War and Population," 10.

[67] Abe Isoo, "Nani ga sorehodo fudōtoku ka (What is so immoral?)," *Fujin kōron* 8 (1920). Abe contributed this article to *Fujin kōron* as part of the special issue "Wagakuni no genjō ni terashite mita hinin kahi ron (The debate over contraception in light of Japan's current situation)." The contributors, including Misumi Suzuko, Abe Isoo, Fujikawa Yū, Yoshida Kumaji, Nagai Hisomu, Namae Takayuki, Ichikawa Genzō, and Miyata Shū, debated the political, social, economic, and medical effects of contraception from different points of views. *Fujin kōron* 8 (1920): 38-59.

> there any other way of abandoning Japan's territorial ambition for Manchuria, Mongol, and Siberia other than taking measures to control the population size?[68]

As seen above, Abe believed that overpopulation caused expansionism due to the need for enough land for the surplus population. Against military expansion into neighboring countries, Abe argued that birth control would function to maintain international peace. Birth control was thus intermingled with pacifism. According to Abe, birth control provided a peaceful solution to overpopulation in contrast to military invasion.

It should be noted that Abe's pacifist view was based on Japan's national economic interests rather than an underlying objection to militarism or colonialism. Despite Abe's worries about military expansionism, Japan invaded Manchuria in September 1931, and eventually established a puppet state, Manchukuo, in February 1932. Abe responded with skepticism to the acute situation in Manchuria and Inner Mongolia. Abe's skeptical stance, however, was based in his calculation of Japan's national interest rather than anti-militarism. In Abe's view, Japan's territorial expansion into Manchuria would fail to alleviate Japan's population surplus just as Japan's colonization of Korea, Taiwan, and Karafuto had failed before. Abe believed that the low numbers of Japanese resettling in the colonies was due to labor market competition between native and Japanese workers.[69]Abe reduced wage discrimination

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[68] Abe Isoo et al., *Sanji seigen no riron to jissai*, 103-104.

[69] As to the wage gap, Abe maintains that "[in Korea and Taiwan] since Koreans and Chinese work for a low wage, Japanese cannot compete with them. Even if Japanese do work, the wage they earn is lower than the wage they earn in Japan. This is also the case with Manchuria. If Japanese workers were paid as much as they are in the U.S., millions of people would move into Manchuria. Unless the income in Manchuria reaches half of the income level in Mainland Japan, Japanese migration to Manchuria is

between the colonized and the colonizer to the simple dynamics of low-wage competition in labor market. Abe's silence on colonial social relations resembled other Neo-Malthusianists' imperial nationalism. Abe's pacifism on economic grounds was deeply implicated in this unconscious imperial nationalism.

Moreover, Abe's concern for peaceful international relations was focused on Japan's relations with the Western powers, particularly, the United States. In other words, the "international world" Abe referred to was limited to the world governed by international laws. The system of international laws was a western, hegemonic system which produced and legitimized state sovereignties. Naoki Sakai and Jon Solomon explain that the nation-State system was a product of international laws that originated in the Treaty of Westphalia (1648), by which the world was initially divided into the West as "one governed by international laws," and the Rest as "one exposed to the discretion of colonial powers." International laws were concerned more with the division of international spaces in the name of "civilizational difference" than in the sovereignty of nation-states from the outset. Abe's understanding of "inter/national" relations depended precisely on this world, reproduced by international laws in which only Western countries with state sovereignty counted as nation-states. On the contrary, the Japanese colonies were completely excluded in Abe's account.[70] Thus, Abe internalized this schema of divided space that was produced by international laws. Furthermore, this schema served to reify national sovereignty.

A growing conflict between Japan and the U.S. over the issue of Japanese

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hopeless." "Fukeiki taisaku to jinkō mondai (A solution to economic depression and population problem)" *Purity* 9 (1932), 2.

[70] Naoki Sakai et al, "Introduction: addressing the multitude of foreigners, echoing Foucault," *Traces 4: Translation, Biopolitics, Colonial Difference* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2006), 23.

migration to the U.S. was Abe's urgent concern. The Immigration Act of 1924 effectively denied *Issei* (the first generation of Japanese immigrants in the U.S.)'s eligibility for U.S. citizenship and completely excluded all Asian immigrants.[71] Immediately after the enactment of the 1924 Immigration Act, Abe wrote about the exclusion of Japanese (*hainichi*) in his defense of the Immigration Act.[72] Abe explained that territorial sovereignty lay at the core of the exclusion of Japanese immigrants in the U.S. In his view, land ownership and absolute property rights were legally guaranteed to individuals by the state. Moreover, every state had territorial sovereignty. Abe believed it was legitimate to ban Asian immigration to protect U.S territorial sovereignty as well as to protect U.S citizens' land ownership. Furthermore, Abe disavowed the claim that the U.S. discriminated against Asian immigrants on a racial basis. Abe considered the criticism that the 1924 Act was racist inadequate because immigration issues were within the domain of legal judgment rather than humanitarian appeals.

Abe's active defense of the Japanese Exclusion Act was not simply the recognition of the U.S. territorial sovereignty, but the confirmation of a reciprocal exclusivity between Japan and the U.S. Abe expanded his belief of the incompatibility

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[71] The Immigration Act of 1924 declared the exclusion of nearly all non-European immigrants including Mexicans, Japanese, Chinese, and Filipinos. Given the fact that Chinese immigration was already suspended by the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the Immigration of Act of 1924 effectively completed the exclusion of Asian immigrants, and particularly terminated Japanese immigration. As a result, *Issei* were classified as "permanent aliens" until this race-based immigration policy was repealed by the McCarran Walter Act of 1952. For the Immigration Act of 1924 and its treatment of Japanese immigrants, see Mae M. Ngai, "The Architecture of Race in American Immigration Law: A Reexamination of the Immigration Act of 1924," *The Journal of American History* 86, no. 1 (1999): 67-92; Lisa Lowe, *Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics* (United States: Duke University Press, 1996), 1-36.

[72] Abe Isoo, "Hainichi to shakai no hansei (The reflection of the exclusion of Japanese and society)," *Purity* 6 (1924).

of the two nations to include incompatible relations between the Japanese and the U.S. population. Abe's concern with the growing Japanese immigrant population living on the Pacific Coast clearly reveals his underlying assumption of the incompatibility of "inter/national" relations. Drawing on his Neo-Malthusian assumptions, Abe considered that Japanese immigrants' high fertility rate was the main cause of anti-Japanese sentiments in the Pacific Coast region.[73] Here, it should be noted that Abe identified Japanese immigrant offspring with the Japanese population, despite the fact that American-born Japanese were naturalized as U.S. citizens.[74] Put another way, Abe assumed the immigrants' bodies embodied "Japan-ness," which was incompatible with "American-ness." In respect of this "Japan-ness" of the immigrants, Abe maintained that:

> It is expected that Japanese immigrants and their future offspring in Hawaii will cause critical problems unless they are completely assimilated as Americans. … Although the American people are in favor of local self-government by nature, there is some fear that the Japanese people may overwhelm the Americans in politics if they are all entitled to vote. It is still possible to limit Japanese power to some extent under the supervision of the central government, but the state government cannot continue intervening in the local government. Once the Hawaii-born Japanese are completely assimilated as Americans, it

[73] Abe paid particular attention to the fertility of Japanese immigrants in California and Hawaii states which had high Japanese immigrant population. According to Abe, the birth rate of the U.S. was 30 births per 1,000 people while that of the Japanese immigrant population in Hawaii reached around 50 births per 1,000 people every year. His concern with Japanese immigrants' high fertility was based on his Neo-Malthusian presumption that the population problem of the Japanese immigrant community would threaten Japan-U.S. relations due to the increasing encroachment on U.S. territory. Abe Isoo et al., *Sanji seigen no riron to jissai*, 104-106.

[74] Prior to 1924, *Nisei*, or the second generation of Japanese immigrants were automatically granted dual citizenship according to the principle of *Jus sanguinis* (right of blood) in Japan and that of *Jus soli* (right of birthplace) in the U.S. However, the Japanese-American Association on the Pacific Coast and in Hawaii proposed to revise the citizenship law in Japan to prevent *Nisei* from automatically retaining Japanese citizenship. As a result, the number of *Nisei* holding dual citizenship declined over time. In the early 1940s, around 30 percent of *Nisei* retained Japanese citizenship. Carey McWilliams, "Dual Citizenship," *Far Eastern Survey* 11, no. 23 (1942): 231-3; and Yuji Ichioka, *The Issei: The World of the First Generation Japanese Immigrants, 1885-1924* (New York: Free Press, 1988), 196-99.

> will be relatively easy to establish local self-government. However, as long as the Japanese immigrants preserve their characters, they will certainly cause political troubles in Hawaii.[75]

Assimilation presupposes incompatibility. Behind Abe's skeptical view on the assimilation of Japanese immigrants lay a naturalized assumption that essential differences between national lines were inscribed on individual bodies. Abe was not interested in whether the difference between the Japanese and the American population was characterized as physical, cultural, or political. Abe assumed that national difference was a transcendent and encompassing reality. Insofar as each nation was responsible for its own population, migration due to the failure of a nation to support its own surplus population was a national shame.[76] From the beginning, Abe advocated birth control over overseas migration because of his presumed incompatibility between different nation-states. What Abe termed "peaceful international relations" required well-defined national borders and national populations which embodied national homogeneity.

Abe's different ways of justifying birth control reveal how his Neo-Malthusian views were enmeshed with eugenics, social reformism, and the schema of the "national and international" world.[77] As another World War broke out, this complex discourse on the population problem—a discourse which began to arise after World War I—gradually strengthen its emphasis of negative eugenics and imperial

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[75] Abe Isoo et al., *Sanji seigen no riron to jissai*, 105-106.
[76] Ibid., 107.
[77] For the "schema," I draw upon Naoki Sakai's term the "schema of co-figuration" to highlight how the modern image of national sovereignty and that of the international world reinforce each other, and furthermore how this schematic understanding conditions a national homogeneity as well as a fundamental incompatibility between different nations. Naoki Sakai, "Translation," *Theory, Culture & Society* 23, no. 2-3 (2006): 71-78.

nationalism while denying the theory of overpopulation. Abe advocated for compulsory sterilization of genetically undesirable populations and early marriage to stimulate population growth.[78] However, Abe's shifting argument should not be viewed merely as self-negation. It was rather the realignment of the population problem, which constantly inscribed a biological hierarchy and national borders on human reproduction.

Mapping Reproduction, Bordering Population

This chapter attempted to dissect the discursive structure of the population problem in the interwar years through a close reading of Neo-Malthusian debates raised by the birth control movement group, *Nihon Sanji Chōsetsu Kenkyūkai*, and Abe Isoo, the leading ideologue of the birth control movements. After the end of

[78] Abe had a longstanding interest in eugenic sterilization in the U.S. When he visited the U.S. in 1929, Abe met the philanthropist and eugenicist Ezra Seymour Gosney who founded the Human Betterment Foundation (HBF) in California in 1928 to promote eugenic sterilization among the pulbic. Inspired by Gosney's promotion of sterilization on eugenic grounds, Abe translated *Sterilization for Human Betterment* (New York: Macmillan, 1929) co-authored by Gosney and Paul B. Popenoe and published it under the title "Funin kekkon to ningen kaizō (Sterile Marriages and Human Betterment)" (Tokyo, Shunyōdō, 1930). In addition to the public promotion of eugenic sterilization, the compulsory sterilization of the unfit including patients with mental problems or leprosy was of particular interest to Abe. Abe believed that compulsory sterilization was a humanitarian and preventive way of promoting racial betterment. Abe's vision for compulsory sterilization was later realized through the enactment of the National Eugenic Law (*kokumin yūsei-hō*) in 1940. For more on Gosney's movement for eugenic sterilization in the U.S. in interwar years, see Wendy Kline, *Building a Better Race: Gender, Sexuality, and Eugenics from the Turn of the Century to the Baby Boom* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 61-94. Abe's favorable comments on eugenic sterilization in light of Gosney's movement in California can be found in various articles including Abe Isoo, "Sanji seigen no yūseigakuteki kenkai (birth control on eugenic grounds)" *Sanji seigen hyōron* 4, no. 6 (1931): 2-5; "Jinko mondai no ryōteki hōmen to shitsuteki hōmen (the quantitative and qualitative dimensions of population problem)," *Jinko mondai* 2, no. 4 (1938): 48-60. Meanwhile, as the war began, Abe retreated from his earlier position of promoting birth control and passively supported the pronatlist population policy on the ground that the population quality was more crucial than the population size. For Abe's shifting view on overpopulation, see Frühstück, *Colonizing Sex*, 147-148; Hayashi Yōko, "Abe Isoo ni okeru 'heiwa' ron to danshu-ron: dansei-sei no mondai no kakawari wo kijikuni (On the notion of "peace" and sterilization in Isoo Abe: concerning the problem of manliness)," *Gender shi gaku* (Gender studies) 2009 (5): 35-49; Abe Tsunehisa, "Abe Isoo to fujin mondai (Abe Isoo and women's issues)," in *Abe Isoo no kenkyū* (The Study of Abe Isoo), Nakamura Naoyoshi ed. (Tokyo: Waseda Daigaku Shakai Kagaku Kenkyūjo, 1990), 178.

World War I, Japan underwent a transition due to sudden economic fluctuations and ideological reflections on Western modernity. In this context, Japanese social reformers and social scientists called the population into question and problematized the quality and quantity of the population within the broader politico-economic structure. The population problem, which emerged as a buzzword in the late 1910s, reveals a discursive technology of life by which both individual and universal human lives can become the object of scientific knowledge, social reform, and politico-economic policy. Neo-Malthusian birth control advocates actively addressed the population problem between the late 1910s and the early 1930s; They focused mainly on the issue of overpopulation and contraception. In the course of justifying the use of birth control, these Neo-Malthusianists discussed various issues and posed questions about national and international politics, poverty and class struggles under capitalism, and racial quality on eugenic grounds. They saw a clear causal link between overpopulation and a series of political, economic, and medical problems, and thus birth control became a panacea for these presumably interrelated problems.

The Neo-Malthusian discourse of the population problem sheds new light on the relationship between the nation-state and the population. For many Neo-Malthusianists, the nation-state functioned as a naturalized, organic realm which mediated between individual bodies and the Japanese population—a homogenous, biological community which was incompatible with different nation-states. This nation-centered understanding of the population obliterated the social reality of Japan as an imperialist nation, and excluded colonial others from biological "Japanese-ness." Individual bodies and human reproduction became sites where this discursive

technology of bordering the population operated. Hence, reproduction became marked by the nation-state.

Seen in a broader history of modern Japan, Neo-Malthusian intellectuals laid the ground for wartime population policies. It was not until the late 1930s that governmental intervention in sexual reproduction was implemented at a policy level. The Japanese government had officially suppressed birth control movements in Japan while pursuing a pronatalist population policy. The goal of Neo-Malthusian birth control advocates to legalize birth control on reformist and eugenic grounds was eventually realized when both the Law on the protection of Mothers and Children (*boshi hogō-hō*) and the National Eugenic Law (*kokumin yūsei-hō*) were promulgated in 1937 and in 1940, respectively. Wartime population policy reinforced the biological link between the population and the nation-state by legalizing eugenic reproduction and disciplining individual bodies for the sake of the Japanese imperial nation.

CHAPTER 3

Birth Control and Eugenics for the Proletarian Class

Proletarius under capitalism: the capitalist representation of human reproduction

> The Roman proletariat lived at the expense of society, while modern society lives at the expense of the proletariat.[79]

The etymology of "proletariat" unfolds the different modes of life between the ancient Roman *Proletarius* up to the proletarian class of a modern capitalist society. The latter, in spite of its invariable indication of the lower class, has changed its primary mode from human reproduction to commodity production. Borrowing the words of a Genevan political economist Jean Charles Léonard de Sismondi, Karl Marx noted that the Roman *Proletarius* referred to "the lowest class of the community… regarded as contributing nothing to the state but offspring."[80] In the mid-nineteenth century capitalist world, Marx and Friedrich Engels witnessed the modern proletariat who were no longer the propertyless class, but workers who were deprived of the means of production, and sold their labor-power which was used in the production of commodities.[81]

Does this semantic change of the proletariat suggest that reproducing offspring is no longer a significant activity for the modern proletariat? The different mode of life

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[79] Karl Marx, Preface to the second edition (1869) of *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte: With Explanatory Notes* (New York: International Publishers, 1963), 8.

[80] *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed., vol. 12 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 606.

[81] Marx and Engels hardly define what the proletarian class is as an inborn, transcendental class. Rather, they outline how the proletariat has been generated out of the bourgeois capitalist system, and in what way the capitalist mode of production has structured labor and life. In *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (1848), Marx and Engels describes the proletariat as "the class of modern workers who live only so long as they find work, and who find work only so long as their labor increases capital. These workers, who must sell themselves piecemeal, are a commodity like any other article of commerce and equally exposed to all the vicissitudes of competition, to all the fluctuation of the market." Karl Marx, *Marx: Later Political Writings*, ed., and trans. Terrell Carver (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 7.

between the Roman *Proletarius* and the modern Proletariat suggests a different understanding of human reproduction. In the capitalist society, the proletariat which once used to represent fertility is merely reduced to the means of creating surplus value for the capitalist. From the capitalist's view, the maintenance and human reproduction of the proletariat is necessary only to the extent that the proletariat continues to work, producing new value beyond their exchange-value of labor power, namely wage. The individual workers' consumption to satisfy one's need beyond the necessary minimum for their subsistence is simply represented as "unproductive." Viewed in this light, the human reproduction of the proletariat lies on this "representational" distinction between productive and unproductive.

However, "representation" as signification is inevitably linked with that as a political representative. In other words, when it comes to the reproduction of the modern proletariat, critical questions to be raised would be "what kind of social relationships are involved with this specific representation of reproduction, and in what sense is human reproduction bound up with productivity?"[82] According to Marx,

[82] In regard to this, Marx describes the entanglement of signification and political representative in representing the "productive or unproductive" consumption of the workers on the one hand, and the effect of the representation on the other as follows. "[Both] the capitalist and his ideologist, the political economist, consider only that part [the necessary minimum] of the worker's individual consumption to be productive which is required for the perpetuation of the working class, and which therefore must take place in order that the capitalist may have labor-power to consume. What the worker consumes over and above that minimum for his own pleasure is seen as unproductive consumption … In reality, the individual consumption of the worker is unproductive even from his own point of view, for it simply reproduces the needy individual; it is productive to the capitalist and to the state, since it is the production of a force which produces wealth for other people." As Marx points out, there is a certain gap between the representation of workers' productivity and its reality. Further, the gap is hardly a void space, but indicates a power relationship which operates between the capitalist and the state on one side, and the proletariat on the other. Specifically, what facilitates this power relationship is the constant conversion of workers' individual consumption into productive one by limiting the value of labor-power to the necessary minimum for their subsistence, and labeling it as "productive." Here, the "necessary minimum" is independent of the workers' individual need or desire. However, it is a substantial mechanism of the constant, voluntary inflow of the workers into the labor market, and

the relative surplus labor is a "necessary product of accumulation" on a capitalist basis as well as a "condition of existence of the capitalist mode of production," which constantly forms a "disposable industrial reserve army."[83] Insofar as the fertility of the proletariat supplies human resources for the capitalist mode of production, the system can continue exploiting this reserve army. Hence, the human reproduction of the proletariat, even if it occurs outside the process of production, is already within the capitalist system, and functions as a crucial lever in the accumulation of capital. Here, another contrast between the Roman slave and the modern wage-laborer keenly reflects the life of the proletariat as it is structured by capitalist social relations: "The Roman slave was held by chains; the wage-laborer is bound to his owner by invisible threads."[84]

The history of the proletarian birth control movement in Japan between the 1920s and the mid 1930s shows the representation of human reproduction of the proletariat under capitalism. Since the early 1920s in Japan, the influx of contraceptive technology ushered in a new way of thinking about human reproduction: Previously a matter of uncontrolled nature, human reproduction became an issue linked to controllable bodies. How did this radical change in the ways of representing reproduction impact socioeconomic conditions of Interwar Japanese society? Rethinking reproduction on the basis of scientific authority gave socialist intellectuals and proletarian activists a new strategy of class struggle. By integrating scientific knowledge and technology regarding birth control into the proletarian movement, pro-

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eventually the constant production and reproduction of surplus value for the capitalist. Marx, *Capital*, 718-719.

[83] Ibid., 784.

[84] Ibid., 719.

birth control class activists strove to challenge the capitalist representation of surplus labor and thus, ultimately, overturn the exploitation of workers. For the activists, controlled human reproduction did not merely mean controlling the number of births; activists also sought to increase the life quality of the proletarian class. Another scientific tool the proletarian movement mobilized in its attempts to refashion reproduction was eugenics, a comprehensive mixture of scientific ideas and methods for the purpose of studying genetic and environmental influences on human quality. The newly coined term "proletarian eugenics (*musansha yūseigaku*)," and the operation of "eugenic consultation center (*yūsei sōdansho*)" by proletarian parties in the early 1930s exemplify the convergence of the class movement and eugenics.

Both birth control and eugenics refashioned the ways in which the proletarian movement thought about reproduction. Reproduction was no longer a means of capitalist exploitation, but a defensive weapon to be wielded for the class struggle. Thus, the proletarian movement reshaped the practice of birth control and eugenics as a science for the proletarian class. The class movement and science came to redefine each other in the process of utilizing the scientific technology of controlling reproduction for the class struggle. Moreover, the conjunction between the proletarian movement, birth control, and eugenics during the interwar period blurred a series of distinctions between politics and science, superstructure and base, and class and sex.

While being attentive to these blurred categories, this chapter traces the social and intellectual history of the proletarian birth control movement in interwar Japan. The history of pro-birth control proletarian movement is largely divided into three periods: the first period (1922-1924) was characterized by the sexologist Yamamoto

Senji's efforts for sexual enlightenment and the foundation of the Birth Control Research Society (*Sanji Seigen Kenkyūkai*, hereafter *Seigenkai*); the second period (1925-1929) involves the justification of birth control based on the Marxist critique of capitalism; and the third period (1930-1933) brought clinic-based, practical actions for propagating contraception and eugenics. While exploring the shifting forms of the proletarian birth control movement, I repeatedly raise the following questions: How did science function as a critique of capitalism and a means of the working class revolution? How did birth control and eugenics redefine reproduction and sex, and how did this redefinition impact the class movement?

The birth of the proletarian birth control movement

A budding biologist and sexologist Yamamoto Senji[85] published a pamphlet titled *the Critique of Ms. Sanger's Family Limitation* (hereafter the *Critique*) in May 1922. The pamphlet was a Japanese translation of *Family Limitation* written by Margaret Sanger in 1914. Despite his intention to introduce rather than criticize

[85] Yamamoto Senji (1889-1929) was a biologist, sexologist, labor activist, and politician in Japan in the early twentieth century. Originally born in Kyoto, Yamamoto grew up surrounded by the Protestantism of Kyoto Congregational Church and immersed himself in horticulture in his teenage years. His earlier belief in religion and interest in horticulture waned gradually during his stay in Vancouver, Canada where he learned about Darwin's evolution theory and Unitarian Universalism. The liberal nature of the Unitarian Church specifically attracted Yamamoto in terms of reconciling his religious beliefs and his interest in scientific truth. Five years in Canada (since 1907) led Yamamoto turn to biology, and eventually in 1917, he entered Tokyo Imperial University to study Zoology. His scholarly career as a biologist and sexologist began when he became a lecturer in Dōshisha and Kyoto Imperial University in 1920, and underwent a dramatic change over the next decade. After participating in the birth control movement since 1922, he actively engaged in various fields including public and university lectures on sexology, birth control movement, journal publishing, working class education, and the proletarian party activity until he was stabbed to death by the right-wing in March 1929. This chapter specifically traces Yamamoto's last decade in which he strove to bridge the academy and society, science and politics, and sexual and class issues. Sasaki Toshiji's two-volume biography *Yamamoto Senji* (Kyoto: Chōbunsha, 1974) provides a thick description of Yamamoto's personal life along with historical background. Sabine Frühstück also gives a detailed account of Yamamoto's scholarly activities, highlighting his work on sexology. See Frühstück, *Colonizing Sex*, 83-100.

Sanger's birth control movement into Japan, Yamamoto advertently included a "critique" in the title to avoid censorship. The arbitrary character of Japanese censorship laws during the Taishō period (1912-1926) simultaneously restricted the freedom of press and left the door open for evading for censorship laws under the pretext of academic purpose.[86] Yamamoto clearly understood the arbitrariness of the censorship laws. Although the publication and distribution of a pamphlet on the subject of sex was considered a violation of "manners and morals (*fūzoku*)" under the Publication Law of 1893, the Home Ministry administration showed relative leniency to academic work. Using this loophole, Yamamoto published the first edition of the *Critique* and distributed two thousand copies to medical professionals and university professors.

The *Critique* marked a watershed event for Yamamoto's manifold ventures as a scientist-cum-political activist for the next decade up until his death in 1929. Despite the various governmental restrictions that impeded the open discussion of sexual matters in the press, Yamamoto was able to raise questions around "sexual enlightenment (*seiteki keimōshugi*)" through his publication of the *Critique*. The phrase "sexual enlightenment" sums up Yamamoto's peculiar understanding of sex.

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[86] There were mainly two laws concerning administrative control of the press during the prewar period: the Publication Law (*Shuppan-hō*) of 1893 and the Newspaper Law (*Shinbunshi-hō*) of 1909. The former was targeted at general publication including books, pamphlets, and leaflets whereas the latter covered general newspapers and periodical publication. In the rise of radical thought and publications peddling radical socialism since the late 1910s, liberal government and bureaucrats of the Home Ministry utilized the censorship laws primarily to suppress "dangerous thought." Although neither censorship laws stipulated an obvious definition of dangerous thought, the arbitrary standard of the violation of "public order (*anne chitsujo*)" and "morals and manners" legitimized the administrative suppress of radical political thought and obscenity. The intensified control of the press during the Taishō period typifies the duplicity of Taishō democracy in terms of the governmental regulation of radical ideas under the veneer of liberalism. As for censorship in Japan during the Taishō period, see Richard H. Mitchell, *Censorship in imperial Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 172-253; Gregory James Kasza, *The state and the mass media in Japan, 1918-1945* (University of California Press, 1988), 28-53.

Yamamoto conceptualized sex as a general biological phenomena of human subject, and as a knowable, controllable object of science.

This twofold understanding of sex was already present in Yamamoto's studies of sexology from the beginning of his scholarly career. Immediately after graduating from the department of science of Tokyo Imperial University in 1920, Yamamoto began to teach an introductory natural science course under the title "the biology of human life (*jinsei seibutsugaku*)" at Dōshisha University, Kyoto. In his lectures, Yamamoto brought a new light to biology, proclaiming that "the biology of human life" should provide "knowledge closely bound to our view of life and practical life."[87] Among the varied phenomena of daily life, Yamamoto regarded sex as a central element of human biology. In unique approach to human reproduction, Yamamoto argued against the conventional and medical understandings of sex as pathological or abnormal, and described sex as a "critical function to be experienced by normal individuals day and night for the preservation of the human species."[88]

Given his emphasis on sex in human biology, it was not surprising that Yamamoto became deeply engaged in sexology and sex education. For him, sex was not only a common activity of the human species, but more importantly a natural phenomenon that should be studied, appropriately controlled, and explicated

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[87] In April, 1921, Yamamoto collected and published the contents of his lecture "the biology of human life" at Doshisha University for the purpose of textbook use. This textbook included the purpose of the lecture, Yamamoto's personal opinion on sex education, a bibliography on the biology of human life, and a course outline. The opinion on sex education and course outline particularly allow us to glimpse of sexology as the central theme of Yamamoto's studies of biology. Yamamoto used this sexology-centered biology textbook also in his lectures at Shinano Free University (*Jiyū daigaku*) and the Osaka and Kyoto Labor School (*Rōdō gakko*). See, Yamamoto Senji, "Jinsei seibutsugaku shōin (The introduction of the biology of human life)," in *Yamamoto Senji zenshū* (The complete works of Yamamoto Senji), ed. Toshiji Sasaki et al., vol. 1 (Tokyo: Chōbunsha, 1979), 47-140.

[88] Ibid., 54.

scientifically. Thus, Yamamoto sharply criticized the prevailing attitude of "sexual obscurantism (*seiteki inpeishugi*)" among intellectuals—a stand that, Yamamoto argued, hindered the general public from obtaining a scientific understanding of intimate sexual matters, and made it more difficult for the public to practice self-control in a rational way. Yamamoto's claim of "sexual enlightenment" was a counteraction to "sexual obscurantism," the general intellectuals' unwilling attitude toward the spread of sex knowledge. Yamamoto particularly criticized the educated class (*chishiki kaikyū*) for monopolizing scientific knowledge while blocking general public's access to necessary knowledge.[89] Hence, Yamamoto emphasized sex education in his lectures on human biology, and explained that the purpose of sex education was "to show individuals the human aspects of the problems they face, and to provide people with enough scientific knowledge to prevent them from encountering an unexpected danger and to publicize the difficulties of controlling blind instinct in a rational self-controlled manner, and by doing so, to help people foster self-awareness, self-respect, and self-control."[90] In Yamamoto's view, sex education was an effective medium for educating ordinary people about their own lives as sexual beings. Needless to say, his lecture "the biology of human life," was one of his initial efforts to awaken young students from sexual ignorance.

Yamamoto strove to expand his earlier efforts aimed at teaching his students about sexual enlightenment to "the masses (*minshū*)." The turning point came with his involvement in encouraging the use of birth control through the *Critique* in 1922.

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[89] See Yamamoto's article "Seiteki inpeishugi no tameni okiru heigai no ichirei (An example of harmful effect from sexual obscurantism)," *Nihon to Nihonjin* (Japan and Japanese), September 1922. The article is reprinted in *Yamamoto Senji zenshū*, vol. 3, 99-113.
[90] Yamamoto, "Jinsei seibutsugaku shōin," 59-60.

When Sanger visited Japan on the invitation of the *Kaizō* publishing company in March and April, Yamamoto interviewed Sanger and translated Sanger's lecture at Kyoto-city Medical Association.[91] In agreement with her radical demand for the distribution of scientific knowledge about contraception among working-class women, Yamamoto translated Sanger's pamphlet, *Family Limitation*, to encourage social discussion of the pressing issue of birth control, which was attracting more attention after Sanger's visit. *Family Limitation* presented mostly technical information about available contraceptives including coitus interruptus, douches, condoms, pessaries, sponges, and vaginal suppositories. Since the concept of contraception was not well known and home hygiene was underdeveloped in Japan at the time, Yamamoto wrote and included a lengthy comment alongside the contraceptive devices Sanger listed in her original text. Yamamoto's additional commentary was divided into two parts: the social and scientific legitimacy of contraception, and the increasing need for educating the masses about proper contraceptive methods. To emphasize the legitimacy of birth control, Yamamoto maintained that:

> The overproduction of living species may lead to the self-destruction of the species. We, as the lord of creation capable of reason, discretion, and foresight, can prevent degeneration and self-destruction—social, national, familial—if our ideals are fulfilled: by selecting good sperm under favorable conditions if possible, and then, satisfying human instinct for the preservation of our species, or the eternal life of human beings.[92]

According to Yamamoto, the time was already ripe for "selecting good sperm." Contraception, the only safe, scientific way of birth control, was not only a means for

[91] Yamamoto Senji, "Sanga joshi kazoku seigen-hō hihan (The critique of Ms. Sanger's *Family Limitation*)," in *Yamamoto Senji zenshū*, vol. 3, 26.
[92] Ibid., 56.

preventing the reckless production of children, but also for improving hereditary factors and environmental conditions for the masses. In view of this, it seems clear that Yamamoto found a new reason for encouraging sexual enlightenment through birth control. Birth control could provide the masses with an alternative way of preventing an unwanted pregnancy, and moreover, birth control was a proper technology easily used in daily life.

The "sexual enlightenment" of the masses was an attempt to constitute a self-knowing subject, particularly a subject who was aware of one's own sexual being. The underlying assumption of enlightenment was that the masses would understand themselves as sexual beings and autonomously control their fertility. However, there was still some vagueness in the concept of "the masses." Educating the masses about sexology and birth control could hardly be a sufficient way to foster self-awareness and self-control in their sexual lives. In reality, enlightenment and self-constitution was entangled with material conditions. A chasm developed between those who had access to sexual education and those who did not. Moreover, not everyone could afford the necessary contraceptive devices. Thus, "the masses" Yamamoto intended to "sexually enlighten" would remain a vague and abstract group if Yamamoto did not take material conditions into account.

Although governmental barriers hindered the circulation of information about birth control among the general public, Yamamoto's pamphlet the *Critique* ended up reaching the outside of intellectual circles. This was neither accidental, nor entirely intentional. A printing house worker, who printed Yamamoto's pamphlet at the workshop, told Mitamura Shirō, a Bolshevist and one of the leading members of the

Japan Federation of Labor (*Nihon rōdō kumiai sōdōmei*, abbreviated to *Sōdōmei*) in Osaka about the *Critique*.[93] Inspired by Yamamoto's pamphlet, Mitamura suggested Yamamoto work to promote birth control among the working class. The collaboration between Shirō, a labor union leader and Yamamoto, a sexologist, resulted in the publication of a popular edition of the *Critique* in December 1922.[94] Two thousand copies of popular edition with a top secret stamp on it were circulated among Kansai area workers. Thus, Yamamoto's pamphlet facilitated a growing consensus about the pressing need for birth control particularly among working-class families.

In January 1923, this growing consensus bore fruit: *Seigenkai*, the first leftist birth control group in Japan, was founded in Osaka. The membership of *Seigenkai* reflects the group's creation through collaborative efforts of labor activists and scientists. In addition to Yamamoto and Mitamura, the members of the Osaka affiliate of the Japan Federation of Labour (Nihon Rōdō Sōdōmei, hereafter *Sōdōmei*) including Noda Ritsuta, Noda Kimiko (Noda's wife), Ōya Shōzo, and Kuzumi Fusako, and a physician and Yamamoto's cousin, Yasuda Tokutarō participated in organizing *Seigenkai*. Within a month, several branches of *Seigenkai* were established in Nagoya, Kyoto, Kobe, Okayama, and other areas within Kansai.[95]

Seigenkai's main channel for propagating birth control was a public lecture. As opposed to printed materials which could potentially violate censorship laws, a public lecture was a legitimate and relatively efficient way to educate a popular audience

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[93] Sasaki Toshiji, *Yamamoto Senji*, vol.1, 303.
[94] Yamamoto Senji, "A personal letter to Margaret Sanger," April 1923. In this letter, Yamamoto gave a detailed update on the process of the birth control group organization and the general situation of birth control movement in Japan. This letter is reprinted in *Yamamoto Senji zenshū*, vol. 7, 145-155.
[95] Ibid., 146.

about birth control technologies. No sooner was *Seigenkai* founded than the group held its first public lecture at the YMCA Hall in Kobe. A second lecture was held at the Osaka Grand Municipal Hall. These two public lectures, which attracted 400 and 1,000 people respectively, also drew considerable media attention.[96] *The Osaka Asahi Newspaper* carried a series of articles which cast a positive light on the labor union's involvement in the birth control movement and its well-attended lectures.[97] Meanwhile, the *Osaka Mainichi Newspaper*, another major newspaper in Kansai, responded to *Seigenkai*'s activity with a critical editorial on contraception.[98] These two contrasting responses reflected a broader debate among contemporary intellectuals over how to solve social problems and class conflicts. While the *Asahi* articles represented a socialist stance which favored birth control as a way to alleviate the sufferings of lower class families, the *Mainichi* spoke for a pronatalist group that supported either the buildup of national strength or parental morality. This controversy on the media eventually had a promotional effect for *Seigenkai*'s birth control movement.[99] Considering the pressure of censorship, it is not surprising that

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[96] In addition, several public lectures led by Yamamoto continued in between February and April. Under the pretext of sex education, Yamamoto gave lectures on the use of contraceptive devices mainly to school teachers and college students in Matsue, Tottori, Kyoto, and Kochi. Ibid., 151-152.

[97] *The Osaka Asahi Shimbun* (Newspaper), the former *Asahi Shimbun*, was one of the major newspapers in Kansai region and known as its left-leaning opinions. *The Shimbun* was attentive to the ongoing birth control movement in Kansai region led by the Labor Union leaders, favorably reporting *Seigenkai*'s argument and its propagation activity. The published articles include "Sanji seigen no jissai undō: Kansai no rōdō kumiai ni jukushita kiun, ko no shussan o osoreru hisanna jujitsu (The actual movement of birth control: the time is ripe for Kansai Labor Union, a miserable fact about people who fear of giving birth)," January 5, 1923; "Rōdō dantai no sanji seigen: jissai mondai ni totsunyu senden kōen ni dai ippo o (Labor Union's birth control movement: entered into actual problems with a first step to a propaganda lecture)," January 7, 1923; and editorial, "Sanji seigen no jissai undo (The actual movement of birth control)," January 10, 1923.

[98] Editorial, "Sanji seigen no senden (the propaganda for birth control)," *The Osaka Mainichi Shimbun,* March 13, 1923.

[99] Later, Yamamoto recalled that *the Osaka Mainichi Shimbun*'s attacks on birth control proved "an efficient advertisement" for the group. Yamamoto, "A personal letter to Margaret Sanger," 146.

Seigenkai reacted favorably to the newspapers becoming an indirect outlet to propagate their ideas.

Then, what were the main ideas *Seigenkai* were propagating? The collaboration between labor activists and scientists did not lead to a simple reiteration of Yamamoto's argument for sexual enlightenment. The fact that *Seigenkai* specified the proletarian class as its intended audience, as opposed to "the masses," Yamamoto's previous abstract audience, suggests that birth control was discussed in an altered context. Put another way, birth control as a part of the sexual enlightenment for the masses was replaced with birth control for the proletarian class. *Seigenkai*'s effort to reframe birth control was primarily centered on the critique of class divisions in the capitalist mode of production. In this reframing of reproduction, the proletarian class was expected to be a self-conscious agent who would practice contraception to tackle the structural contradiction of capitalism.

In May 1923, Noda Kimiko, one of the founders of *Seigenkai*, published a pamphlet "*Sanji seigen kenkyū* (The study of birth control)."[100] This pamphlet summarizes the ways in which *Seigenkai* incorporated birth control into the proletarian movement based on the Marxist critique of capitalism. First and foremost, *Sengenkai* distinguished its support of birth control from Neo-Malthusian theories. *Sengenkai* denounced the theoretical basis of Neo-Malthusianism, namely Malthus' principle of population, for its failure to grasp the underlying cause of poverty. In opposition to Neo-Malthusianism that attributed the root cause of poverty to excess population outgrowing food supplies, Noda attributed the root cause of poverty to the economic

[100] Noda Kimiko, *Sanji seigen kenkyū* (The study of birth control) (Sanji Seigen Kenkyūkai, 1923). The pamphlet is reprinted in *Sei to seishoku no jinken mondai*, vol. 2, 202-213.

structure of capitalism. Noda noted that "the capitalist system based on private ownership of the means of production conditions unfair ways of production and distribution."[101] According to this view, as long as the bourgeois class—including the landed class—monopolized the means of production and produced profitable commodities by exploiting proletarian labor force, simply putting a brake on population growth would not eradicate poverty. For *Seigenkai*, the Malthusian advocates who represented overpopulation as an absolute fact, as well as a social evil, were in collusion with the capitalists. Protected by Malthusian theories, capitalists continued to generate the exploitable labor force, what Marx calls "industrial reserve army," whose poverty, hunger, and misery enriched the capitalist class.[102]

Nevertheless, *Seigenkai* members attempted to encourage the proletarian class to practice contraception, as they phrased it "scientific artificial birth control (*kagakuteki jinkō sanji seigen hō*)" in favor of it. Thus, birth control became a defensive solution for various problems, such as poverty, illness, and the high infant mortality rate of the proletarian class. In the pamphlet, Noda argues that:

> It is most necessary and appropriate to control too many pregnancies to help relieve the proletariat from poverty and reduce their burden, because for the proletariat, poverty is the problem at hand. Even though poverty is the product of capitalism, there is no need to put up with its faulty system.[103]

In contrast to the Neo-Malthusian position that birth control was the ultimate solution

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[101] Ibid., 10.

[102] Marx, *Capital*, 793. Marx highlights the relative surplus population that forms a disposable industrial army under the capitalist mode of production. According to him, the surplus laboring population is independent of absolute surplus population, but is affected by the expansion of capital that continuously sets free exploitable population. Here the "industrial reserve army" is an unsettled, precarious category because this despotic work of capitalism which constantly shifts the boundaries of employment, half-employment, and unemployment for the self-expansion of capital.

[103] Noda, *Sanji seigen kenkyū*, 16.

to poverty, *Seigenkai* members viewed birth control as a necessary, if incomplete, defense against capitalism. Insofar as the capitalist system prevailed, birth control could function as an individual defense against poverty. Moreover, birth control could help defend the proletariat class in general by preventing those burdened with too many children from dropping out of the class war.[104] This argument for defending the lower classes, worked to counter the concerns of socialists who worried that contraception would weaken proletarian class consciousness. Those who were against the use of contraception among the proletarian class identified birth control with bourgeois class interests. By countering the argument that birth control was bourgeois, *Seigenkai* gave a new class identity to birth control; birth control became the means of self-defense for the proletariat.

Viewed in this light, *Seigenkai*'s slogan for "birth control for the proletarian class" raised a series of broader questions about the capitalist system, the illusion of overpopulation, and socialists' rigid economic determinism. Simply put, birth control was a class issue for *Seigenkai*. Their new understanding of reproduction as a controllable biological phenomenon facilitated a critique of the capitalist structure that exploited an ever-increasing proletarian labor force. *Seigenkai*'s stance also altered the representation of human reproduction from being an economic burden to being a defense strategy for the proletarian class. Thus, what began as "sexual enlightenment for the masses" developed into a defensive weapon wielded for the proletarian class.

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[104] Yamamoto Senji also mentioned the importance of birth control in the class movement. He criticized the messianic stance of some labor activists in their pursuit of the revolution while neglecting immediate problems encountered by the proletariat, metaphorically speaking "what those who are suffering really need is rather a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." Yamamoto Senji, "Sanji chōsetsu hyōron kara sei to shakai e (From *the Birth Control Review* to *Sex and Society*) 1," *Sei to shakai* (Sex and society) 9 (1925): 13.

Theorizing birth control: eugenics for the proletariat, proletarianizing science

The reframing of birth control in the name of class in the early 1920s was the beginning step of proletarian birth control in Japan. Although the proletarian birth control movement continued to utilize birth control as a means for criticizing capitalism, there were still various ideological, theoretical and moral controversies over the legitimacy of birth control. Different perspectives were raised from Neo-Malthusianism, anti-birth control socialism, pronatalist nationalism, and anti-birth control moralist or religious perspectives. Since the mid-1920s, proletarian birth control advocates worked to theorize their perspectives toward birth control while they tackled a number of other controversies which erupted both inside and outside working class organizations. The proletarian birth control movement never crystalized into a final unchanging form; it was always in the making and shifted as it responded to different political and ideological terrains. As I explain below, the proletarian birth control movement reveals the intertwined relationship between science and politics as well as the complex connections between sex and class.

In February 1925, *Seigenkai* published the first issue of *Sanji Seigen Hyōron* (hereafter *Hyōron*), a monthly magazine for birth control research and propaganda.[105] Since its founding, *Seigenkai* organized one-time or short-term lectures to encourage working class people to use contraception. The group also recruited members

[105] *Sanji Seigen Hyōron* was published between February 1925 and May 1926, a total of 14 issues. The chief editor was Yamamoto, and contributing writers included Yamamoto himself, Yasuda Tokutarō, a Neo-Malthusian, Fabian socialist Abe Isoo, a medical doctor who managed People's Hospital (*Heimin byōin*) in Tokyo, Kaji Tokijirō, the president of *Sōdōmei* Suzuki Bunji, a medical doctor who also ran People's Hospital in Osaka, Katō Tokiya, a commissioned (*shokutaku*) medical doctor of Tokyo Municipal Social Affairs Bureau (*Shakaikyoku*) Majima Kan, and a eugenicist and social work theorist Unno Yukinori. The title of the magazine changed to *Sei to shakai* (Sex and society) from the ninth issue, October 1925. The whole issues were reprinted in 1983 (Tokyo: Fuji Shuppan, 1983).

throughout the Japanese empire and in the beginning of 1925, *Seigenkai* had 5,000 members.[106] To improve communication with these members, Yamamoto took the leading role in publishing a monthly magazine that dealt with issues around birth control ranging from academic discussions on birth control to informative contents on contraceptive methods and sexual matters in general. As the title of the magazine suggests, the *Hyōron* was largely influenced by the *Birth Control Review* published and edited by Sanger since 1917. Yamamoto, a committed subscriber of the *Birth Control Review*, attempted to imitate its comprehensive character—topical, scholarly, and popular—while creating an original tone and content which spoke to the legitimacy of birth control on "proletarian" grounds.

In their efforts to legitimize birth control, the editors of the *Hyōron* emphasized the themes of science and class. In a series of articles, the *Hyōron* proffered plausible answers to its fundamental question "why is birth control necessary?" Many contributing authors used the language of science and class consciousness to argue against persistent social conventions. Science was a new value that displaced arguments for parental responsibility and the laws of nature. The proletarian laborer, who had suffered under capitalist exploitation, became the new subject who should practice birth control. Thus, the theorization of birth control as seen in the *Hyōron* centered on questions of reframing reproduction through birth control in order to ensure the scientific reproduction of the proletarian class.

It should be noted that "science" does not merely refer to a modern discipline or the objective knowledge of nature. As Foucault's term "modern episteme" denotes,

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[106] Kanda Ryūichi (The Birth Control Research Society in Osaka), "Osaka no sanji seigen undo (The birth control movement in Osaka)," *Sanji seigen hyōron* 1 (February 1925): 26-27.

modern knowledge, either social or natural science, is bound up with a certain episteme which serves as the "positive ground of knowledge" and constitutes "man's particular mode of being and the possibility of knowing him empirically."[107] The notions "science" or "scientific (*kagakuteki*)" were frequently used in the birth control debates of the 1920s, and were inexorably linked with specific historical, epistemological conditions of knowledge. On one hand, science signified the regime of biological truth, that is a systemic process of establishing the truth about human bodies. In this regime of scientific truth, the human being was simultaneously a truth-knower and a to-be-known object. On the other, science signified its effect, or the goal of human progress by discovering, conquering, and controlling the object of knowledge. Therefore, "scientific birth control," as a shared vision of the *Hyōron*, pointed to the progress of human bodies based on the objective knowledge of reproduction.

Viewed in this light, it is no surprise that many authors of the *Hyōron* chose eugenics (*yūseigaku*) as one of the significant principles of scientific birth control. As Diane Paul keenly observes, eugenics has been "a protean concept" which has been easily bonded with humanitarian politics, or its goal for biological progress.[108] The bond between socialism and eugenics was strengthened internationally in the name of "human progress" during the interwar period. Socialists—including Marxian socialists, Fabianists, and Bolshevists—viewed eugenics, not as the pure science of genetic

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[107] Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage Books, 1973), 420-421.
[108] Diane B. Paul, *Controlling Human Heredity: 1865 to the Present* (Amherst: Humanity Books, 1998), 19.

determinism, but as a practical science for improving the quality of human stock.[109]

Japanese socialists were not an exception in this international wave of interest in eugenics among the socialist groups. Yamamoto, the chief editor of the *Hyōron*, was a representative figure who stressed the eugenic value of the birth control practice. Yamamoto believed that birth control led to human physical improvement ever since he began to engage in the birth control movement. His comment on "self-awareness based eugenics (*Jikaku no ueni taterarubeki yūseigaku*)" found in the *Critique* pamphlet illuminates his peculiar understanding of eugenics. Yamamoto claimed:

> In terms of euthenics and eugenics, their goals cannot be achieved without social well-being built on people's self-awareness based knowledge and their sense of responsibility in addition to the legal means for natural selection of the inferiors (i.e. castration or ovariotomy of congenital criminals and mental patients). … Hence, people's own discretion is essential to improve their physical constitution. Without it, however good the government is, excellent the laws are, or wise and diligent the authorities are, the goal for physical improvement is unachievable.[110]

Yamamoto uses the concept of eugenics in two senses: euthenics and eugenics. Euthenics, as Yamamoto translated it into *gense kaizengaku* (the study of improving this life), was concerned with the social and environmental conditions that could impact a person's physical and mental health. Eugenics, or *raise kaizengaku* (the study of improving next life), on the other hand, was associated with genetic conditions and hereditary traits. These two terms show Yamamoto's complex understanding of

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[109] As to the historical relationship between leftism and eugenics, see Diane B. Paul, "Eugenics and the Left," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 45 (1984): 567–590; Mark B. Adams, "The Politics of Human Heredity in the USSR, 1920–1940," *Genome* 31 (1989): 879–84; Alberto Spektorowski, "The Eugenic Temptation in Socialism: Sweden, Germany, and the Soviet Union," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 46 (2004): 84–106.

[110] Yamamoto, "Sanga joshi kazoku seigen-hō hihan," 73.

hereditary factors, and acknowledge both the environmental and the genetic influences on human development. However, this indeterminable nature of eugenics spurred Yamamoto on to pursue scientific research on the quality of human traits rather than question the validity of eugenic science. Instead of the "nature or nurture" debate, Yamamoto's focus was on the question of how to enlighten people regarding scientific ways to improve their own physical and mental quality. In this sense, Yamamoto's "self-awareness based eugenics" was grounded in scientific enlightenment. This reveals the irony of "self-awareness," which had to be built on given knowledge, or more specifically, a given ordering of the knowledge object. In the same vein, eugenics presumed knowledge of one's own body based on a hierarchical ordering of human traits and characteristics.

During the interwar years, there was an international consensus among birth control advocates that contraception use would result in race betterment. The *Hyōron* functioned as a vehicle for introducing the eugenic value of birth control—an argument used by birth control advocates in Europe and America—to Japanese audiences.[111] For example, Yamamoto wrote on the Society for Constructive Birth Control and Racial Progress (C.B.C) founded by Marie Stopes in 1921, with Japanese

[111] Historically, eugenics has had double-sided character, positive and negative eugenics. While the former has been concerned with ideas or movements to increase the population with "good" genes, the latter has related to those discouraging the population with "bad" genes from producing offspring. A British statistician, Francis Galton defined eugenics as "the science of improving stock, which is by no means confined to questions of judicious mating, but which, especially in the case of man, takes cognizance of all influences that tend in however remote a degree to give to the more suitable races or strains of blood a better chance of prevailing speedily over the less suitable than they otherwise would have had." This definition clearly reveals the inherent ambiguity of eugenics. Francis Galton, *Inquiries Into Human Faculty and Its Development* (London: Macmillan and co., 1883), 24-25.

translation of the Society's leaflets.[112] Marie Stopes was a British birth control activist who encouraged people to practice contraception from the viewpoint of "positive eugenics." The C.B.C, as its name implies, upheld birth control for wise parenthood to protect the child's and mother's health, and ultimately, for racial progress while denouncing the Neo-Malthusian claim that contraception was mainly aimed at controlling the population size.[113] The dissociation of birth control from Neo-Malthusian arguments about population control marked the difference between the British constructive birth control movement from its Neo-Malthusian counterpart. Agreeing with Stopes' view of constructive birth control, Yamamoto questioned the effectiveness of birth control to decrease the total population.[114]

A British eugenicist and sexologist, Havelock Ellis was another influential source for the *Hyōron*'s reframing of birth control on the basis of positive eugenics. To the Japanese proletarian birth control activists, it was more appealing to place greater emphasis on the quality of the population. The eugenics-based claim for "quality over quantity" strengthened the legitimacy of birth control, and distanced

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[112] Yamamoto wrote a series of articles introducing the Society for Constructive Birth Control and Racial Progress with his translation of the Society's advertisement leaflets. These articles titled "Kensetsu teki sanji chōsetsu to wa donna mono ka (What is "constructive birth control)" were published in *Sanji seigen hyōron* 1 (Feb 1925): 3-6, and 2 (Mar 1925): 12-16.

[113] Since launching the C.B.C., Stopes continuously emphasized differences between Neo-Malthusianism and constructive birth control movement despite her membership of the Malthusian League, a British organization founded in 1877. In a monthly newsletter *Birth Control News* published by Stopes herself, she made a remark that the primary goal of the C.B.C was "to bring home to all the fundamental nature of the reforms involved in conscious and constructive control of conception and the illumination of sex life as a basis of racial progress." Also, she added that this goal clearly differed from that of the Malthusian League, that is, "to spread a knowledge of the law of population." Marie Stopes, "Differences between the Malthusian League and the C.B.C.: What are they?" *Birth Control News* (July 1922): 4.

[114] In one of his articles on the C.B.C, Yamamoto recounted an anecdote about his private correspondence with Stopes. According to this anecdote, it was Stopes who made him to dissociate birth control and Neo-Malthusianism. He acknowledged that he had heretofore failed to distinguish birth control from Neo-Malthusianism without verifying the actual effectiveness of contraception on limiting population. Ibid., 16.

birth control advocacy from the Neo-Malthusian position which was considered bourgeois ideology. Ellis was sympathetic to birth control on the grounds that conception control could contribute to an increase in the quality of citizens, and thus, the advancement of the nation. The following passage taken from Ellis's writings exemplifies his belief that birth control was as a scientific means for national progress:

> The demand of national efficiency thus corresponds with the demand of developing humanitarianism, which, having begun by attempting to ameliorate the conditions of life, has gradually begun to realize that it is necessary to go deeper and to ameliorate life itself. … [The] more searching analysis of evil environmental conditions only serves to show that in large parts they are based in the human organism itself and were not only pre-natal, but pre-conceptional, being involved in the quality of the parental or ancestral organisms.[115]

Ellis' reframing of reproduction was deeply intertwined with nationalism, humanitarianism, and scientific progress. Ellis deemed that birth control would radically replace natural selection, once considered irreversible human condition, with artificial selection for a better human life, and a more advanced nation. In other words, the predictability and manipulability of reproduction would become new human condition in which human and national progress is expressed only in a biological form. As opposed to Neo-Malthusianism that centers on the political economic calculations of the population size, this biological viewpoint focused on the enrichment of the quality of life, by improving either the genetic or the environmental conditions of life. The biological representation of human progress, or conversely, the humanitarian,

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[115] Havelock Ellis, *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, vol. 6, (Philadelphia: F. A. Davis, 1910), accessed February 20, 2016, http://www.gutenberg.org/files/13615/13615-8.txt. The chapter 7 of the book, titled "the procreation of science" was translated and serially published in the *Hyōron* from no. 7 to no. 13. Ellis' writing was the most frequently translated in the *Hyōron*. His essays introduced in the *Hyōron* include "The Objects of Marriage" (1920) "Children and Parents" (1922) in no.4, "The Love-Rights of Women" (1918) in no. 5, and "The play-function of sex" (1921) in no. 6.

nationalist representation of science, sums up the main thrust of positive eugenics.

The voices of these British birth control advocates on eugenic grounds were echoed by the Japanese proletarian birth control activists.[116] For them, translating Western eugenic views were an important part of theorizing birth control. In the re-contextualizing process or translation, eugenics and scientific procreation became indispensable and legitimate factors in the arguments of proletarian advocates. Through the *Hyōron*, Japanese advocates explicitly articulated how essential birth control was for creating eugenic value, or improving the race,[117] and how justifiable artificial selection was in creating the biological, medical, and sanitary conditions needed for healthy mothers and children.[118] Thus, contraception embodied a utopian view of human progress based on scientific development. Here, the underlying assumption that reproduction, as a part of nature should be dominated by science, put humanity in a paradoxical position. Humans belonged to nature and thus were an object of science on one hand, but, on the other hand, humans were a knowing subject who should control nature. However, this paradox remained unexamined while the idea of progress—the blending of scientific advancement and humanitarian reform—constantly justified scientific interventions into reproduction. Yamamoto compared

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[116] Another eugenic-based birth control advocates translated and introduced through the *Hyōron* include a Russian Bolshevist Alexandra Kollontai (no.1; no.3), an Irish critic and a member of Fabian Society, Bernard Shaw (no. 2), a Dutch medical practitioner Johannes Rutgers (no. 6), and Margaret Sanger (no. 7).

[117] For example, a socialist politician Koike Shirō explicitly criticized the blind spots of Malthusian theory, the unfair control of the means of production and the unequal distribution of products. Nevertheless, Koike stressed the pressing need for birth control for three reasons: first, from the eugenic viewpoint; second, a temporary solution to poverty; third, for mother's health and rights protection. Koike's emphasis on biological and environmental quality of human life is in accord with Ellis' claim for positive eugenics. Koike Shirō, "Jidai ni genwaku sare taru marusasu (Malthus, blinded by his time)," *Sei to shakai* 14 (May 1926): 18-24.

[118] Yamamoto Senji, "Sanji chōsetsu wa tenri ni somuku ka (Does birth control go against the law of nature?)" *Sei to shakai* 13 (March 1926): 18-23.

birth control to radio communication and modern technologies of transportation, on the grounds that "those are all based on the knowledge of nature, and a human privilege to obey and partly control nature." Thus, a paradox resides in the idea of progress.[119]

Meanwhile, there was another crucial factor in establishing the legitimacy of birth control in addition to eugenics and scientific procreation: class. As already discussed above, when proletarian birth control advocates were first organizing *Seigenkai*, they proclaimed that birth control was the proletariat's "self-defense" against the exploitative system of capitalism. This Marxist perspective remained unchanged in subsequent processes of theorizing. In response to *Seigenkai*'s initial critique of the Malthusian theory of population, some labor activists participated in the discussion of birth control from a class-based viewpoint. Tanizaki Zentarō, a Kyoto-based labor activist, actively criticized Neo-Malthusians who failed to see the illusory nature of overpopulation while representing the interest of bourgeois class. In opposition to Neo-Malthusianism, Tanizaki attempted to shift the association of birth control with bourgeois ideology to that of proletarian praxis. Insofar as the capitalist economic system continued, the proletariat would keep suffering from poverty, exploitation, and unemployment. Tanizaki stressed the exclusive use of birth control by the proletariat for a temporary self-defense on the premise that capitalism was a historically specific economic form. Tanizaki's class-based logic created a double

[119] Ibid., 23. Yamamoto's remark on birth control as one of the modern technologies also can be found in "*Rajio to sanji chōsetsu* (radio and birth control)," in *Yamamoto Senji zenshū*, vol. 3, 557–568. In this article, he opposed to those who considered contraception the violation of the course of nature, and maintained that contraceptive technology was a kind of modern preventive medicine which would bring happiness and stability to the masses.

standard in sexual ethics. Whereas the use of contraception by the bourgeois class was considered to be sexual licentiousness, the same practice by the proletarian class was a justifiable solution to economic problems.[120] This double-standard suggests that Tanizaki reaffirmed sexual ethics by limiting the purpose of sex to reproduction. Thus, the practice of birth control was only permitted when aimed at the liberation of the proletariat.

In a larger context, Tanizaki was reiterating the major argument of proletarian leaders who considered the proletarian class "desexualized." The majority of these leaders limited the discussion of birth control in economic and material issues, and excluded sexual concerns. An individual's sexual needs were not entirely ignored, but rather resigned to a hidden, private realm. In this way, socialist birth control advocates could embrace birth control as a part of the class movement without contaminating the proletariat class with "immoral" sex. The fact that both the Japan Farmer's Union (*Nihon Nōmin Kumiai*) and *Sōdōmei* turned down concrete proposals aimed at spreading birth control among the working class in 1925, exemplifies the general desexualization of the proletarian class.[121] Interestingly, Kuzumi Fusako, a delegate of *Sōdōmei* and a founding member of *Seigenkai*, played a key role in the labor union's rejection of birth control campaigns. After making this decision, Kuzumi explained why labor union delegates, including herself, objected to the proposal. She clarified that "the campaigns of *Sōdōmei* aim at improving working conditions and

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[120] Tanizaki Zentarō, "Musan kaikyū to sanji chōsetsu (The proletarian class and birth control)," *Sanji Chōsetsu Hyōron* 5 (June 1925): 41-45.

[121] In the 4th General Meeting of the Japan Famers Union in February 1925, the proposal for the "promotion of birth control (*sanji seigen shōrei-an*)" was not adopted. One month later, in the National Meeting of the Japan General Federation of Labor also rejected the proposal for birth control submitted by Inoue Suejirō from Kobe Association.

abolishing the wage system. In other words, *Sōdōmei* is an organization for the economic battle of the proletariat. And, birth control is simply a means of self-defense. Considering the numerous activities the labor union is currently committed to, we can hardly afford to campaign for birth control at a concrete organizational level."[122] Her remarks clearly illustrate how activities addressing sex and reproduction remained outside the boundaries of the economic base. This discursive desexualization of the working class exposed a contradiction: that is, sexual activity was necessary for the reproduction of proletariat, but the proletariat as a whole was largely desexualizaed.

Nevertheless, a few proponents of the proletarian birth control movement adopted different approaches to questions about "sex and class."[123] Especially Yamamoto, who once expanded the boundaries of his birth control concerns to include the enlightenment of the proletarian class, gradually came to recognize the socioeconomic dimensions of sex. Yamamoto's shifting understanding of sex in relation to a specific socioeconomic condition is seen in his move to rename the *Hyōron* as "*Sei to Shakai* (Sex and society)."

In an article explaining this editorial decision, Yamamoto maintained that "sexual relations in our human society are not merely a biological phenomenon; sex involves grave issues present in the basis of social systems." Yamamoto associated this recognition of the socioeconomic aspects of human sex with "a revolution in modes of thought (*Umwälzung der Denkweise*)." Here, revolution does not simply refer to a

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[122] Kuzumi Fusako, "Naniyueni wareware wa hantaishitaka: Sōdōmei taikai ni teishutsu sareshi BC an (Why did we object to the proposal for BC campaign submitted to the National Meeting of *Sōdōmei*?)," *Sanji Chōsetsu Hyōron* 4 (1925): 53.

[123] As a representative example, Yamakawa Kikue raised a criticizing voice within the proletarian birth control group. Her critique of the negligence of sex in economic determinism from a Marxist feminist viewpoint will be discussed in Chapter 4.

change in the content of thought, but a more fundamental change in the dominant bourgeois mode of classifying sex as obscene, private, and pathological. In Yamamoto's view, the revolution of sex had to begin with a revolution in the bourgeois representation of sex. As his pursuit of "proletarian sexology" implies, sex, for Yamamoto, was a key part of the working class movement insofar as bourgeois ruling ideology monopolized the truth of sex while concealing the historical and socioeconomic structure of sex.[124]

The *Sei to shakai* was discontinued in May 1926 due to financial difficulties and a rapid change in the proletarian movement. In the final issue of the magazine, Yamamoto wrote about his future plans which included developing his sexological research into "Socialerotik (*shakaiteki aiyokugaku*)."[125] Although the era of theorizing birth control was about to end with the gradual dissolution of *Seigenkai*, Yamamoto maintained his convictions about the close link between class and sex in capitalist social relations. Applying Marx's understanding of the base and superstructure to the social aspects of sex, Yamamoto noted that the world of erotic love also followed the principles of historical materialism. In the same vein, sexual institutions, customs and

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[124] Yamamoto Senji, "Sanji chōsetsu hyōron kara sei to shakai 3," *Sei to shakai* 11 (January 1926): 2-13. Yamamoto's critique of sexual obscurantism in accordance with bourgeois ruling ideology contradicts with Michel Foucault's account of "the theory of repression." Foucault points out that the discourse of sex has multiplied in the space of power since the eighteenth century, instead of being silenced. According to Foucault, not only the knowledge of sex, but also the theory of repressing sex are the effects of multiple discursive deployment of sex. Therefore, Yamamoto's account of ideological aspect of sex and Foucault's analysis of the discursive formation of sex sharply differed from each other on the underlying view on a knowledge-power relation: while the former views sex as a singular, a strategic means of the ruling class, the latter sees the modern mode of sex as multiple effects formed by the interplays of diverse subjects who pursue the truth of sex. As to a question about the modern repression of sex, see Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality* vol.1, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), 8; 128.

[125] Yamamoto Senji, "Watakushi goto ni san shūkan ni nozon de aisatsu to shōrai no keikaku (A few things about me: the last words on the discontinuation of the magazine and my future plans)," *Sei to shakai* 14 (May 1926): 102-111.

consciousness fostered in a capitalist society would ultimately end in a moment of "self-dissolution" as capital worked for its own dissolution.[126] Thus, the goal of Socialerotik was to trace this shifting materialist structure of sex. Needless to say, birth control was a key technology that could disrupt the material conditions of reproduction, and furthermore, revolutionize sexual consciousness.

Seen in this light, the theorization of birth control in the mid-1920s centered on the reframing of human reproduction and the constitution of the subject. Birth control technologies and eugenics redefined human reproduction a knowable and controllable object of science. Contraception, as a scientific means of improving the life quality of the population, became the new tactics of the proletarian movement. Proletarian birth control advocates positioned the working class as the self-conscious subjects of birth control. In these advocates' view, scientific procreation was ultimately linked to the liberation of the proletariat. In this light, the proletarian birth control movement was a critique of the bourgeois-capitalist representation of overpopulation and furthermore, an attempt to reframe the proletarian class as biological subjects. However, there was an indeterminable nature in this newly defined "proletariat." The blending of the class movement and birth control propaganda cast a series of critical questions about the ambiguity of the proletariat between a knowing subject and a known object, a biological being and a socioeconomic being, and sex and class.

The praxis of birth control: towards the socialization of reproduction

[126] Ibid.; In this article, Yamamoto emphasized the self-dissolution of capitalist sexual ideology as that of capitalist economy. His understanding of the materialist structure of sex was based on Marx's historical materialism, which can be summarized as "capital works for its own dissolution as the dominant form of production." Karl Marx, *Karl Marx: Selected Writings*, ed. David McLellan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 411.

Since the mid 1920s, the continued lack of agreement among proletarian organizations became a major impediment to effects to encourage individual working class people to practice birth control. The proletariat movement underwent repeated instances of consolidation and dissolution due to both internal factionalism and the state's suppression of radical thought. A major split in the proletariat movement occurred in 1925 between its socialist and communist subgroups, when *Sōdōmei* expelled the communists and a breakaway communist faction founded the Japan Labor Unions Council (*Nihon Rōdō Kumiai Hyōgikai*). In the following year, there was the second split between right-wing socialism and centrist socialism when the latter group separately formed the Japan Labor Union League (*Nihon Rōdō Kumiai Dōmei*). Each labor federation developed into different proletarian parties with different ideological lines.[127] The majority of the leading members of *Seigenkai* were involved with the labor union movement, and then later the political party activities ahead of the first general election of 1928. As a result, the group gradually disbanded, and eventually, the magazine *Sei to Shakai* was discontinued.[128]

In addition, growing government oppression undermined the proletarian birth control movement. The Peace Preservation Law, promulgated in 1925, reinforced the

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[127] In 1926, three different political parties were founded after the General Election Law whose purpose was to extend male suffrage to male citizens (over the age of 25). These parties include the Social Democratic Party (*Shakai Minshūtō*, right-wing), the Japan Labor-Farmer Party (*Nihon Rōdō Nōmintō*, centrist), and the Labor-Farmer Party (*Rōdō Nōmintō*, leftist). For an account of the leftist movement in prewar and wartime Japan, see Stephen S. Large, *Organized Workers and Socialist Politics in Interwar Japan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Gordon, *Labor and Imperial Democracy*.

[128] Yamamoto also devoted himself to the labor movement and the political party activity. He was involved in the Labor-Farmer Party shortly after the decision to discontinue the *Sei to shakai* was made in 1926, and elected as a member of the House of Representatives in Japan's first general election of 1928. As to Yamamoto's political activities in the late 1920s, see Toshiji, *Yamamoto Senji*, vol. 2, 121-382.

state's repression of socialists, communists, and other radical groups, and eventually led to the March 15 Incident of 1928. In this incident, more than fifteen hundred communists and suspected sympathizers were arrested, and several proletarian organizations were dissolved under the Peace Preservation Law which legitimized the state control of political thoughts.[129]

In spite of the government's control of social radicals, the worldwide Great Depression and its devastating impact on Japan's national economy ignited a series of proletariat protests between 1929 and 1932. In rural Japan, disputes over tenancy rights between tenant farmers and landlords increased as the price of agricultural products plummeted. In cities, the unemployment rate exceeded 20 percent of the industrial work force and the labor union movement reached a peak in 1931 in proportional terms.[130] These economic crises generated multiple, conflicting ideological responses: right-wing or reactionary grass root groups appeared, "Japanists" or national socialists converted from leftism, and leftist groups came under the constant threat of ideological suppression.[131] It should be noted that these groups, surprisingly, had much in common in terms of their critique of the government's failure to solve the economic crisis, however, the solutions proposed by the competing

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[129] On 10 April, Home Minister ordered the dissolution of the Hyōgikai, the Labor-Farmer Party, the Japan Famer's Union, and the All-Japan Proletarian Youth League for violating *kokutai* (national polity). Ironically, the General Election Law was passed in 1925 and the first general election in Japan was held in 1928. A series of political events in 1925 and 1928 reveals that Taishō democracy and its liberal legacy in the 1920s stood in a complex balance between repression and liberal reform. Sheldon M. Garon, *The State and Labor in Modern Japan* (Berkeley : University of California Press, 1987), 130-136.

[130] As to the Shōwa Depression between 1929 and 1932, see Gordon, *Labor and Imperial Democracy*, 237-69; Andrew Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014); 181-201; Nishida Yoshiaki, "Dimensions of change in twentieth-century rural Japan" in *Farmers and Village Life in Twentieth-Century Japan*, ed. Ann Waswo et al.(London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), 7-37.

[131] Gordon, *Labor and Imperial Democracy in Prewar Japan*, 255-261.

political groups differed considerably. Reactionary, rightist groups attempted to solve the crisis through military expansion into Manchuria while the leftist groups anchored their hopes in a future proletarian revolution.[132] The murder of Yamamoto by a right-wing activist reflects the intensified ideological conflicts of the late 1920s.[133]

In such a situation, the proletarian birth control movement resurfaced in two different forms. In Osaka, several birth control clinics opened in the early 1930s to provide free or inexpensive counsel about birth control, child and maternal health, and sexual diseases for the poor and the working class. Meanwhile, in the Tokyo area, the Proletariat Birth Control League (*Musansha Sanji Seigen Dōmei*, or Pro-BC) was founded by a proletarian group in June 1930 to denounce a commodified birth control campaign and meet the growing demand for birth control among the proletariat. These two new developments in the birth control movement focused on popularizing practical contraceptive measures for the working-class people rather than engaging in more intellectual debates about the meaning of population growth and the legitimacy of birth control. As a result, since the early 1930s, the birth control movement unfolded in consultation centers, exhibitions, and voluntary groups.

A quintessential example showing the transition from the intellectual debate to praxis in the proletarian birth control movement is the Eugenic Consultation Center, established in Sumiyoshi district, Osaka, in April 1930. One month prior to its establishment, proletarian activists involved in the Labor Union, the Farmers' Union,

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[132] Sandra Wilson, *The Manchurian Crisis and Japanese Society, 1931-33* (London: Routledge, 2002), 114-119.

[133] Yamamoto was stabbed to death by a right-wing activist on the same day he made a speech against the retrogressive revision of the Peace Preservation Law on March 1929. The purpose of the revision was to ratify the emergency ordinance stipulating the introduction of death penalty and widen the definition of political dissidents. Sasaki, *Yamamoto Senji* vol.2, 340-359; Sheldon, *The State and Labor in Modern Japan,* 152-156.

and other proletarian parties, cooperated with medical practitioners and midwives to organize a new birth control advocacy group dubbed the "Japan Birth Control Association (*Nihon Sanji Seigen Kyōkai*)."[134] The activists announced the three key goals of their newly formed association, which included 1) raising the quality of children on eugenic grounds, 2) the prevention of infant death, and the protection of children's right to life, and 3) saving mothers from the "hell of fecundity (*tasan jikoku*).[135] The expressed goals of the Japan Birth Control Association resembled birth control arguments made previously. However, now, science was directly connected with practical social work. Hence, the Association set up the Eugenic Consultation Center in pursuit of popularizing birth control among individual proletarians.

The Eugenic Consultation Center, as a new venture for the proletarian birth control movement, also became a space for reshaping the meaning of eugenics. As stated earlier, eugenics had been rationalized as a humanitarian science for human progress by previous birth control activists in the 1920s. In contrast, in the new venue, where a modern midwife Shibahara Urako was in charge of counselling work, eugenics became a matter of individualized counselling and thus addressed individual bodies and families rather than universal, ideological goals. More than 3,000 people visited the Center in the first four months since its opening, asking for counsel on

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[134] Nihon sanji seigen kyōkai, "Yūsei sōdanho annai: nihon sanji seigen kyōkai sanjyo kaiin no susume (The guidebook for eugenic consultation: recommendation regarding the patron membership of the Japan Birth Control Association)," in *Nihon josei undō shiryō shūsei*, vol. 7, 640-643. Originally published in March 1930.

[135] "The hell of fertility" was a buzzword in the period of Shōwa Depression. This term, literally meaning of a painful life caused by producing many children, suggests the common representation of fertility as symbolic of a wretched life. In reality, however, fertility was considered an actual problem among the lower class people who suffered from poverty and unemployment. As Fujime Yuki points out, while there was a growing demand for birth control in both cities and rural areas, infanticide was also frequently reported in the newspaper between 1930 and 1932. Fujime, *Sei no rekishigaku*, 260-263.

contraceptive methods. Their reasons for consultation on birth control included having many children, poverty, infirm health of mothers, and possessing an inferior genetic inheritance.[136] It should be noted that there was a difference in the understanding of eugenics between the intellectual birth control activists and the general public who were in need of birth control. For the intellectuals, eugenics was associated with a future-oriented goals—mainly the health of population, and the coming proletarian revolution. In contrast, the general public searching for answers to their everyday questions about sex and married life; they turned to eugenics to answer questions about spouse selection, to help ameliorate low income and childrearing duties, and to improve their physical and mental health. Each specific counselling encounter redefined eugenics as a way to improve one's living conditions and health.

In addition to the reshaping of eugenics, the operation of consultation center also marked a shift in the proletarian birth control movement in terms of "gendering" birth control. As the demand for counselling and the perceived effectiveness of the consultation center increased, two more consultation centers opened in Osaka by 1932. In November 1930, the "Eugenic Child Consultation Center (*Yūseji sōdansho*)" was set up by the Proletariat Women's League (*Musan fujin dōmei*) and another Eugenic Consultation Center, funded by Eugenics Society (*Yūsei kyōkai*), opened in July 1932.[137] Such consultation centers were increasingly female-dominated realms. This

[136] According to investigation results published by the Social Bureau of Osaka city, the total number of people who visited the Center reached approximately 6,600 for the first 11 months since opening in 1930. Those who came to the Center were mostly from the married, working-class population, including retailers, salaried workers, manual workers, craftsmen, and unemployed people. Osaka shi shakai bu rōdōka (Labor Affairs Section of the Social Bureau of Osaka City), "Hon shi ni oke ru yūsei sōdan sho nikansuru shiryō (Documents on the eugenic consultation Center in Osaka city)," *Shakaibu hōkoku* (Social Bureau Report) 184 (Osaka: Social Bureau of Osaka City, 1934).
[137] Ibid., 10-23.

female-specific character contrasted markedly with the previous birth control movement which was, for the most part, led by male intellectuals and activists. At the new consultation centers, professional midwives or female doctors provided cost-free or inexpensive counselling services to women and sold contraceptive devices at a reasonable price. Women, overwhelmingly, sought out the services provided by the eugenic consultation centers. According to an investigation conducted by the Social Bureau of Osaka city, 21,711 people visited one of the consultation centers between April 1930 and December 1932. Women accounted for more than 93 percent of the total number of visitors.[138]

Despite the substantial demand for the birth control services they provided, the consultation centers were closed one after another by 1934. Growing governmental restrictions justified by the Harmful Contraceptive Devices Control Regulation of 1930 as well as internal divisions among the proletarian parties in 1932 shortened the life of the otherwise thriving birth control centers.[139] Shibahara, who played a key role in two consultation centers in Osaka, was arrested for performing abortions in June 1933. Another consultation center, that was funded by the Proletariat Women's

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[138] The fee for consultation was less than fifty sen (one hundred sen equals to one yen) at all the consultation centers. According to the investigation of the Social Bureau of Osaka City in 1932, 89 percent of workers in general industry made 10 to 50 yen per month. Ibid., 13-5; Osaka shi shakai bu rōdōka, "Osaka shi shitsugyōsha seikatsu jōtai chōsa (Investigation of the living condition of unemployed population in Osaka City)" *Shakaibu hōkoku* 169 (Osaka: Social Bureau of Osaka City, 1933).

[139] In Japan since the Meiji period, abortion was illegalized under the Abortion Law (*Datai zai*) in 1880, and severely punished by the Criminal Abortion Law in 1907. Since the early 1930s, birth control activists formed the Alliance for Reform of the Anti-Abortion Law (*Datai Hō Kaisei Kiseikai*) to legalize abortions on eugenic grounds, the laws remained unchanged by 1948, when the Eugenic Protection Law of 1948 was issued. Meanwhile, the Harmful Contraceptive Devices Control Regulation (*Yūgai hinin yō kigu torishimari kisoku*) was issued by the Home Ministry in 1930 to prohibit the sales and distribution of intracervical and interuterine devices. As to the whole text of the laws, see Norgren, *Abortion before Birth Control*, 139; *Jitsuyō iji hōki: Sankō hōrei mokuji oyobi bibōran tsuki* (The laws of practical medicine: lists of referential legislation and legal memorandums) (Tokyo: Kokuseidō Shoten, 1939), 144-145.

League, virtually halted all of its services in 1933 as the proletarian parties split because of different views on Japan's military expansion. As the consultation centers gradually reframed eugenics and birth control as an individualized practice, these centers became increasingly tied down to the state's regulation of reproduction and subject to the shifting winds of proletariat ideology.

Meanwhile, in 1931, another kind of proletarian birth control movement was launched in Tokyo. Several proletarian organizations—including the Labor Union, the Farmers' Union, the Consumers Union, and a group of physicians and midwives working for the proletariat—joined forces to establish the Pro-BC in June 1931. The Pro-BC inherited the ideological vision of the preceding 1920s birth control movement, and thus maintained a firm emphasis on helping the proletarian class. This emphasis differed from the less class-consciousness eugenic consultation centers in Osaka. In vehement opposition to the commercialization of birth control which had been growing since the late 1920s, the Pro-BC issued the following manifesto: "We adamantly reject the existing reactionary, profit-seeking, and deceptive business of birth control. We advocate birth control to support Liberation Front (*kaihō sensen*). We hope for sexual reform on the basis of scientific birth control."[140] In October, the Pro-BC joined the Japan Proletarian Cultural League (*Nihon Puroretaria Bunka Renmei*, or KOP), a newly founded proletarian alliance for cultural and scientific

[140] Particularly, the Japan Birth Control League (*Nihon Sanji Chōsetsu Renmei*), founded in January 1931, was a specific target of its criticism for profiting from the sale of Dutch pessaries invented by Majima Kan, one of the leading members of the League. Musansha Sanji Seigen Dōmei, "Musansha Sanji Seigen Dōmei Sengen: Kōryō kiyaku (the PRO-BC: codes and agreements)," in *Nihon josei undō shiryō shūsei* 7, 686-688. Originally published in June 6, 1931.

movements.[141] The move shows that the Pro-BC regarded the proletarian revolution as its ultimate goal and viewed birth control as a scientific medium which could help facilitate the revolution and be a "defensive means for class struggle."

In an effort to replace commercialized birth control, the Pro-BC pursued a different strategy of propagating birth control practices from its Osaka counterparts. Notably, the organization of the Pro-BC resembled that of the Soviet Union's Communist Party specifically in terms of its democratic centralism. An organic link between a central organization and local units called "circles (*ban*)" characterized the democratic centralist structure of the Pro-BC.[142] The Pro-BC was largely divided into a central committee and a standing committee, and the latter was again divided into three departments, namely, the propagation, the technology, and the financial departments.[143] The organization focused on the propagation of birth control through and among Pro-BC's local circles. Although the Pro-BC also engaged in other existing ways of popularizing the practice of contraception among the masses, (for example, the Pro-BC published a popular edition of the "Pro-BC News," sponsored a birth control exhibition, and operated birth control consultation centers) its main strategy was to organize the "circles" among factory workers and farmers.

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[141] A Japanese writer Matsuda Tokiko wrote a novel based on Yamada Kotoko's activities for the Pro-BC. Yamada was also involved in KOP as an editor of the magazine for the Proletarian women *Hataraku Fujin* (Working women). As to a brief history of the Pro-BC and its affiliation to KOP, see Matsuda Tokiko, *Joseisen* (Women's lines) (Tokyo: Akebi Shobō, 1995), 339-349.

[142] Kurahara Korehito, a socialist critic who led the All-Japan Proletarian Arts League (*Zen Nihon Musansha Geijitsu Renmei,* or NAP) in 1928 and then KOP movement since 1931, began to use "circles" first in Japan. Referencing the proletariat cultural movement of the Soviet Union, or the Proletkult, Kurahara used circles to denote support organs for spreading cultural or scientific activities, or class aesthetics under the supervision of the central proletarian organization. As to the origin of "circles" in Japan, see Simon Andrew Avenell, *Making Japanese Citizens: Civil Society and the Mythology of the Shimin in Postwar Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 44-46.

[143] The chairman of the central committee was Nakane Kōnosuke from the Tokyo Transport Worker's Union and a vice-chairman was the midwife Kobayashi Miyo.

In their fight for the socialization of birth control, the Pro-BC used the organizational model of Soviet Russia. In post-revolution Russia, abortion and contraception was legalized on the grounds that reproduction and childcare was a social matter, and the state needed to protect motherhood and infancy to ensure healthier future generations.[144] The Pro-BC was sympathetic to a number of Russia's state policies including state-subsidized maternity hospitals, nurseries, and sex education, as well as the legalization of birth control and artificial abortions.[145] Acknowledging the differences in socioeconomic system between Soviet Russia and Japan, the Pro-BC members reframed the socialization of reproduction from the post-revolution state policy to match the Japanese context, which required the means of class war to achieve a proletariat revolution. Channeling birth Control propaganda through organizing circles was thought to be a primary step in shifting the burden of reproductive functions from individual families onto the social realm. The Pro-BC, however, failed to present a plan detailing the state's role in human reproduction and childcare in Japan. For them, the watchword "class-based birth control (*kaikyūteki sanji seigen*)" was effective only to the extent that workers, farmers, and other

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[144] Olga Issoupova, "From duty to pleasure? Motherhood in Soviet and post-Soviet Russia," in *Gender, State, and Society in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia*, ed. Sarah Ashwin (London: Routledge, 2000), 30-54.

[145] The Pro-BC introduced the state policies of Soviet Russia regarding motherhood, reproduction, and childcare several times through its periodical *Sanji seigen undō* (The birth control movement) and the popular edition of *Pro BC News*. For example, a poet and a founder of Japana Prolet-Esperantista Unio (JPEU) Akita Ujaku, wrote an article on state-run maternity hospitals and a state support for birth control in Russia based on his own experience of travelling to Moscow and Leningrad (the old name of St. Petersburg). In *Pro BC News,* the Pro-BC also reported that the reason for legalizing abortions in Russia was to warn about the risks of performing abortion procedures and to provide the scientific methods of abortions under the state provision. Writing articles on Soviet Russia was a strategic vehicle for the Pro-BC to advocate the socialization of reproduction in Japan. Akita Ujaku, "Sovēto dōmei ni okeru sanji seigen sono ta nitsuite (Birth Control and the Others in Soviet Union)," *Sanji seigen undō* 1 (September 1931): 3-5; "Sanji seigen ga jiyū demo Sovēto dōmei wa jinkō ga zōka," *Pro BC News* (Popular edition) 1 (July 1933): 2.

proletarian groups were able to devote themselves to the ongoing class war instead of depleting their energies in raising children in impoverished conditions.[146] With this defensive understanding of birth control, the Pro-BC inadvertently pursued a strategy that reinforced the distinction between public and private spheres, instead of heralding the socialization of reproduction.

Like the eugenic consultation center movement in Osaka, the Pro-BC was also short-lived. Despite its constant efforts to expand and foster local units and branches, the Pro-BC faced challenges in convincing workers and farmers to voluntarily organize and participate in birth control circles.[147] Furthermore, after the Manchurian Incident in September 1931, the shifting political situation became a major barrier to maintaining the proletarian organizations. Increasing state suppression of left-wing groups reached a peak in 1933, when a central figure in the proletarian movement, Kobayashi Takiji was tortured to death by Special Higher Police. Widespread suppression also sparked a dissension within the proletarian movement and this ultimately led to the dissolution of the KOP and its affiliated organizations in April 1934.[148] As a result, the Pro-BC campaign was abandoned and the proletarian revolution did not materialize. With the dissolution of the Pro-BC in 1934, the Japanese proletarian birth control movement was also put to an end.

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[146] "1923 nendo Pro-BC tōsō hōshin sōan (A draft for the struggle policy of the Pro-BC in 1923)," in *Nihon josei undō shiryō shūsei*, vol. 7, 692-697. Originally published in January 1932.

[147] According to a report published in the *Pro BC News* in 1932, several circles were established in factories in Tokyo area, and the Pro-BC was planning to further expand the movement into different Prefecture including Mie, Niigata, Ibaraki, Nagano, Dottori, and Hokkaido, though it is unconfirmed the plan was actually fulfilled so far. Given the growing state repression against the Proletariat movement and continuing imprisonment of leading members of the Pro-BC since the early 1932, it is a grim possibility that the latter plan was carried out. *Pro BC News* 11 (April 1932).

[148] Wilson, *The Manchurian Crisis and Japanese Society*, 105-109; Matsuda, *Joseisen*, 346-347.

An unfinished revolution: rethinking class, reproduction, and science

This chapter has explored the genealogy of the proletariat birth control movement during the interwar years in Japan. The movement which began with the birth of *Seigenkai* in the early 1920s eventually ended in the mid-1930s without having facilitated a proletarian revolution. The intensifying state control of leftism and ideological conflicts within the proletarian organizations during the mid 1930s greatly hindered the movement. Moreover, the call for using birth control as a way to catalyze the proletarian revolution faded into history.

However, the proletariat birth control movement in Japan cannot simply be reduced to an unfinished revolution. The trajectory of the movement provokes a series of critical questions about the socioeconomic representation of reproduction and sexuality under capitalism. Birth control and eugenic ideas radically changed the status of human reproduction from that of uncontrolled nature into the domain of controllable biological phenomena. The reproductive technologies adopted by proletarian activists exposed parts of the exploitative economic system of capitalism under which the production of the proletarian population brought benefit primarily to the capitalists. Furthermore, proletarian birth control activists appropriated the meaning of human reproduction for the benefit of the proletarian class in the process of revaluing reproduction as a defensive means of class survival and revolution. Put another way, the proletarian birth control movement problematized capitalist representations of reproduction, and reframed reproduction with a revolutionary science. Although the revolution ultimately failed, the genealogy of the Japanese proletarian birth control movement casts a still valid question about the complex and

interconnected relationships between human reproduction, capitalist economy, and reproductive science.

CHAPTER 4

Voluntary Motherhood: Feminist Struggles for Birth Control

Feminism, Ideology, Reproduction

The Ōhara Institute for Social Research (*Ōhara shakai mondai kenkyūjo*, established in 1919), an institute for the study of social and labor issues, had published the Labor Yearbook of Japan (*Nihon rōdō nenkan*) since 1920.[149] In the 1922 yearbook, a new "population problem" section was added to the Institute's growing list of social problems requiring research. This new population section summarized data from the first national census of Japan conducted in 1920, and the key points of a recent debate on birth control in Japan. According to the report, during the previous year, Japanese intellectuals and social activists had become increasingly interested in artificial birth control as a method of tackling a wide variety of pressing social issues including poverty, employment, migration, eugenics, and maternal health. The report reflected the controversial nature of recent debates over birth control and its purposes at the time. In addition to articulating the views of those against birth control, the Yearbook chose two women—Yamakawa Kikue (1890-1980) and Ishimoto Shizue (1897-2001, later changed her name to Katō Shizue after marrying a labor activist Katō Kanju in 1944)—to represent birth control advocates.

Although Yamakawa and Ishimoto shared common ground as pioneering feminist voices for birth control, there were significant differences between them. Yamakawa in contrast to Ishimoto refuted neo-Malthusian theory that assumed

[149] Ōhara Shakai Mondai Kenkyūjo, "Sanji seigen mondai (The problem of birth control)," *Nihon rōdō nenkan* (Labor Yearbook of Japan) (Tokyo: Rōdō Junpōsha, 1922): 344-345.

population growth was the source of many social problems. Drawing on a Marxist critique of capitalism, Yamakawa argued for a "birth strike (*shussan sutoraiki*)" as a way of protesting capitalist exploitation and alleviating the economic burdens of the working class. Meanwhile, Ishimoto, having returned from the United States where she learned about the birth control movement, outlined three significant reasons why birth control was necessary. These reasons included a Malthusian concern with overpopulation in contemporary Japan, the improvement of the national standard of living, and the liberation of women from their subordinate social status and domestic work. These gaps between Yamakawa's and Ishimoto's views mirrored the ideological chasm between Malthusianism and Marxism. Furthermore, these ideological differences constantly reappeared in the subsequent debates over birth control between neo-Malthusian reformists and socialists in Japan.

It should be noted that, notwithstanding their ideological differences, both Yamakawa and Ishimoto explicitly advocated women's liberation. While Yamakawa supported women's rights to reproductive choice as an underlying condition for women's liberation, Ishimoto argued for freeing women from the burdens of domestic work. The feminist goal of expanding women's freedom is present in the arguments of both feminists in spite of their different approaches to liberation. Their shared feminist perspective, however, unlike the ongoing conflict between neo-Malthusian and Marxist positions, faded away in subsequent debates on birth control in Japan. In the end, the issue of women's liberation remained only a minor concern among pro-birth control advocates in Japan.

This chapter focuses on the Japanese feminist critics who advocated for birth

control during the interwar period by focusing on two leading pro-birth control feminists, Yamakawa and Ishimoto. Although they intermittently cooperated with each other in the promotion of birth control, Russian famine relief efforts, and women's suffrage movement in the early and mid 1920s, their collaboration did not necessarily imply agreement on their ultimate goals.[150] In fact, Yamakawa and Ishimoto were on the opposite ends of the ideological spectrum, namely, socialism and liberalism. Although both Yamakawa and Ishimoto borrowed the term "voluntary motherhood" from Sanger, they exemplify the heterogeneity of feminist goals in their different ways of arguing for birth-control in Japan. This chapter will illuminate how Japanese feminists differed in their views of motherhood even though these diverging views ironically converged into an advocacy of birth control. The ideological division here will not be considered a fundamental point useful for demarcating Yamakawa and Ishimoto. Rather, this chapter will shed light on the complexity and heterogeneity of the feminists' birth control advocacy in Japan, and thus contribute to a broader understanding of the politicization of reproduction, or conversely the sexualization of a politico-economic system world-wide.

[150] There were several interactions between Yamakawa and Ishimoto in terms of organizational feminist activities in the early to mid 1920s. The amendment of Article 5 of the Public Peace Police Law (*Chian keisatsu hō*) that had prevented women from attending political meetings or joining political organizations was a watershed for women's movement in Japan. Against the backdrop of the increase in feminist organization and women's participation in political movement, varied feminist voices cutting across ideological lines emerged to support birth control, Russian famine relief, disaster relief after the Great Kantō Earthquake of 1923, and women's suffrage. Yamakawa and Ishimoto also participated in these women's movements, regardless of their different social visions. For the primary sources regarding Japanese feminist movement in the 1920s, particularly the period from when the New Women's Association (*Shin fujin kyōkai*, founded in 1919) made an organizational effort to amend the Article 5 up to when the women's suffrage movement was organized, see Suzuki. *Nihon josei undō shiryō shūsei*, vol. 1, 412-781.

The Multiple Definitions of Voluntary Motherhood

Margaret Sanger began publishing a monthly magazine titled *Birth Control Review* in February 1917 to popularize the ideas and techniques of birth control. On its cover page, Sanger dedicated *Birth Control Review* to "the principle of intelligent and voluntary motherhood." The term "voluntary motherhood" remained a slogan until the magazine later modified its main goal to emphasize the concrete action plan of "agitation, education, organization, legislation" in 1922.[151] Unlike the term birth control, "voluntary motherhood" was not directly coined by Sanger, but Sanger frequently employed this term and likened "involuntary motherhood" to slavery from which she argued American women should be liberated. While the term, "voluntary motherhood," itself was inherited from women's suffrage groups and Free Love groups in the late nineteenth century, Sanger redirected public attention from a concern with the sexual morality of "self-control" to a focus on artificial contraception for women's liberation.[152] In the book *Woman and New Race* published in 1920, Sanger highlighted the central goal of woman's freedom in her birth control movement; this freedom could be condensed in the term "voluntary womanhood." Sanger explains:

> Voluntary motherhood implies a new morality—a vigorous, constructive, liberated morality. That morality will, first of all, prevent

[151] There were some minor changes in the subtitle to "Dedicated to the Cause of Voluntary Motherhood" in the issue of April 1918 and to "Dedicated to Voluntary Motherhood" in the issue of April 1919. After the American Birth Control League (ABCL) was formed in November 1921, *Birth Control Review* became the official organ of the ABCL. The modification of subtitle in the issue of January 1922 formed a part of the reorganization of American birth control movement.

[152] For the different context and connotation of voluntary motherhood between the late nineteenth-century feminism and the early twentieth-century feminism in the United States, see Linda Gordon, "Voluntary Motherhood: The Beginnings of Feminist Birth Control Ideas in the United States," *Feminist Studies* 1, no. 3/4 (1973): 5-22.

> the submergence of womanhood into motherhood. It will set its face against the conversion of women into mechanical maternity and toward the creation of a new race.[153]

Voluntary motherhood as a new morality fundamentally denoted women's ownership of their own body and their control of reproduction. The lack of reproductive freedom had been openly denounced by Sanger not only as the central reason for women's servitude, but also as the root cause of various socioeconomic problems such as poverty, unemployment, emigration, and maternal and infantile mortality.[154] While labor activists and socialists struggled to solve these social problems as well,[155] Sanger believed that most leftists failed to fully address the malfunctions of capitalism. For Sanger, such leftist political movements overlooked the fact that poverty was produced by the fecundity of the working class, rather than external economic structures.[156] Insofar as she stood on the neo-Malthusian assumption that overpopulation was the root cause of poverty, it was logical for Sanger to prescribe birth control as the preventive medication.

Sanger's pursuit of voluntary motherhood exemplifies the distinctive way in which Sanger linked neo-Malthusian thought with women's sexual liberation. For

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[153] Margaret Sanger, *Woman and the New Race* (New York: Brentano, 1920), 226.

[154] Margaret Sanger, "Voluntary Motherhood," public speech at the National Birth Control League, 1917, Library of Congress Microfilm, LCM 131:104, accessed December 1, 2015, https://www.nyu.edu/projects/sanger/webedition/app/documents/show.php?sangerDoc=143450.xml.

[155] Sanger was originally involved in working class movement based on her radical leftism, but her initial radicalism and hostility towards capitalism turned into the middle-class based Neo-Malthusianism and the British sex radicalism since her visit to European countries between 1914 and 1915. A British sexologist Havelock Ellis was particularly influential for her in terms of diminishing radicalism and reframing birth control as an ideal form of love. Linda Gordon, *Woman's Body, Woman's Right: Birth Control In America*. (New York: Penguin, 1990), 217-227.

[156] Sanger, "Voluntary Motherhood"; It was not only orthodox Marxists, but also Marx himself whom Sanger criticized. In her book *the Pivot of Civilization* published in 1922, Sanger also denounces Marx for shifting the real cause of poverty to the capitalist system without acknowledging the fact that "the deeper unity of the proletariat and the capitalist" supported by "the uncontrolled breeding among the laboring classes." Margaret Sanger, *The Pivot of Civilization* (New York: Brentano, 1922), 138-139.

Sanger, birth control was a new medium which allowed a woman to consciously choose whether she would be mother or not. Motherhood was neither a woman's predestined vocation, nor something that could be decided by the State, the church or the family system. By emphasizing a woman's ownership of her own body and the self-determination of motherhood, Sanger attempted to position women as the conscious agents of birth control.

While the neo-Malthusian theories justified the urgent need for birth control, eugenics was another pillar of Sanger's pro-birth control argument. Sanger linked the issue of overpopulation with the eugenic goal of race improvement. Following her definition of the "population problem," Sanger argued that overpopulation was the root cause of socioeconomic problems and improvement of the human race was the expected effect of birth control . How is it possible to improve the quality of race by checking the growth of the population? The gaps between quantity and quality created a political space for Sanger's feminist argument, which highlighted the eugenic effects of voluntary motherhood. Sanger argued that "[if] we are to make racial progress, [the] development of womanhood must precede motherhood in every individual woman."[157] In other words, if women could consciously choose whether they would give birth or not, the reproduction of racial inferiors would be efficiently prevented. Controlling birth through contraception implied not only the modification of reproduction from uncontrolled nature to manipulable life, but also the empowerment of women through reproductive autonomy.

In view of this, feminism was at the center of Sanger's advocacy for birth

[157] Sanger, *Woman and the New Race*, 229.

control. Her argument for women's freedom was hardly compromised by her advocacy for neo-Malthusianism or for eugenics. Rather, women's freedom was reconfigured in service of the quantity and quality of population through the concept of voluntary motherhood. The biological representation of women's freedom allowed Sanger to transform the womb from being the birthplace of poverty into being the birthplace of a new race. In this regard, voluntary motherhood fused radical feminism and eugenics by redefining the former in a biological way and the latter as women's reproductive issues.

During the same period when Sanger raised the banner of voluntary motherhood, a few Japanese feminists were carefully observing the growth of the birth control movement in the United States. Yamakawa, an increasingly prominent socialist feminist critic at that time, was a keen observer of the worldwide rise of contemporary social movements. Between 1920 and 1921, Yamakawa employed Sanger's "voluntary motherhood" slogan to repeatedly emphasize the need for birth control. It was not the technology of birth control itself that interested Yamakawa, but rather the issue of women's sexual autonomy embedded in the concept of voluntary motherhood. Yamakawa revisited voluntary motherhood through her own critique of the double burden placed on working class women. The translation of voluntary motherhood was not simply the repetition of Sanger's discourse, but the introduction of new questions about sex and class.

Another Japanese feminist, Ishimoto Shizue, was influenced by Sanger's birth control movement, which she observed at relatively close range. Ishimoto spent one year in New York with her husband, the baron Ishimoto Keikichi, between 1919 and

1920, taking a secretarial course in the Ballard School of the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA). During her stay in New York, she met Sanger in person once through Agnes Smedley, an American activist who was involved with *Birth Control Review* at that time.[158] After returning to Japan in September 1920, Ishimoto worked to introduce birth control to Japanese society.[159] Sanger's voluntary motherhood slogan triggered Ishimoto's sympathy for birth control and neo-Malthusianism, although Ishimoto redefined the slogan based on family-oriented values and nationalism. Like in Yamakawa's case, Sanger's voluntary motherhood served as a spark which facilitated Ishimoto's framing of motherhood.

Yamakawa and Ishimoto were feminist pioneers of birth control movement which was predominately supported by men who led the communist and socialist movements in Japan. Yamakawa and Ishimoto's initial advocacy for birth control led to the first birth control organization in Japan, "*Nihon Sanji Chōsetsu Kenkyūkai* (The Japanese Society for the Study of Birth Control, hereafter *Chōsetsukai*)."[160] *Chōsetsukai* was founded under the leadership of Ishimoto in Tokyo, in May 1922. Its members included a physician Kaji Tokijirō, a socialist and baron Ishimoto Keikichi, a socialist and professor of Waseda University Abe Isoo, a labor activist Suzuki Bunji,

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[158] Agnes Smedley (1892-1950) was an American activist, feminist, and writer who was involved in a range of radical political movements including the Indian nationalist movement, the Communist revolution in China and so forth. During the years between 1919 and 1920, Smedley worked for *Birth Control Review* as an associate editor. Ruth Price, *The Lives of Agnes Smedley* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 51-68.

[159] For detailed accounts of her stay in New York and its impacts on her career as a birth control advocate, see Ishimoto's autobiography, *Facing Two Ways: The Story of My Life* (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1935), her memoir *A Fight for Women's Happiness: Pioneering the Family Planning Movement In Japan* (Tokyo: Japanese Organization for International Cooperation in Family Planning, 1984), and the biography authored by Helen M. Hopper, *Katô Shidzue: A Japanese Feminist* (New York: Pearson Longman, 2004).

[160] For the details of *Chōsetsukai*, see Chapter 2.

and Yamakawa. The group published a magazine titled *Small Family* (*shōkazoku*, which was suspended after the publication of the first issue) and a series of pamphlets promoting birth control. This first birth control organization, however, was short-lived. As shown in Chapter 2, conflicts of interest and ideological disagreements among the members led to the dissolution of the group before any coordinated activities promoting birth control could be carried out.

There were considerable differences between Ishimoto's and Yamakawa's visions of the role *Chōsetsukai* should play. Although Ishimoto and Yamakawa worked together to create an organization promoting birth control, this does not mean that they agreed on the overall purpose of birth control practice. Different understandings of voluntary motherhood epitomize the chasm between Yamakawa's and Ishimoto's views. How were Yamakawa's and Ishimoto's definitions of voluntary motherhood different from each other? How did these differences reconfigure the contemporary social context of birth control in Japan? Or conversely, what were the larger socioeconomic structures which created such differences between feminist voices supporting the birth control movement? The following two sections will be dedicated to exploring the different ways in which the reconfiguring of motherhood played a role in Yamakawa's and Ishimoto's positons. I will particularly focus on Yamakawa's advocacy for birth strike and Ishimoto's eugenic feminism.

Birth Strike: Yamakawa Kikue's Socialist Critique of Sex and Class

Yamakawa Kikue was a theorist rather than an activist in the public debate on birth control during the interwar period. A series of her public writings (mainly

published between 1920 and 1921) reveal the fact that she endeavored to promote "self-awareness" among women rather than explaining the specific techniques of birth control.[161] Considering the growing public interest in birth control after Sanger's visit to Japan in Spring of 1922, Yamakawa's attention to birth control in the very beginning of 1920s may appear premature. In fact, Yamakawa had maintained an interest in the liberation of women in conjunction with that of the working class since her early critiques of women's problem in 1910s.[162] For Yamakawa, birth control was one of the practical and scientific means for realizing women's freedom from the shackles of a patriarchal family system, and also for alleviating the reproductive burdens of the proletarian class. Her pursuit of the emancipation of women, especially working class women was consistent with her promotion of birth control. What was

[161] Yamakawa authored several articles on the birth control issue during the period between 1920 and 1921, which included Yamakawa, "Tasan shugi no noroi (The curse of pronatalism)," *Taikan*, no. 10 (1920); "Josei no hangyaku: Seishin teki oyobi busshitsu teki hōmen yori mitaru sanji seigen mondai (Women's rebel: birth control problem in light of spiritual and material aspects)," *Kaihō*, no. 1 (1921); "Sanji seigen mondai (The problem of birth control)," *Onna no Sekai*, no. 1 (1921); "Sanji chōsetsu ron to shakai shugi, (The discussion of birth control and socialism)" *Shakai Shugi Kenkyū* (The Study of socialism), no. 6 (1921). All the articles above mentioned were reprinted in the complete works of Yamakawa's critiques with the title of *Josei no hangyaku* (Women's rebel), ed. Suzuki Yūko, vol. 2 of *Yamakawa Kikue shū* (The complete works of Yamakawa Kikue) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2011).

[162] The motherhood protection debate (*bosei hogo ronsō*) between 1918 and 1919 exemplifies Yamakawa's materialist view on women's question. Sparked by Yosano Akiko's critique of women's dependency on men and the government in the magazine Fujin Kōron (*Women's Review*), four female critiques including Yamakawa, Yosano, Hiratsuka Raichō, and Yamada Waka had a heated discussion on the issue of motherhood protection from each different viewpoint. Two prominent Japanese feminists in the Taishō period, Yosano and Hiratsuka were in opposition to each other. While Yosano argued for women's economic independence in pursuit of the equal rights for both sexes, Hiratsuka refuted Yosano's argument in advocacy for motherhood as women's inborn vocation. Meanwhile, there was another opposite pole of the debate between Yamakawa and Yamada. Yamada, a conservative feminist with a family-oriented perspective, strongly supported the idea of motherhood protection whilst Yamakawa critically equated Yamada's family-oriented feminism with the neo-ideology of "good wife and wise mother (*ryōsai kenbo*)." The debate continued for over a year, during which these main debaters exchanged criticism and theoretically articulated the women's issues within complex social institutions including individual political rights, family system, and the nation-state. The primary sources on the debate of the protection of motherhood are accessible in the collection *Shiryō Bosei Hogo Ronsō* (Documents on the motherhood protection debate), compiled by Kōuchi Nobuko (Tokyo: Domesu Shuppan, 1984). Also, on the conflicting arguments of the debate, see Vera C. Mackie, *Feminism In Modern Japan: Citizenship, Embodiment, and Sexuality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 55-58.

inconsistent was only the fact that Yamakawa came to embrace new vocabulary as well as technology in solving the problems of sex and class, that is, contraception.

Yamakawa's attempt to theorize birth control began with her reconsideration of motherhood in relation to Sanger's idea of "voluntary motherhood." By quoting Sanger in her book *Women and the New Race*, Yamakawa introduced *ninniteki bosei*, a Japanese translation of voluntary motherhood, in order to highlight an individual mother's self-conscious choice to give birth.

> Millions of women are asserting their right to voluntary motherhood. They are determined to decide for themselves whether they shall become mothers, under what conditions and when. This is the fundamental revolt referred to. It is for woman the key to the temple of liberty.[163]

It was apparent that the concept of voluntary motherhood entailed a feminist voice for individual autonomy, particularly women's autonomy over their own bodies and reproduction. Agreeing with Sanger's perspective on women's reproductive agency as a way of revolt, Yamakawa embraced the concept of voluntary motherhood in order to assert women's freedom of reproductive choice.

However, there were gaps in their understanding sociohistorical conditions which justified the need for voluntary motherhood. As stated in the previous section, Sanger embraced eugenics in order to justify the biological benefits of women's autonomous choice over the body. For Sanger whose ideological basis on neo-Malthusianism and eugenics became conspicuous by the beginning of 1920s,

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[163] Sanger, *Woman and the New Race*, 5; Yamakawa translated the most parts of the first chapter "Woman's Error and Her Debt" including the quote above into Japanese in her article "Tasan shugi no noroi," reprinted in *Josei no hangyaku*, 198-205.

voluntary motherhood was the "new morality" which would "set its face against the conversion of women into mechanical maternity and toward the creation of a new race."[164] The concept of voluntary motherhood implied the causal link between mother's freedom and their potential to improve racial quality. In other words, it was not genderless, individual freedom, but feminine, racialized freedom that Sanger pursued through the birth control movement.

Meanwhile, Yamakawa reassigned the concept of voluntary motherhood to a means of revolt against enforced sexual morality, the inhumane exploitation, and oppression under the capitalist system.[165] Her defiance against patriarchy and capitalism was rather a reaction to reality, in particular, the subjugated status of women and the proletarian class within the contemporary social relations, than a promise for the eugenic, utopian future of humanity as Sanger did. Although Yamakawa also envisioned an ideal society in which all human free will would be respected, she paid more attention to voluntary motherhood as a means of revolt than the ultimate goal. From her viewpoint, birth control was related to the project of transforming women's bodies into a political subjectivity. Therefore, it was crucial for her to resist against the reduction of women's sexuality and reproduction merely to an expression of womanhood or to an instrument for race betterment. With the notion of voluntary motherhood, Yamakawa reframed women's bodies into the political subject, and further reframed political struggles into sexual, corporeal forms.

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[164] For the transition of Sanger's thoughts from radical socialism to Neo-Malthusian, middle-class based reformism due to the state repression, personal struggle from poor health and financial issues, see Joan M. Jensen, "The Evolution of Margaret Sanger's "Family Limitation" Pamphlet, 1914-1921," *Signs* 6, no. 3, spring (1981): 548-567; Patricia Walsh Coates, *Margaret Sanger and the Origin of the Birth Control Movement, 1910-1930: The Concept of Women's Sexual Autonomy*. (Lewiston N.Y.: Edwin Mellen Press, 2008), 181-212.

[165] Yamakawa, "Sanji chōsetsu ron to shakai shugi," 282-286.

Yamakawa's theorization of birth control as the means of revolt was in fact associated with her sharp criticism on two major solutions to the "population problem": Neo-Malthusianism and socialism. Regardless of the different definitions of the "population problem" and the conflicting solutions, the two theories ran in parallel in terms of the representation of reproduction with the presumed formula of economic equilibrium between population and resources. Whereas Neo-Malthusianists considered the equilibrium to be acquired by reducing population growth, socialists supported either the equal distribution of wealth or an increase in wealth. A discussion of reproduction as the bodily experience of women and as an object of patriarchal exploitation was absent in both kinds of economic determinism. Yamakawa positioned herself as the double critic of Neo-Malthusianism and socialism. Her role was to remind both groups of the fact that birth control had to be a permanent goal even after overpopulation or poverty was resolved. In her view, women's autonomous decision to give birth or not was a necessary part of the proletarian revolution.

Firstly, Yamakawa basically agreed with the Marxist denunciation of the Malthusian theory of overpopulation. Many contemporary Neo-Malthusianists or social reformists endeavored to solve the overpopulation problem through controlling birth on the presumption that various social problems, particularly poverty, were caused by rapid population growth which outstripped the limited resources. Yamakawa's criticism centered on this mechanistic presumption by pointing out that "[n]owadays, it is the unfair distribution of products rather than low productivity relative to population growth that prevents the reduction of poverty encountered in some societies." It was, hence, natural for Yamakawa to conclude that the fundamental

solution to social problems should be focused on "the change in the system of production and distribution instead of that in overpopulation."[166]

Yamakawa's critique of the Neo-Malthusian causal link between overpopulation and social problems was mainly supported by two reasons: Namely, the socialist optimism of technology and human progress, and Marx's understanding of overpopulation as the necessary condition for exploitation. First, Yamakawa borrowed the arguments of European socialist giants including Karl Marx, Peter Kropotkin, and August Bebel who offered the bright pictures of human progress based on technological development and growing food resources.[167] Drawing on Bebel's accounts of production and reproduction under capitalism, Yamakawa argued the idea that the theory of a surplus population could outstrip food resources was mistaken because of a superabundance of yet untapped resources.

> If all these tasks of civilization were to be undertaken at the same time, we would not have too many people, but too few. Humanity must still multiply considerably to do justice to all the tasks that are awaiting it. The soil is far from being cultivated as it might be, and **almost three-quarters of the surface of the earth are still uncultivated, because there are not enough people to undertake its cultivation.** The relative excess of population that today is continually produced by the capitalistic system to the detriment of the working class and of society **will prove a blessing on a higher level of civilization** (highlighted by Bebel).[168]

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[166] Yamakawa, "Tasan shugi no noroi," 201.

[167] Yamakawa, "Sanji chōsetsu ron to shakai shugi." 271-282. This chapter is particularly devoted to quoting European socialists' thoughts on the population problem including Marx's *Capital I*, Kropotkin's *Fields, Factories and Workshops: or Industry Combined with Agriculture and Brain Work with Manual Work*, and Bebel's *Women under Socialism*. It should be noted that Yamakawa's brief reference on Marx's critique of Malthus might be misleading because the main point Marx made in his analysis of overpopulation was not the optimism of human evolution, but the nature of relative surplus population as the necessary condition for the capitalist mode of production. For Marx's critique of relative surplus population, see Marx, *Capital*, 781-870.

[168] August Bebel, *Woman Under Socialism* (New York: Schocken Books, 1971), 494. Also, quoted in Yamakwa "Sanji chōsetsu ron to shakai shugi," 281-282.

According to Bebel's logic, the growth of a surplus population was inevitable for the higher level of human progress regardless of its detrimental effect on proletarian people. However, Yamakawa attempted to stress the point that a "relative excess of population" that was being "produced by the capitalistic system." The "relative excess of population" here referred to the excess of laboring population in relation to capitalist production, in contrast with the notion of absolute surplus population relative to limited resources in Malthusianism. Yamakawa pointed out that "the relative surplus population is the nature of a capitalist society, and therefore, is generated and increased by capitalism and at the same time becomes a necessary condition for the existence of capitalism."[169] Her critique of the surplus laboring population both as the product and the condition for capitalist accumulation was closely linked to what Marx called "the despotism of capitals" in his analysis of the capitalist mode of production and its creation of the industrial reserve army.[170] Insofar as the capitalist mode of production necessitated the surplus laboring population for the expansion of capital, the exploitation of laborers would continue independently of the size of population.

In view of this, the notion of the relative surplus population was a direct refutation of both the Malthusian theory of overpopulation and the Neo-Malthusian

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[169] Yamakwa "Sanji chōsetsu ron to shakai shugi," 282.

[170] Marx, *Capital*, 793. With the notion of the despotism of capitals, Marx highlights the relative surplus population that forms a disposable industrial army under the capitalist mode of production. According to him, the surplus laboring population is independent of absolute surplus population, but is affected by the expansion of capital that continuously sets free exploitable population. The industrial reserve army is not the fixed category of unemployed population, but bears a precarious contingency precisely because this despotic work of capitalism which constantly shifts the boundaries of employment, half-employment, and unemployment for the self-expansion of capital.

solution for social ills. From Yamakawa's view, the overpopulation problem posed by the Neo-Malthusian groups was merely a displacement of the nature of capitalist exploitation into the so-called "natural law" of absolute overpopulation. Interestingly, Sanger whose slogans for birth control and voluntary motherhood influenced on Yamakawa's sympathy of birth control was one of the leading Neo-Malthusianists of her day. Sanger asserted that the misery of the proletariat originated in their sexuality and furthermore, their sexuality served capitalism as its accomplice.[171] Whereas Sanger problematized overpopulation as an immediate reality the working class mothers themselves created, Yamakawa grasped the ideological tactics of the population problem, which inverted the causation of poverty.

Yamakawa reframed birth control as a means of protest against the capitalist system. She advocated birth control, specifically for the proletarian class as a weapon against exploitation and oppression, and for proletarian women as a way of fighting the instrumentalization of women as breeding machines. Birth control as a method of protesting, namely a "birth strike" clearly reveals that Yamakawa placed reproduction as central to capitalist exploitation, and thus, a powerful instrument for undermining

[171] Sanger, *The Pivot of Civilization*, 146-9. In Chapter 7 titled "is Revolution the Remedy?" specifically focuses on Sanger's criticism of Marxian Socialism over the origin of poverty under capitalism. In opposition to the Marxian interpretation of surplus population as the structural cause of poverty under capitalism, Sanger asserted that the poverty of the proletarian class was caused by themselves, that is, their uncontrolled sexuality. Her argument regarding the sexuality of the proletariat as the accomplice to capitalism was based on a French neo-Malthusianist Gabriel Giroud (or G. Hardy, the pseudonym of Giroud). Giroud was one of the first generation of sex radicals in France and acted as the French representative of the International Birth Control conferences during the interwar period. In arguing against the anti-birth control French socialists, Giroud advocated for the workers' practice of birth control as the means of socialist movement. As for Gabriel Giroud and the French birth control movement since the beginning of the twentieth century, see Angus McLaren, *Sexuality and Social Order: The Debate Over the Fertility of Women and Workers in France, 1770-1920* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1983), 110-121.

the capitalist system.[172]

Yamakawa's idea of using birth control as a "birth strike" was, however, controversial among many Japanese socialists of the time. As she disagreed with the perspective of Neo-Malthusianists, Yamakawa was also a heretic to the contemporary socialists regardless of whether they supported birth control or not.[173] The conflict between the contemporary Japanese socialists and Yamakawa fundamentally focused on the recognition of women as individual subjects and as the proletarian class. For Yamakawa, women's bodies and reproduction had to lie simultaneously inside and outside the domain of the class struggle because women were not only workers who pursued social equality and liberty, but also individuals who had the rights and freedom of choice. Reproduction could not be an exception and thus had to be respected as the realm of individual rights. Meanwhile, most socialists subsumed women's reproductive rights into political goals of the proletarian class. In this case, not only was the individual subjectivity of women denied, but also their reproductive

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[172] Yamakawa noted "birth strike (*shussan sutoraiki*)" as a protest against the inhumane exploitation and oppression of capitalism. Yamakawa "Sanji chōsetsu ron to shakai shugi," 283. The notion of birth strike first appeared in a Swiss anarchist, Fritz Brupbacher's brochure titled "Blessed with children: and no end to it?" (München G. Birk & Co, 1904) in Germany in the early 1900s, and drew public attention in 1913 when two German social democrats, Alfred Bernstein and Julius Moses debated over the birth strike in and for the socialist movement. As for the origin and social debate of the birth strike in the European discourse, see Robert Jütte, *Contraception: a history*, Vicky Russell trans. (Cambridge: Polity, 2008), 167-171.

[173] One of the exceptional figures was Sakai Toshihiko (1871-1933), an early socialist pioneer in Japan and a critique of gender role. Being sympathetic to August Bebel, Edward Carpenter, and Friedrich Engels who saw the gender division of labor within the socio-economic structure, Sakai advocated for the reproductive self-determination of women while criticizing both neo-Malthusianism and pronatalism in terms of their serving for bourgeois class. For Sakai's representative argument for the women's rights to abortion, see Sakai Toshihiko, "Umu jiyū to uma nu jiyū (The Freedom of giving birth and not giving birth)," reprinted in *Shiryō sei to ai o meguru ronsō* (Documents: Debates on Sex and Love), ed. Orii Miyako (Tokyo: Domesu Shuppan, 1991), 185-188. Originally published in *Sekaijin* (Cosmopolitan) 2 (1916). In addition, for the socialist debate of sexuality in Japan, see Ishikawa Shoji, "Shakai shugisha ni okeru 'sei' to seiji: nihon no 1920-30 nendai o chūshin toshite (The Gender Role of Women in the Japanese Socialist Movement during the 1920s and 30s)," *Nenpō seiji gaku* (The Annuals of Japanese Political Science Association) 54 (2003): 161-77.

bodies remained undefined until they were thoroughly subsumed under the proletarian's body. The locus of reproduction was neither individuals nor class, but sex, as were women. Yamakawa must have been aware of this disavowal of women's individual freedom for the ultimate goal of socialism, given her sharp question "what will happen if society provides welfare for people in the future so that birth control is no longer needed for economic reasons?"[174] Defining women's place at the intersection between individual rights and class interests was deeply problematic in the socialist debate of birth control.

Conflicting definitions of women and reproduction can be found in the debate between Yamakawa and Ishikawa Sanshirō, who was originally a Christian socialist turned anarchist during his exile in Europe between 1913 and 1920.[175] The debate was focused on the rights and wrongs of contraception, which revealed their opposing views largely on two issues: firstly, whether birth control served bourgeois ideology or women, particularly proletarian women; secondly, whether birth control would be needed once poverty was solved by the proletarian revolution.

In regards to the first question, Ishikawa saw contraception as merely "the pleasure (*dōraku*) of bourgeois intellectuals" or a "tricky philosophy born out of

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[174] Yamakawa, "Tasan shugi no noroi." 202.

[175] The debate on the rights and wrongs of contraception occurred between Yamakawa and Ishikawa, sparked by Ishikawa's essay titled "Shakai shugi sha kara mi ta fujin kyūsai: ippuippu seido wa shizen de jiyū de junketsu de aru (A socialist view on the relief of women: monogamy as nature, freedom, and purity)" (*Onna no sekai* (women's world), February 1921). Yamakawa responded to this essay by writing "Ishikawa Sanshirō to hinin ron (Ishikawa Sanshirō and the discussion on contraception)" (*Onna no sekai*, March 1921). After then, they exchanged criticism again by writing essays in the same journal, which include Ishikawa, "Hinin ron ni tsuite: Yamakawa kikue joshi ni mōsu (On the discussion of contrapception: a message to madam Yamakawa)" (*Onna no sekai*, April 1921) and Yamakawa, "Hinin zehi nitsuite futatabi ishikawa sanshirō ni atau (A follow-up message to Mr. Ishikawa on the pros and cons of contraception)" (*Onna no sekai*, June 1921).

modern decadence."[176] This objection resonated with his antipathy towards all social and relief works whose humanitarianism invariably buttressed capitalist and commercialist interests. Yamakawa, on the contrary, criticized Ishikawa's own bourgeois mentality in equating contraception merely with "the pleasure" whilst overlooking women's burden. From her view, "women, particularly proletarian women who are working mothers" bore the burdens of childbirth, parenting, and education which ought not to be ridiculed by an androcentric indifference to women's labor.[177]

Given her blurry characterization of women and proletarian women connected by an adverb "particularly," it should be noted that Yamakawa's stance on women appears to be ambivalent. The ambivalence lies between sex and class. Her critique of women's domestic labor suggests her view that women's exploitation was mainly defined by their sex, and class could only intensify or mitigate women's sexualized labor. It can be said that Yamakawa was keenly aware of how sex and class overdetermined women's experience, and thus how difficult "particularly" the proletarian women's experiences were. Her understanding of the intersection of sex and class contrasts with Ishikawa who overlooked the question of sex altogether. From Yamakawa's view, Ishikawa was ultimately complicit in the subjection of women because androcentrism common to both bourgeois intellectuals and socialist activists excluded sex from socioeconomic domains. The bourgeois and socialist circles were ultimately complicit in sexualizing domestic work and thereby domesticizing women.

The second crucial issue of contraception revealed the contradictory views

[176] Ishikawa, "Shakai shugi sha kara mi ta fujin kyūsai," 34.
[177] Yamakawa, "Ishikawa Sanshirō to hininron," 244.

between Yamakawa and Ishikawa on the place of women between nature and society. In opposition to Ishikawa's vision of a socialist state in which the economic burden of childbirth and child rearing would just simply disappear, Yamakawa asserted that women's rights to reproductive choice, namely voluntary motherhood, had to be protected even in a socialist state. Thus, Yamakawa answers her previous question "what will happen if the society provides welfare for people in the future so that birth control is no longer needed for economic reasons?" with the following explanation.

> In short, [in an ideal society], people should be able to choose whether to give birth or not at their free will, just like they do when deciding marriage. There would be no fundamental difference from the present society if the ideal society denies human free will. I have no doubt that the difficulties in getting married for economic reasons would be solved in the future. However, that cannot be directly linked to the conclusion that women will no longer need reproductive choice. In the same manner, the uselessness of contraception for economic reasons should be distinguished from the issue of birth control as women's rights to decide on motherhood.[178]

Thus, Yamakawa put emphasis on voluntary motherhood by representing women's reproduction within the domain of individual rights. Her insistence on reproduction as an individual right suggests that Yamakawa's understanding of sex was already politicized in the language of individual will. On the contrary, Ishikawa and many contemporary socialists, who argued against contraception, left reproduction in the realm of nature, that is to say, the depoliticized sexuality of women. From their economic-centered view, motherhood which was assumed to be in the realm of nature would improve in a socialist state founded on economic equality and technological advance. Thus, the question of the proper place of women's bodies either nature or

[178] Ibid., 247.

culture—in the realm of depoliticized sexuality or the domain of politics—was crucial in the socialist debate on the rights and wrongs of contraception. While anti-birth control socialists depoliticized reproduction by naturalizing it as a women's sexual function, Yamakawa strove to politicize reproduction by placing it into the language of modern political rights.

It was this new political terrain of reproduction upon which Yamakawa agreed with Sanger's birth control movement. Neither Sanger nor Yamakawa had authority to define the notion of voluntary motherhood. Rather, their arguments for voluntary motherhood were structured by different tactics and by specific social contexts. In addition, such acts of asserting the right to voluntary motherhood simultaneously created the different meanings of voluntary motherhood. For Sanger, it was overpopulation that had to be addressed while women's reproductive choice was a solution to the problematized population, and more significantly, a new political niche for women. On the other hand, Yamakawa tackled intersectionality between sex and class. For Yamakawa, women's reproductive choice was the means of protest against the depoliticized realm of reproduction in the socialist movement. Ironically, the different definitions of voluntary motherhood were analogous to each other in terms of the politicization of motherhood. For both, reproduction had been in the politics of sex where motherhood had been represented as the terrain of nature by androcentrism. By the same reasoning, reproduction had to be in a different politics of sex where women could exercise their individual rights instead of obeying the laws of mothers' nature.

Birth Control for Japanese Mothers: Ishimoto Shizue's Eugenic Feminism[179]

Ishimoto Shizue was another vociferous feminist in support of birth control since the beginning of 1920s. Like Yamakawa, she made an effort to justify the socioeconomic necessity and the morality of birth control practice as a leading ideologue during the 1920s. In the early 1930s, her involvement with the birth control movement as an ideologue shifted to include more directly encouraging birth control practices while she operated a birth control clinic in Tokyo. While the form of her birth control advocacy work changed over time, the underlying idea of her vocal support for birth control remained consistent. Her thought was anchored in Neo-Malthusianism, eugenics, and feminism.

In many cases, Ishimoto's logic for justifying birth control was similar to that of Sanger. As described previously, Sanger supported women's free choice to reproduction by reframing women's reproductive role as a scientific means to control the quality and quantity of population. Birth control and eugenics were the new tactics and language of feminism, by which the improvement of women's political status joined forces with the improvement of race. This refashioned feminism, or "eugenic feminism"—a term I adopt to indicate the historical link between the feminist movements for gender equality and the eugenic idea of racial betterment—echoed in Ishimoto's argument for birth control. Ishimoto also found new political potential for

[179] I borrowed the term Eugenic Feminism from Asha Nadkarni in her book *Eugenic Feminism: Reproductive Nationalism in the United States and India* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014). Nadkarni adopts "eugenic feminism" to illuminate the historical link between feminism, eugenics, and nation-state (nationalism) in the twentieth century India and the United States. Agreeing with Nadkarni's definition of eugenic feminism that "a specific kind of maternal feminist investment in biological reproduction, biological reproduction as the means of progress and improvement, as the platform for women's rights within the state," I will adopt this term in explaining how Ishimoto's advocacy for birth control was closely linked to her political pursuit of women's empowerment, the goal of eugenics, and nationalism. Nadkarni, *Eugenic Feminism*, 7.

women's reproductive roles by imaging birth control as a scientific solution for overpopulation and racial degeneration. In view of this, it is not exaggerated to liken Ishimoto to "the Margaret Sanger of Japan."[180]

In August 1921, Ishimoto published a pamphlet titled "*Shin-marusasu shugi* (Neo-Malthusianism)."[181] The concept of *Shin-marusasu shugi* and the thrust of its argument for contraception were already being discussed among Japanese intellectuals at that time.[182] Debates over the pros and cons of controlling fertility revealed a vague and confusing distinction between Neo-Malthusianism (*Shin-marusasu shugi*), birth control (*sanji seigen* or *basu kontororu*), and contraception (*hinin*). The ambiguity of terminology itself was a symptom of the numerous issues surrounding birth control. Ishimoto was one of the pro-birth control participants in this struggle for the justification of birth control. Her pamphlet *Shin-marusasu shugi* can be read as her initial effort to justify birth control in relation to specific social problems.

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[180] Both historically and academically, Ishimoto has been likened to Sanger, given their personal relationship, and Sanger's influence on Ishimoto's birth control movement in prewar times and her family planning project in postwar years. It also cannot be overlooked that both were eulogized as the pioneering figures of the birth control movement in each country in terms of humanitarian and progressive movements. However, simple comparison between two figures based on their personal relationship or humanitarian feminism can be problematic because it may overlook the complexity of the discourses of reproduction in a particular social context while idolizing two figures on the ground of their contribution to women's liberation. As for the existing studies focusing on Ishimoto's leading role in the birth control movement in Japan, see Elise K. Tipton, "Birth Control and the Population Problem," in *Society and the State in Interwar Japan*, ed. Elise K. Tipton (New York: Routledge, 1997), 42-62; "Ishimoto Shizue: The Margaret Sanger of Japan," *Women's History Review* 6, no. 3 (1997): 337-55; Aiko Takeuchi-Demirci, "Birth Control and Socialism: The Frustration of Margaret Sanger and Ishimoto Shizue's Mission," *The Journal of American-East Asian relations* 17 no. 3 (2010): 257-80.

[181] Ishimoto Shizue, *Shin-marusasu shugi*, Nihon Pamphlet Hakkosho, August 1921.

[182] The main platform for the public discussion of the pros and cons of birth control was a popular or general interest magazine. For example, the August 1920 issue of *fujin kōron*, one of the representative women's magazine during the Taishō period, ran an article titled "Waga kuni no genjō ni terashite mita hinin kahiron (The pros and cons over contraception in view of the current situation in our nation)" that contained diverse opinions on the necessity of contraception in Japan in comparison to the contemporary Western countries. Meanwhile, the October 1920 issue of *Kaizo*, the magazine mainly focused on the progressive ideas of the time, published an article with a title of "Shin-marusasu kenkyū (The study of Neo-Malthusianism)" containing the socialist critiques of Neo-Malthusianism.

> *Sanji seigen* or birth control in English can be paraphrased as "voluntarily having a child" in the original sense. In other words, it means that giving birth to a child when one wants to. Recently, people in America are using a term voluntary parenthood [or motherhood] or *jishuteki bosei* to refer to giving birth to a child when one wants to be parents. However, insofar as we live in the era of capitalism under which parents' duty of childrearing is a social convention, "voluntarily having a child" necessarily pursues the goal of *sanji seigen*. Therefore, it is inevitably appropriate to translate birth control as *sanji seigen*.[183]

As seen above, Ishimoto introduced two terms for controlling fertility: voluntary motherhood and birth control. According to Ishimoto, voluntary motherhood, translated to *jishuteki bosei* or in a more literal sense autonomous motherhood, referred to a women's free choice to have a child. "Birth control," or *sanji seigen* was used when emphasizing the socioeconomic reasons for contraception. Thus, the two terms were distinguished from each other when the specific purpose of contraception was explicitly expressed. In other words, the term voluntary motherhood was employed to empower mothers to reproduce at their will. The term "birth control" was often used when addressing the malaise of capitalism by controlling reproduction.

Despite this distinction between the two terms, voluntary motherhood and birth control were not necessarily mutually exclusive, but rather exemplified the multilayered advantages of contraception from Ishimoto's viewpoint. In fact, the

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[183] Ishimoto, *Shin-marusasu shugi*, 1. It is unclear that Ishimoto meant to use voluntary parenthood in this paragraph, given that she translated it into "*jishuteki bosei*," or autonomous motherhood in literal translation. Voluntary parenthood is possibly a misprint for "voluntary motherhood," given the Japanese translation and also the historical context of the American birth control movement. As for the latter, Sanger advocated for voluntary motherhood while there was another group named the "Voluntary Parenthood League" led by a Feminist activist Mary Ware Dennett. In early 1920s, Sanger and Dennett were rivalries due to their advocacy of different strategies for the birth control movement. Considering Ishimoto's sympathy for Sanger, "voluntary motherhood" appears to be correct in this paragraph. As for the relationship between Sanger and Dennett, see Coates, *Margaret Sanger and the Origin of the Birth Control Movement*, 188-189.

unsettled terminology opened up space for a potentially productive public debate of contraception. As a pioneering participant in that discussion, Ishimoto stressed the urgent need for the birth control practice in the light of the population problem on one hand, and the liberation of women on the other.

Ishimoto raised population issues in the context of the Neo-Malthusian concerns. For Ishimoto, Neo-Malthusianism pinpointed the "problem" of excess population and predicted Japan's population crisis in the near future. The breakout of the First World War was interpreted as being a disastrous result of an immoderate increase in population in European countries. This "population problem" in terms of its excessive quantities was closely associated with the quality of population and life. In view of cultural life (*bunka seikatsu*) as a desirable form of modern life, Ishimoto pointed out that the quality of life, encompassing physical health, the advanced mode of living, the levels of income and consumption, among the European population decreased as the rates of human reproduction increased.[184]

Meanwhile, Ishimoto interpreted Japan's population crisis through European situation. She reasoned that the imbalance between population growth and food resources in Japan was worse than that in European countries; Japan's mountainous territory which made agriculture difficult and high population density. Ishimoto presented Japan's population problem as a fait accompli, and hence, a solution had to be found to reduce the population size. In other words, "the population problem" was the discursive concept which simultaneously created the problem of overpopulation and its desirable solution, rather than it merely analyzed the actual cause of social

[184] Ishimoto, *Shin-marusasu shugi*, 2-6.

problems. The causal link between uncontrolled fertility and a wide range of social problems formed a discursive structure of problem, in which Ishimoto linked overpopulation with social poverty and living difficulties. Insofar as the uncontrolled fertility of Japanese people was the root cause of such socioeconomic problems, birth control was already a determined solution.

Women's liberation was another crucial factor in Ishimoto's advocacy for birth control. In the pamphlet "*Shin-marusasu shugi*," Ishimoto claimed that Japanese women's social status was relatively low because they lacked "time" and "money" to develop and liberate themselves. This dearth of time and money was a result of women's frequent pregnancies, and the physical and economic burdens of childrearing and domestic labor.[185] Ishimoto pointed out that uncontrolled fertility was not only the reason for women's mental and physical exhaustion, but also had a detrimental effect on the health of Japanese children. The link between birth control and children's health points to Ishimoto's embrace of eugenics. In her use of eugenics as the expected effect of birth control, the question of whether genetic or environmental factors was more determinant in human reproduction was less important than the goal of eugenics itself. In other words, eugenics was synonymous with its goal, that is, the reproduction of mentally and physically healthy offspring. Healthy, enlightened mothers who practiced birth control were seen as embodying this goal of eugenics.

One can notice a sudden substitution of the goal of women's liberation to the goal of eugenic reproduction. How did the former guarantee the latter, or conversely in what sense did the latter necessitate the former? What is the implication of the gap

[185] Ibid., 8-12.

between women and mothers in this transposition? As already seen, Sanger also advocated for women's reproductive choice in pursuit of the goal of eugenics. For her, birth control was not only a means of liberating women from their roles as breeding machines, but also a way of enhancing their political status as the key agent who could solve the "population problem." Likewise, Ishimoto shed new light on the link between women's empowerment and the ultimate resolution of the population problem. In the light of this eugenic feminism, Ishimoto concluded that "the only solution for the population problem in Japan is birth control … [it is] primarily a women's issue. It is not strange at all that the population problem that has troubled great male politicians so far can be resolved by women."[186] The goal of women's liberation was not synonymous with women's civil freedom, but rather the rearrangement of gender norms through an altered meaning of reproduction. For Ishimoto, reproducing children itself was no longer the desirable norm for women. Instead, reproducing healthy children was women's new norm.

There was a paradox in the link between feminism and eugenics: the focus on women as mothers. In other words, women's liberation from their duty of "involuntary" motherhood still depended on women's reproductive role. The differences were that desirable mothers could control their fertility, and that mothers were political subjects only to the extent that their reproductive role influenced the total national population. Initially, Ishimoto championed women's liberation as one of the chief principles of birth control while, at the same time, arguing that "voluntary motherhood" would strengthen motherhood. Her article titled "Women's liberation

[186] Ibid., 13.

and birth control" published in the first issue of *Small Family* exemplifies this ambivalence of women's liberation.

> The birth control movement is a prerequisite for the issue of women's liberation. We women have been ruled by slavish morality and have resigned themselves to the forced duty of motherhood. However, times have changed. The motherhood in the true sense becomes possible only when a married woman who is physically, mentally, and financially qualified to be a mother gives birth to a beloved baby at her own will. In light of this, birth control can be interpreted as voluntary motherhood.[187]

For Ishimoto, voluntary motherhood was an ideal form of motherhood as well as a condition for the liberation of women. In other words, women's freedom was mediated by their motherhood, particularly eugenic-minded mothers. According to this logic, women were not only reduced to mothers, or at least potential mothers with reproductive functions. They were also granted new morality, that is, the science of birth control and eugenics in place of conventional sexual morality. The significance of motherhood in terms of eugenics was highlighted in the concept of voluntary motherhood.

Although this term itself was borrowed from Sanger, there was a difference in direction between the two definitions of voluntary motherhood. For Ishimoto, it was motherhood that conditioned women's reproductive choice whereas Sanger noted that women's autonomy outweighed motherhood. Sanger's claim that "[v]oluntary motherhood…, [that] morality will, first of all, prevent the submergence of womanhood into motherhood" clearly shows Sanger's privileging of the self-

[187] Ishimoto Shizue, "Fujin kaihō to sanji chōsetsu (Women's liberation and birth control)," reprinted in *Sei to Seishoku No Jinken Mondai Shiryō Shūsei*, vol. 14, 3. Originally published in *Shōkazoku* 1 (May 1922), 6.

awareness of women.[188] Meanwhile, the differences between Ishimoto and Yamakawa in reconfiguring voluntary motherhood was obvious. While Ishimoto attempted to endow women with political agency through their reproductive roles, Yamakawa considered women's reproductive choices as an expression of their innate political subjectivity. The differences between the multiple definition of "motherhood" depended upon the vision for political subjectivity each individual birth control advocate pursued.

In fact, the issues of motherhood and womanhood were not new in feminist discussion in Japan. The motherhood protection debate (*bosei hogo ronsō*) between 1918 and 1919 was a watershed for early feminism, which was largely divided into two strains: feminists who argued for the rights of mother (*boken*) on one hand, and those who advocated for the rights of woman (*joken*) on the other. Two pioneering feminists, Hiratsuka Raichō and Yosano Akiko opposed to each other in this earlier motherhood protection debate. Endorsing the Swedish feminist Ellen Key's ultimate maternalism, Hiratsuka supported the rights of mothers whereas Yosano advocated for improving the rights of women by helping women gain economic independence based on Olive Schreiner's claim.[189]

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[188] Sanger, *Woman and the New Race*, 226.

[189] Hiratsuka and the members of Seitō enthusiastically introduced Ellen Key's maternal feminism in Japan through translating and discussing her representative work *Love and Marriage* (New York and London: G.P. Putnam's sons, 1911) and *the Century of the Child* (New York and London: G.P. Putnam's sons, 1909) between 1913 and 1916. Hiratsuka particularly emphasized the importance of motherhood as the foundation of womanhood in pursuit of new gender ideology. On Hiratsuka's favorable reception of Key's thoughts, see Dina Lowy, "Love and Marriage: Ellen Key and Hiratsuka Raichō Explore Alternatives," *Women's Studies* 33, no. 4 (2004): 361-380; Meanwhile, Olive Schreiner who was the South African author of *Women and Labor* (London: T.F. Unwin, 1911) and an advocate for women's economic independence was another influential figure in early Japanese feminism. In the Japanese feminist discourses of the 1910s, Schreiner's condemnation of the condition of women's domesticity as sex-parasitism was often contrasted with Key's emphasis on the protection of motherhood. For more on Yosano's response to Schreiner' feminist thoughts, see Laurel Rasplica Rodd, "Yosano Akiko and the

These two feminist voices sharply conflicted on issues of gender equality and gender differences. Working to improve the status of women and increase sex equality, Yosano argued for women's economic independence through their participation in the paid labor force. For Yosano, domestic labor, including reproduction, nurturing, and various household chores, was nothing more than "parasitism (*iraishugi*)," and by the same reasoning, the governmental protection of domestic work would result in an intensification of women's economic dependency and their servitude. In contrast, Yosano's disavowal of the value of domestic work, Hiratsuka argued that the state should provide social assistance for the protection of motherhood. Influenced by Key's view on the importance of motherhood, which she considered the natural vocation of women, Hiratsuka believed that the rights of mothers were central to women's rights. The inevitable conflict between the rights of women and the rights of mothers reveals a fundamental discrepancy in acknowledging gender equality and difference. For Yosano, gender equality was the ultimate goal whereas for Hiratsuka, gender difference had to be protected as a means for ensuring equality.

Years later, Ishimoto's advocacy for motherhood would resemble Hiratsuka's argument for protecting motherhood. Ishimoto also pursued equality between men and women by strengthening women's distinctive reproductive roles. However, it was not precisely the mother's rights that Ishimoto attempted to uphold. Rather, she emphasized mothers' political and biological responsibility for national or racial progress. Moreover, reproduction was not simply women's inborn nature; it was also

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Taisho Debate over the "New Woman"," in *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600-1945*, ed. Gail Lee Bernstein (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 175-198.

an important component in the political economy, i.e., Neo-Malthusianism as well as an important part of the science of eugenics. Thus, Ishimoto's eugenic feminism was different from the feminist argument for mother's rights in terms of the coupling of women's bodies and population control. By reconfiguring this simultaneously biological and ideological coupling, she replaced the protection of motherhood with a new improvement of motherhood. Motherhood was not an end in itself, but a way of pursuing population control and race betterment.

As her involvement in the birth control movement deepened, Ishimoto's insistence upon the link between women's reproductive role and population control became increasingly clear. Ishimoto newly defined birth control that "[b]irth control (*sanji seigen*) is a conscious control of population, far from race suicide or the advocacy for sinful abortions. What birth control aims is to breed the better humans based on individuals' self-consciousness" in the pamphlet of *Chōsetsukai*.[190] This statement illuminates the fact that Ishimoto's eugenic feminism called for women's self-conscious embrace of responsibility for the future human bodies such as population (*jinkō*), race (*jinshu*), and ultimately humankind (*jinrui*) instead of women's liberation.

Ishimoto does not address how the different human categories she mentioned—for example, population, race, and humankind—relate to one another in her eugenic feminism. Does the obscure demarcation between race and population, or the abstract organic relationship between population and humankind disclose a weakness of Ishimoto's argument? Otherwise, what are the effects of her

[190] Ishimoto Shizue, *Sanji seigen ron o sho hōmen yori kansatsu shi te*, 1.

representation of universal homogeneity in a specifically biological sense? Ishimoto's silence on the relationship between population, race, and humankind allows an ideological vision of organic community in which individual bodies directly connect to racial bodies which in turn, become all humankind. Such ideology functions to produce political subjects among individuals, as Louis Althusser theorizes ideology as a "representation of the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence."[191] Althusser's notion of ideology can be paraphrased as "the representation of the imaginary organic relationship of individuals whose real conditions of lives are rearranged by the knowledge of life," like the biological community Ishimoto envisioned.

Neo-Malthusianism and eugenics were the knowledge of life which transformed individuals into biological subjects. In particular, what these modern forms of knowledge specifically created was not precisely the sameness of bodies, but a series of dichotomous relations of living beings, such as the superior and the inferior, the fit and the unfit, and the we-race and other-races and so forth. The way Ishimoto problematized overpopulation, namely the "the sharp increase in the size of the unhealthy population" who would "burden the superior and healthy humankind and diminish national strength"[192] clearly illustrates what Foucault terms "a biological-

[191] Althusser suggests the twofold attribute of ideology with regard to its transformative relationship between imaginary and reality, by arguing that ideologies "do make allusion to reality, and that they need only be 'interpreted' to discover the reality of the world behind their imaginary representation of that world (ideology = illusion/ allusion)." Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses: Notes toward an Investigation," in *Lenin and Philosophy, and Other Essays* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972), 109-110.

[192] Ishimoto, *Sanji seigen ron o sho hōmen yori kansatsu shi te*, 2-8.

type relationship."[193] Put it simply, the decrease in the population of the unfit ensures the proliferation of the fit. On the basis of this biological logic, Ishimoto demanded selective birth control depending on the quality of bodies as a solution to the population problem. Individual bodies were never equal in terms of their qualities; bodies were differentiated between the superior and the inferior ones. Furthermore, women were subjected not only to the autonomous choice of giving birth or not giving birth, but also to the ethical categories of "being entitled to give birth" and "being banned from giving birth." This combination of Neo-Malthusianism and eugenics functioned as an objective and preventive science by which reproductive rights and norms were rationalized.

In 1931, Ishimoto resumed her movement for birth control after a brief hiatus during the mid to late 1920s.[194] In May 1932, she organized *Nihon Sanji Chōsetsu Fujin Domei* (the Women's Birth Control League of Japan, hereafter *Fujin Domei*), the first women's birth control advocacy group in Japan with a number of liberal feminists involved in the women's suffrage movement, Kawasaki Natsu and Niizuma Itoko, the labor activist Akamatsu Tsuneko, a daughter of Yamamuro Gunpei and a Christian who worked for the salvation army Yamamuro Tamiko, and Yamamoto

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[193] Foucault refers to the "biological-type relationship" as the fundamental mechanism of biopower, namely, a modern form of power ceaselessly addressing the biological continuum of life while creating the caesuras within it. The creation of caesuras is what Foucault calls "racism." According to him, racism in modern biopower conditions a twofold technology in terms of making our species proliferate through eliminating other species. Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 255.

[194] During this hiatus from birth control advocacy, Ishimoto was still involved in other social movements. She participated in the League for the Attainment of Women's Political Rights (*Fujin Sanseiken Kakutoku Kisei Dōmeikai*), an organization for women's suffrage movement founded in 1924, and renamed "Women's Suffrage League (*Fusen Kakutoku Dōmei*)" about one year later. In the late 1920s, however, she limited her social activities mainly because of marital discord. Her marriage with Baron Ishimoto virtually ended in 1936 when they attempted to divorce but failed because of their *kazoku*—the hereditary peerage in modern Japan—social status. Hopper, *Katô Shidzue*, 37-9.

Sugiko, a female medical doctor.[195] The chief aim of this group was to educate women in the specific methods of contraception, provide medical guidance regarding birth control, and to manufacture and sell contraceptive devices.[196] In Ishimoto's birth control movement in the early 1930s, there was an obvious shift primarily form from textual and ideological activities to more practical and technological education campaign. The operation of birth control clinics in the Shinagawa district of Tokyo since 1934, and the manufacture and sales of contraceptive devices such as pessaries and jellies became the new channel by which Ishimoto promoted birth control, and further attempted to transform individual women into self-conscious subjects of population control.

This shift in the strategies of birth control movement, however, did not necessarily mean the absence of ideological justifications. Motherhood and biological relationships which had been emphasized in Ishimoto's eugenic feminism took on a more specific form of "Japanese mothers." One of the pamphlets published by *Fujin Domei*, titled "*Sechigarai yononaka ni* (In a world full of difficulties)" illustrates how motherhood and organic bodies were articulated as being the basis of the family and the nation-state.[197] The family and the nation-state constituted the two poles of birth control practice in a sense that the former was the principal unit of reproduction

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[195] In June 1931, one year before the foundation of the Women's Birth Control League of Japan, Ishimoto participated in the Japan Birth Control League (*Nihon Sanji Chōsetsu Renmei*) as a president of the organization. The group was organized to bring activists involved in the birth control movement together across ideological lines, but ended up being short-lived mainly due to the conflicting interests between Ishimoto and Majima Kan, the chief director of the group. After the dissolution of the *Nihon Sanji Chōsetsu Renmei*, a number of female members including Ishimoto, Kawasaki, and Niizuma founded the Women's Birth Control League of Japan. Ogino, *Kazoku keikaku e no michi*, 55-57.

[196] Ishimoto Shizue, *Sanji chōsetsu no kokoroe* (The knowledge of birth control) (September 1936), reprinted in *Sei to seishoku no jinken mondai shiryō shūsei*, vol. 7, 290-292.

[197] Nihon Sanji Chōsetsu Fujin Dōmei, *Sechigarai yononaka ni* (In a world full of difficulties) (February 1934), reprinted in *Sei to seishoku no jinken mondai shiryō shūsei*, vol. 7, 130.

whereas the latter demarcated the line within which a biological relationship could be considered effective. The slogan for women's liberation was replaced with family-oriented emphasis on the protection of mothers, particularly, the bodies of mothers (*botai*). What determined the importance of a mother's physicality was her reproductive role, that is, giving birth only to the number of children one can afford, and reproducing and raising healthy children. Moreover, the bodies of mothers were represented as a basic biological unit which the health of the nation-state depended on.[198] The following statement illuminates the convergence of nationalism with eugenic feminism, which paradoxically reduced women to breeding machines, which should be "healthy." In the above-mentioned pamphlet, *Fujin Domei* declares:

> A child is a family treasure as well as a social treasure. Giving birth to a child is the vocation of a woman (*josei*). We, Japanese women, should give birth to strong children for the society, and to good children for the family.[199]

This declaration presented to "Japanese women" reveals the complex structure of women's gender identity. Those who were identified as "Japanese women" belonged to a specific gender which was defined by their connections to family,

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[198] In the mid 1930s, there was a feminist movement calling for the law for the protection of motherhood led by women's suffrage movement groups. The first organization named the Alliance for the Promotion of a Mother and Child Protection Act (*Bosei Hogo Hō Setei Sokushin Fujin Renmei*) was founded in 1934, with the aims of institutionalizing the financial assistance to mothers with the burden of raising their children. In the next year, the group was renamed as "Motherhood Protection Alliance (*Bosei Hogo Renmei*)" and reorganized in concert with social work organizations. The groups' appeal of the enactment of the Mother and Child Protection Act eventually was passed by the Japanese parliament in 1937, although the main goal of the law veered to the reproduction of strong human resources for the state-led war. Ishimoto was also a member of the Motherhood Protection Alliance, which reveals another example of the complicity between her eugenic feminism and nationalism. As for the prewar feminist movement for the motherhood protection law, see Mackie, *Feminism In Modern Japan*, 104-106; Imai Konomi, "The Study on the Process of Enacting *Boshi-hogo hō*: An Analysis of the Activism of the Maternal Protection Union," *Osaka University of Health and Sport Sciences* 1 (2004): 67-84.

[199] Nihon Sanji Chōsetsu Fujin Dōmei, *Sechigarai yononaka ni*, 130.

society, and the nation-state. Women's physicality and reproduction, namely their sex, was central in determining "womanhood" as their gender identity. However, it should be noted that sex was hardly natural, but biopolitical in its discursive construction. The centrality of reproduction in female sexuality itself was the political-cum-scientific product for creating the eugenic chain of life which moved from healthy mothers to healthy offspring, and further onto a healthy nation. While Ishimoto previously maintained the ambiguity of universal bodily categories in her eugenic feminism, the representation of organic bodies became enclosed by a national border. In place of the ambiguous terrain between womanhood and motherhood, Ishimoto reconfigured women as mothers, or at least potential mothers, whose vocation was to have children, and morally to have healthy children. Thus, Ishimoto's long pursuit for eugenic feminism remained consistent to her birth control movement, and also took a concrete form by drawing both the national border and a biological chain around mother's bodies.

Reproduction, Evolving Questions of Politics

This chapter delved into the multifaceted meanings, objectives, and questions of motherhood in Japanese feminists' advocacy for birth control during the interwar period. Feminists' arguments for birth control practice mainly adopted the notion of voluntary motherhood to link the empowerment of women with women's free choice to reproduction. Although the political representation of motherhood was commonly shared by pro-birth control feminists, there was also difference among feminist voices depended on different ideological views toward the politico-economic system. Hence,

the feminist debate on birth control was hardly limited to the women's issues isolated from the social structure, but was embedded in the contemporary social context. Simultaneously, the context was reconfigured as a series of problems related to questions of women, reproduction, and population.

Two prominent Japanese feminists discussed in this chapter, Yamakawa Kikue and Ishimoto Shizue illustrate this multiple, conflicting nature of the birth control debate. As Yamakawa's socialist view exemplifies, the question of birth control created a discursive space which unsettled the relationship between production and reproduction under capitalism; it also upset the desired location of women between sex and class. In this space, Yamakawa's advocacy for birth control was not only a magnifying lens that reflected the double shackle of women under the patriarchal capitalist system, but also a new channel for protesting against that oppressive system by means of a birth strike. Ishimoto's argument illustrates the discursive coupling of feminism, eugenics, and nationalism. Ishimoto regarded birth control as a new political niche for the empowerment of women. Her argument was based on eugenic concerns with population quality and a nationalist vision of an organic biological community. Through this process, women were reduced to their reproductive roles and motherhood was redefined along two lines of national borders as well as placed in a biological hierarchy.

This chapter began with a question about implications of multilayered feminist voices for birth control within the contemporary social context. I have shown the irony embedded in the convergence of multiple voices into the goal of birth control. However, divergent and convergent feminist arguments reveal the political centrality

of reproduction. Reproduction lay at the center of politico-economic concerns. In particular, concerns about the reproduction of the labor force in a capitalist system, the population of the nation-state, and that of desired life in eugenics, were emphasized. These different goals of reproduction were not separate from each other. They were closely related in the discourse of birth control. Therefore, the feminists' questions of reproduction were simultaneously the symptoms of the politico-economic representation of reproduction, and the respective critiques of it, that is, the formation of women's political subjectivity by means of reproductive autonomy. Regardless of Japanese feminists' different ideological visions, the discursive link between the voluntary control of reproduction and women's autonomy was consistent in the feminist voices.

CHAPTER 5

Interwar Governmentality: Population, Colonialism, and Science

The Government of Population

The previous three chapters focused on Japanese birth control advocates who addressed the population problem from different angles. Neo-Malthusian reformers attributed the fundamental cause of social ills—unemployment; poverty; and physical, mental, and moral deterioration—to overpopulation. Pro-birth control class activists dismissed the idea of overpopulation as catering to the interests of the bourgeois class. They reframed birth control as a means of self-defense for the proletariat. Meanwhile, feminists who engaged in the birth control movement invariably prioritized the goals of women's empowerment and reproductive self-determination, regardless of the different ideological positions held among them. These different patterns of the birth control movement during the interwar years, however, had much in common in terms of their sympathy for eugenic ideas and, essentially, for social and technological interventions into individual reproductive practices.

This chapter turns to the roles of governmental elites in the development of population policies during the interwar period. Compared to birth control advocacy groups who had raised population issues since the late 1910s, the Japanese government was a latecomer to discourses about the population problem. It was not until the late 1920s that the Japanese government began to realize the importance of comprehensive governmental control of the population and to institutionalize population studies against the backdrop of economic depression and the rise in agrarian and industrial disputes. However, one big difference existed between birth

control advocates and governmental elites: the pros and cons of using birth control methods. While birth control advocates spoke with one voice about spreading adequate knowledge and methods of birth control among the masses to solve whatever social problems the advocates were tackling, the elites who were involved in the making of population policies strictly opposed the idea of birth control. Governmental elites were not only skeptical of the effectiveness of birth control in curbing population growth, they also adopted a comprehensive approach for the government of the population.

The comprehensive agenda of the interwar population policies aimed at regulating and managing multifaceted dimensions of population: population quantity and quality, density, birth-rates and death-rates, the standard of living, public health, sanitation, employment, distribution of resources, food production and consumption, and so forth. For governmental elites, the population problem did not refer to a single issue; rather, the population itself had to be problematized in multiple ways in order to be scientifically studied and managed according to governmental policies. The development of comprehensive population policies during the interwar period laid the foundation for wartime population management (1938-1945), and later on, for postwar welfare policies. The importance of the interwar population policies lies in the facts that the agenda for the comprehensive government of the population crystalized into the establishment of the Ministry of Health and Welfare (*Koseishō*) and the National Eugenic Law during wartime, and afterward into a series of postwar policies including the Eugenic Protection Law of 1948 and a family-planning campaign that began in the mid-1950s.

In this chapter, I will trace the development of the principles of the interwar population policies. These principles range from multiple definitions of the population problem to the emphasis on scientific research about population phenomena, as well as to the necessity of a permanent national institution to regulate and manage the population. The primary bodies that laid down such principles during the interwar period include the Population and Food Problems Investigation Committee (*Jinkō Shokuryō Mondai Chōsakai*, established in 1927 and dissolved in 1930) and the Institute for the Research of Population Problems (*Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūkai*, established in 1933). In addition to these two governmental research institutes, this chapter will focus on two power elites: diplomat and agricultural economist Nitobe Inazō (1862-1933) and bureaucrat and social reformer Nagai Tōru (1878-1973). Both Nitobe and Nagai led the foundation of governmental institutions in their pursuit of scientific research on various population issues and they designed a comprehensive agenda for the government of population.

The history of the formation of interwar population policies provides a revealing look at Foucault's theory of governmentality. Using the notion "governmentality," Foucault highlights a complex form of power that emerged in the eighteenth century, and which primarily has "as its target population, as its principal form of knowledge political economy, and as its essential technical means apparatuses of security."[200] Through this new ensemble of modern political apparatuses that modified, if not entirely abolished, the preceding sovereignty mode, population became reconfigured as the end of the government for the first time in history. This

[200] Foucault, "Governmentality," 102.

chapter will delve into three strands of inquiry, which will add concrete historical dynamics to Foucault's distinctive understanding of the modern form of power: first, population both as a multifaceted problem and the target of the government; second, the roles of governmental elites—intellectuals and experts who were involved in the policy-making process—in rationalizing a series of instruments for governing the population; and last, the intersection of governmentality and colonialism.

The Emergence of the Science of the Japanese Population

The population problem had been a buzzword among intellectuals and social reformers since the late 1910s in Japan. Neo-Malthusian reformers such as Abe Isoo and Ishimoto Shizue initiated a public discussion about overpopulation in Japan. These reformers interpreted the extended economic downturn and growing social unrest after the end of the temporary economic boom during the First World War as being caused by surplus population. Malthus' theory on population growth and the food supply was revived and recreated by these Japanese reformers who reduced a series of social and economic problems to the problem of population. Meanwhile, proletarian activists and Marxian intellectuals like Yamamoto Senji, Yamakawa Kikue, and Kawakami Hajime saw overpopulation as a relative term. For these Marxist critics, the cause of pressing social problems, particularly rising unemployment and poverty in both urban and rural areas, was irrelevant to absolute population size; the fault undoubtedly lay in a capitalist system. While dismissing overpopulation as a mere illusion, they identified the essential problem as capitalism, or more specifically as capitalism's unfair ways of controlling the means of production and distribution of

resources.

The debate on the Japanese population problem between sociologist and economist Takada Yasuma (1883-1972) and Marxist economist Kawakami Hajime (1879-1946) in the mid-1920s is another symbolic event that shows different or even conflicting interpretations regarding the population problem. The debate was triggered when Takada published his paper "*Umeyo Ueyo* (Be fruitful and multiply)" in 1926. Takada claimed that the real problem was the decrease in birth rates in comparison with other civilized nations. In opposition to both Neo-Malthusianism and Marxism, Takada adhered to a distinct view on the population problem while advocating for lowering the standard of living to solve poverty.[201] Meanwhile, Kawakami Hajime criticized Takada in his pamphlet titled "*Jinkō Mondai Hihan* (Critiques of the Population Problem)" in 1927 by arguing that a wage reduction was only for the benefit of capitalists.[202] This debate between Takada and Kawakami developed into further population debates among economists and demographers that lasted until the mid-1930s. The continuing debates were mainly focused on whether the cause of poverty was overpopulation or the uneven distribution of wealth in the capitalist system.

Whereas intellectuals and social reformers began turning to the population problem and resultant social problems as early as the late 1910s, the Japanese government belatedly joined the debate over the population problem. It was not until 1927 that the government recognized the gravity of the problem and took action at an

[201] Takada Yasuma, "*Umeyo ueyo* (Be fruitful and multiply)," *Keizaiōrai* (Economic Correspondence) 1, no. 5 (1926), 15-16.
[202] Kawakami Hjime, *Jinkō Mondai Hihan* (Critiques of the Population Problem), (Tokyo: Sōbunkaku, 1927), 51-57.

institutional level. The establishment of the Population and Food Problems Investigation Committee (hereafter the Investigation Committee) in the Cabinet was the first step by the government toward conducting scientific research on the Japanese population and the development of population policies. Although the Investigation Committee remained a temporary body, it took an initiating role in outlining the primary agenda of population policies during the years of 1927-1930. The Investigation Committee was largely divided into two parts: the Department of Population (*Jinkō-bu*) and the Department of Food (*Shokuryō-bu*). Both consisted of bureaucrats, politicians, businessmen, experts, and professors in diverse fields—particularly economics, sociology, demographics, agriculture, and biology.[203] As an advisory group to the government, these governmental elites created a bridge between research and policies.

As its name suggests, the Investigation Committee was mainly focused on the problems of population and food resources. Given a marked lack of consensus in social and intellectual realms regarding the definition of the population problem, it is worth looking closely at how the Investigation Committee defined the population problem and what their solutions were. Nagai Tōru, a leading member of the Department of Population, provides a revealing glimpse into the Committee's distinctive view, not only of the population problem but more fundamentally of the population itself.

A society consists of its people and is geographically divided. What

[203] Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūkai (The Society for Population Problem Studies), *Jinkō mondai kenkyūkai 50-nen ryakushi* (A Fifty-Year History of the Society for Population Problem Studies) (Tokyo: Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūkai, 1983), 3-8.

> limits the society's productivity is its resources whether they are above ground or underground. Productivity is also regulated by social organizations formed among the people, particularly economic organizations. In addition, other factors such as national mentality and social traditions combine to condition and determine productivity. In this light, population problems not only arise between the productivity of a nation or a society as a whole and the size of the population who composes the society. The causes and conditions of the population problems also lie in different factors including natural resources, social organizations, and national mentality.[204]

As a social policy specialist, Nagai shed new light on the complexity of the population problem in a society. The complex causes of the problem included environmental and socioeconomic structures, national productivity, and characteristics of a population that might affect social relations and economic behavior. Nagai's distinctive view of the population problem is also noticeable in his critique of both Malthusian and Marxian framings of the problem. Despite ostensible differences between the two groups, Nagai pointed out that neither Malthusian nor Marxist advocates penetrated the essence of the population problem, but merely replaced the problem with something else. While Malthusians equated the problem with food resource issues or poverty under the rubric "overpopulation," Marxists reduced the problem to that of labor or unemployment according to the simple law of the relation between wage labor and capital.[205] Instead, Nagai turned to "social scientific" or "sociological" approaches to population.[206] His emphasis on the social complexity of the population problem marks a sharp break from both Malthus' absolute law of

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[204] Nagai Tōru, *Nihon jinkōron* (The Study of the Japanese Population) (Tokyo: Ganshōdō Shoten, 1929), 64-65.
[205] Nagai Tōru, "Kajō jinkō no jitsugyō to no kankei wo ronjite jinkō mondai no honshitsu ni oyobu (Towards the essence of the population problem by discussing about the relation between overpopulation and unemployment)," *Jinkō mondai* (The Population Problem) 1, no. 3 (1936): 37-41.
[206] Nagai, *Nihon jinkōron*, 19.

population and Marx' ideological critique of capitalism.[207]

The reframing of the population problem as a set of complex social problems was groundbreaking in two senses: First, addressing the population problem no longer meant removing a single cause of the problem (whether the cause was overpopulation or capitalist exploitation). Instead, the population *per se* became the target of government. In other words, the population had to be problematized in multiple ways, and intervened into by bureaucratic, scientific, and technological apparatuses so that it could be managed at an optimal level. It was imperative for Nagai to use "population problems" in the plural to indicate a wide range of elements in human lives—from the variable to the invariable, and from the environmental to the biological. Second, insofar as population "problems" arise out of complex social relations, each society has its own problems that are different from those of other societies. Nagai highlighted the nation-state as a necessary condition for a society to exist; he argued that "it is an established fact that the modern population problem deals with the whole society in a nation-state—the state comprised of a certain ethnic society (*minzoku shakai*)—and its ethnic group (*minzoku*) or its people (*kokumin*)."[208] For Nagai, just as the border of a society was drawn along the national border, the population problems had to be demarcated along its national territorial line. The need to formulate the theory of the Japanese population problem arose from this national border.

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[207] In many articles, Nagai traced the trajectory of population theories, beginning from Malthus' theory of population and food to Darwin's theory of evolution to Marx's study of capitalism. For this stream of intellectual history, Nagai noted that theories of the law of population had moved from economics to biology, then to social Darwinism, and finally to socialism. His emphasis on social science and sociology, therefore, reveals his effort to keep a critical distance from the existing theories and to reframe the law of population. Nagai Tōru, "Sekai no jinkō-ron yori nihon no jinkō-ron e (From the global theory of population to the Japanese theory of population) (I)," *Taiyō* (The Sun) 34, no. 1 (1928): 2-10.

[208] Nagai, *Nihon jinkōron*, 32.

Nagai's ideas for reframing the population problem were crystalized in the Investigation Committee. Given Nagai's crucial role in designing the agenda of the Committee and drafting reports for submission to the government, it is no exaggeration to say that the agenda and activities of the Committee were largely a reflection of Nagai's interest in the social scientific study of the Japanese population.[209] During the years of 1927-1930, the Department of Population in the Investigation Committee published a total of eight official reports about Mainland Japan and its colonies on a wide range of population problems and possible solutions. The subjects of the official reports are as follows: 1) domestic and overseas migration policy, 2) the control of supply and demand for labor, 3) population policies outside Mainland Japan, 4) population control measures, 5) increases in productivity, 6) the distribution of resources for living and the rationalization of consumption, 7) the establishment of a permanent body for the investigation of population problems, and 8) the establishment of the Ministry of Social Affairs (*shakai-shō*).[210]

Among the varied pressing issues and solutions suggested by the Investigation Committee, the report on population control measures ("*Jinkō tōsei ni kansuru sho-hōsaku*") embodied an effort to integrate the different modes of knowledge needed for the government of the population. As the following outline of the report shows, the population problem lay at the nexus of statistics, demographics, medicine, public

[209] The Department of Population in the Investigation Committee submitted a total of eight reports on the population problems in Japan to the government during the years of 1927-1930. Nagai took the lead in drafting all the reports for the Department of Population that dealt with various population issues including emigration, labor demands, colonial policies, population control, productivity, resource distribution, and consumption. For Nagai's drafts and the official reports of the Department of Population, see Jinkō shokuryō mondai chōsakai, *Jinkō shokuryō mondai chōsakai jinkō-bu tōshin setsumei* (A description of the reports of the Department of Population by the Population and Food Problems Investigation Committee), (Tokyo: Jinkō shokuryō mondai chōsakai, 1930).
[210] Ibid., 1-3.

hygiene, and eugenics. These different modes of modern knowledge determined particular ways in which the population was problematized, rather than merely functioning as a toolkit for analyzing the actual problems.

> Even if the population is in sound living conditions, it is impossible to improve national strength and promote industry without measures for population control. According to the dynamic statistics of the Japanese population, the death rate remains high with little possibility of decline. Moreover, because of the remarkably high birth rate, the natural population growth rate continues to rise. This pattern, categorized as "high fecundity and high mortality," is more noticeable in rural farming areas and places with lower standards of living than in urban areas. Especially, when compared with other countries, Japan has a lower life expectancy and a smaller working-age population due to the high mortality of infants, children, and adolescents. The higher mortality of female adolescents than male adolescents is particularly a matter of serious concern. With regard to solutions for the population problem in Japan, there is an urgent need to improve such living conditions, and to create a healthy population both in quantity and quality.[211]

The Investigation Committee diagnosed the Japanese population problems from multiple angles. The problems included high fecundity and high mortality, low life expectancy, low numbers in the working-age population, poor living conditions, and low standards of living. Varied statistical data on the Japanese population also showed marked differences in demographic patterns between rural and urban areas, male and female populations, and among age groups. All these demographic indicators highlighted peculiar patterns of the Japanese population that were different from other nation-states. Furthermore, the population problems as a reflection of national character contributed to justifying the state's control of its population in order to meet its aims: "create a healthy Japanese population both in quality and quantity."

The notion of "population control," therefore, did not necessarily refer to

[211] Ibid., 56-57.

measures for decreasing the population size. The Investigation Committee proposed various measures for population control, which exemplifies a comprehensive approach to the lives of the Japanese people. According to the report on population control, the measures ranged from the improvement of social infrastructure—including sanitation and hygiene facilities; the protection of female, child, and adolescent workers from labor exploitation; and social services for the protection of motherhood and childhood—to the improvement of individual physical and reproductive health, including physical and nutritional education for women; medical consultation about marriage, pregnancy, and contraception; the regulation of illegitimate sales and promotion of contraceptives; and investigations of eugenics-related facilities.[212] These various measures to integrate social reforms with biological betterment, and the population as a whole with the health of each individual, embody what Foucault calls "governmentality." Foucault highlights the purposes of modern government as "the welfare of the population, the improvement of its condition, the increase of its wealth, longevity, health, etc."[213] In other words, the primary role of the modern state lies in the government of population. The report on the population control measures was the blueprint for the government of the Japanese population, more specifically, for regulating, managing, and optimizing the lives of the Japanese population.

Women's physical and reproductive health was of a particular concern in the blueprint for the government of the Japanese population. Just as birth control advocates focused on women's bodies as the key factor for solving the population problem, the Investigation Committee showed great interest in improving women's

[212] Ibid., 57-58.
[213] Foucault, "Governmentality," 100.

physical and reproductive health as a primary means for improving the health of the population as whole. However, there was a sharp difference between the Investigation Committee and birth control advocates in their views on birth control. While birth control advocates, particularly Neo-Malthusian activists, justified the use of birth control methods in their concern over high birth-rates and the resultant overpopulation, the Investigation Committee held a defensive attitude toward birth control, mainly for the following two reasons: First, their aim was neither decreasing birth-rates nor reducing the population size, but decreasing death-rates by improving socioeconomic conditions. The second reason, which is not irrelevant to the first, is that the Committee gave importance to the welfare of the population and their physical and mental health. Unlike the birth control advocates who saw women's bodies as a means of controlling population size and improving population quality, the Committee members regarded women's health as the target of the government itself. For these reasons, the Investigation Committee attempted to limit the use of birth control to only eugenic grounds or hereditary reasons, and apply strict restrictions on the illegitimate sale and promotion of contraceptives.[214] The latter idea came to fruition when the Harmful Contraceptive Devices Control Regulation (*Yūgai hinin yō kigu torishimari*

[214] The drafts of the report on population control provide more a detailed explanation of why the members of the Department of Population demanded that the use of birth control be minimized. Nagai, who drafted the report, argued that since birth control was merely a stopgap measure, there should be more fundamental ways of controlling the quantity and quality of the population in order to address Japan's peculiar demographic issues such as high birth-rates and death-rates, and high marriage-rates and divorce-rates. Nagai's defensive attitude toward the use of birth control is manifested also in his other writings. For example, in an article published in 1928, Nagai highlighted that the only necessary condition for promoting birth control was to ensure the health and welfare of the population. For Nagai, the role of social institutions ought to have priority over individual responsibility in implementing contraceptive measures. His conditional approval of birth control gives a glimpse into institutional and technological apparatuses for the government of the population. Jinkō shokuryō mondai chōsakai, *jinkō-bu tōshin setsumei*, 39-40; Nagai Tōru. "Sekai no jinkō-ron yori nihon no jinkō-ron e (II)." *Taiyō* 34, no. 2 (1928): 14.

kisoku) was issued by the Home Ministry in 1930.[215]

As seen so far, the Investigation Committee laid the groundwork for the reframing of population problems and the population itself. The health and welfare of the Japanese population became the priority of population control, or to put it in other terms, the government of the Japanese population. The Investigation Committee stated that population problems, or the effects of various state apparatuses for problematizing the lives of its people, ought to be addressed by each nation-state based upon a full understanding of its peculiar population patterns. Hence, for the Committee members, the state's role in the government of the population and in comprehensive, long-term research of various population patterns were the two most important principles to be implemented at the institutional level. Among the reports of the Department of Population, the seventh report on the establishment of a permanent body for the investigation of population problems particularly stressed such principles. Since the Investigation Committee was set to expire by the end of March 1930, leading elites on the Committee looked for ways to continue implementing the principles of increasing the state's roles and collecting academic knowledge.

Ironically, this blueprint for "Japanizing" the systems and knowledge for the government of population reflected an international trend at that time in the scientific discourse on populations. The birth of the International Union for the Scientific Investigation of Population Problems (IUSIPP) in 1928 was a symbolic event for increasing international cooperation for collecting demographic data and integrating

[215] Norgren, *Abortion before Birth Control*, 28-29.

knowledge and skills about the government of populations.[216] The purposes of the IUSIPP, articulated in its statutes, reveal its specific strategy to make scientific research as well as national and international institutions the global norm of population control.

> (A) To initiate and organize researches which depend upon international cooperation, to provide for the scientific discussion of the results of such researches, and to publish them without duplicating the publications of existing international statistical agencies. (B) To facilitate the establishment of common standards for the collection, tabulation, and analysis of data regarding human populations, including not only demographic, but also agricultural, economic, sociologic, and biologic data in the broadest sense. (C) To serve as a clearing house for the interchange of information about population, for the purpose of facilitating research. (D) To cooperate to the fullest extent with other organizations of a scientific character having similar objects. (E) The Union confines itself solely to scientific investigation in the strict sense, and refuses either to enter upon religious, moral, or political discussion, or as a Union to support a policy regarding population, of any sort whatever, particularly in the direction either of increased or of diminished birth rates.[217]

As both its name and statutes denote, the IUSIPP sought a "scientific" approach to the investigation of each nation's population issues and "international" benchmarks for such scientific knowledge. Here, the term science encompassed

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[216] The IUSIPP was founded in 1928 following a resolution made in the World Population Conference in Geneva in September 1927. The participants in the Population Conference agreed upon the need for a permanent organization for international cooperation in the scientific investigation of population problems. This eventually came to fruition in the following year. In July 1928, the IUSIPP members had their first general Assembly in Paris and completed the Statutes of the Union. The initial members of the IUSIPP came from twelve nations including Belguim, Denmark, France, Great Britain, Greece, Holland, Italy, South America (as a whole), Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States. Raymond Pearl, an American biologist, was elected as the first president. The IUSIPP was reorganized as the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population in 1947, and has continued its international activities since then in conjunction with the United Nations (UN). "Interim Report of the Proceedings of the First General Assembly of the International Union for the Scientific Investigation of Population Problems," *Journal of the American Statistical Association* 23, no. 163 (1928): 306-317; Matthew James Connelly, *Fatal Misconception: The Struggle to Control World Population* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008), 70-74.

[217] *Bulletin of the International Union for the Scientific Investigation of Population Problems* 1, no. 1 (October 1929): 1-2.

different forms of knowledge including sociology, economics, agriculture, demographics, and biology. The plan to establish common standards at the international level aimed at collecting national data on each population and integrating that data into international knowledge.

Nitobe Inazō—the former Under-Secretary General of the League of Nations who became the Head of the Japanese delegation at the Institute of Pacific Relations after his return to Japan in 1926— paid great attention to this growing international cooperation for facilitating the scientific study of populations. While serving as a member of the Investigation Committee, Nitobe took the initiative in establishing a permanent organization for scientific research about the Japanese population. He also conceived the idea of developing the permanent organization into a liaison with the IUISSP. In his recommendation to the government, submitted in February in 1928, Nitobe stressed the necessity for an academic research institution that consisted of experts in population problems to contribute to communicating with the IUISSP and to resolving domestic population problems.[218] The Department of Population officially adopted this suggestion made by Nitobe and submitted a recommendation to the permanent investigating organization to the government in January in 1930. According to the report, the main purposes of the permanent organization included academic research on the domestic population—i.e., basic demographic research, scientific research on population control, investigation of solutions to population problems, theoretical study of the population and its related problems, presentations and publications about the results of research, lectures on population issues, and, as an

[218] Nitobe Inazō, "Nitobe Ianzō iin ikensho (Nitobe Inazō's statement of opinion)," in *Jinkō mondai kenkyūkai 50-nen ryakushi*, 8.

official IUISPP member, sending Japanese delegates to the IUISPP.[219] This recommendation eventually came to fruition in 1933, when the Institute for the Research of Population Problems (hereafter the Research Institute) was founded as a semi-public organization.

The continuity between the Investigation Committee and the Research Institute lay in the long-term pursuit of comprehensive research—whether it be called scientific or social science—on population problems. The Research Institute was not merely a successor to the Investigation Committee, but also its successful product that would serve as a mediator between the State's population policies and scientific research. However, changing domestic and international political conditions beginning in the early 1930s also played a considerable role in the design and implementation of population policies. In particular, in terms of potential sources of food supply or land for Japanese settlement, the Manchurian Incident of 1931 and the establishment of Manchukuo in 1932 as the puppet state of the Japanese empire created new conditions for the population problems in Mainland Japan. How did the governmental elites of the Research Institute view Japan's growing military and economic expansion into Manchuria? What was the relationship between colonialism and the government of population in the Japanese Empire? In the following sections, I will delve into the intersection between colonialism and governmentality by focusing on the Japanese governmental elites' changing ideas of population policies in the 1930s. By focusing on Nitobe's conception of colonial government, Section 3 explores how governmental

[219] Nagai Tōru (drafter), "Jinkō mondai ni kansuru jōsetsu chōsa kikan setchi ni kansuru kengian (A recommendation to establish a permanent investigating organization about population problems)," in *Jinkō mondai kenkyūkai 50-nen ryakushi*, 20.

elites conceived the roles of Japan's colonies in resolving the population issues in the Mainland before the Manchurian crisis arose. Section 4 turns to the remaking of population policies after the founding of Manchukuo in 1932.

Colonization as a Solution to the Population Problems in the Metropole

Despite controversy over the overpopulation problem, the increase in the absolute population numbers in Mainland Japan had been an undeniable fact from the late Meiji period onward. According to the national census, the population of Mainland Japan had been growing by more than 700,000-800,000 every year since 1926. Ueda Tejirō, a demographer involved in the Research Institute, estimated that the population in Mainland Japan would increase from 60 million in the late 1920s to 90 million in the late 1950s, given the consistent tendency of the population to grow.[220] Moreover, a high population density in relation to insufficient arable land in the Mainland was another pressing concern for those who demanded scientific population policies. In particular, demographers and economists viewed the density indicator from a socio-economic angle. For example, Nasu Hiroshi, professor of agricultural economics at Tokyo Imperial University, stressed the increase in both agricultural and industrial productivity and the promotion of Japanese emigration as a means to relieve population pressure in the Mainland.[221] Socio-economic solutions to the high population density marked a departure from the Malthusian theory of

[220] Ueda Teijirō, *Nihon jinkō seisaku* (Japan's Population Policies) (Tokyo: Chikura Shobō, 1937), 61-62.

[221] Nasu Hiroshi, *Jinkō shokuryō mondai* (Population and food problem) (Tokyo: Nihon Hyōron-sha, 1927), 97-163. Meanwhile, Ueda Teijirō also claimed that industrial and commercial development was an imperative for solving the high population density issue. Despite differences in detail, both Nasu and Ueda pursued the improvement of national productivity as a solution to the population density instead of relying upon birth control. Ueda Teijirō, *Shin jiyū shugi* (Neo-Liberalism) (Tokyo: Dōbunkan, 1927), 140-151.

population; put another way, population growth was no longer an inexorable law of nature, but a social condition to be addressed by institutional interventions.

Among various possible solutions to population growth and the high population density in the Mainland, emigration (*imin*) was often a subject of debate in the 1920s. As soon as the Investigation Committee was founded in 1927, the Committee members launched an investigation into the current economic and demographic conditions of Japan's colonies and foreign territories under military occupation, and determined the effectiveness of emigration for relieving the population problems in the Mainland.[222] The report on population solutions outside of Mainland Japan (*Naichi igai sho chihō ni okeru jinkō taisaku*) provides a glimpse into governmental elites' initially negative outlook on Japanese emigration. In the report, the Committee members articulated the practical difficulty of promoting mass emigration and the risk of fomenting instability in colonized and native societies.[223] The fact that the colonies had not heretofore functioned as an outlet for the Japanese labor population, due to differences in the standards of living and labor costs between the metropole and colonies, was obvious proof that reinforced their negative outlook on emigration.[224] Given the many barriers to encouraging Japanese immigration to the

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[222] Since Japanese immigration to the United States was halted as a result of the Immigration Act of 1924, possible destinations for Japanese emigrants were mostly limited to the Japanese Empire's spheres of influence, including Korea, Taiwan, Karafuto, North China, Manchuria, Mongolia, Siberia, and the South Seas Islands (*Nanyō*). Chōsun Sōtokufu (The Governor-General of Korea) et al., *Jinkō Mondai ni Kansuru Hōsaku no Sankōan* (A Reference for solutions to population problems) (Keijō: Chōsun Sōtokufu, 1927).

[223] Jinkō shokuryō mondai chōsakai, *jinkō-bu tōshin setsumei*, 23-5.

[224] In the mid-1920s, demographic statistics proved that colonies failed to absorb surplus population in Mainland Japan, particularly Japanese farmers who would settle in the colonies. In Colonial Korea, despite long-term efforts by the colonial government and the Oriental Development Company (*Tōyō Takushoku*) to encourage Japanese farmers to immigrate to the Korean peninsula after the annexation, the number of Japanese immigrants increased by merely 17,000 per year (total 440,000 immigrants). Likewise, Japanese immigrant farmers in Taiwan only accounted for 2 percent (in number 4,000) out of the 180,000 immigrants. Colonial administrations were also well aware of the practical difficulty of

colonies, the Investigation Committee concluded that the role of the colonies in resolving the population problems in the metropole should be limited to an increase in Japan's productivity and the use of available resources through the development and utilization of economic resources in the colonies. The following comments in the report sum up the Committee's preference for colonial economic development over mass emigration.

> There are many factors that need to be carefully considered with regards to population problems in territories outside of the Mainland, particularly Chōsun [*sic*] and Taiwan. The population problems in exterior territories cannot be overlooked; not only because of their effects on the population problems in the Mainland Japan, but also because planting (*ishoku*) many Japanese people in the territories outside the Mainland might cause insecurity among local people, and in fact, mass settlement is impossible to fulfill. Moreover, the goal of taking measures for population policies in other territories such as Manchuria, Mongolia, Siberia, and the South Islands is not to curb Japanese population growth, but to improve national productivity through reclaiming land, developing natural resources, and advancing industry in those territories.[225]

The governmental elites' skepticism about Japanese settlement in the colonies is closely interwoven with the question of different forms of colonialism. In particular, the question whether the colonies should be integrated into the Japanese Empire only as a resource provider or for long-term settlement by Japanese became a primary

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promoting Japanese colonial migration. For example, the Governor-General of Korea reported in 1927 that the barriers to Japanese migration to Korea included a lack of understanding about Korea's local situation, a Japanese tendency to stay in the Mainland, different standards of living between the Mainland and colonial Korea, insufficient infrastructure in Korea in terms of police, hygiene, education, transportation, and entertainment, and Korea's poor productivity. Nagai, *Nihon jinkōron*, 196-197; Chōsun Sōtokufu, *Jinkō Mondai ni Kansuru Hōsaku no Sankōan*, 8-9.

[225] Jinkō shokuryō mondai chōsakai, *jinkō-bu tōshin setsumei*, 23-24.

criterion for assessing the population policies in the metropole.[226] However, it cannot be overlooked that colonialism itself, whatever its form is—whether exploiting the native workers to produce the resources necessary to improve the economy of the metropole, or having the colonizers permanently settle on the native land to exploit resources in the colonies—was thought to be indispensable for solving the population problems in Mainland Japan. Given this, the fact that the governmental elites initially gave priority to economic development in the colonies over Japanese migration hardly reflects an anti-colonial attitude. On the contrary, their idea of associating colonial development with population control in the metropole exemplifies the complex layers of colonialism: more specifically, the governmentality of the metropole and its impacts on the nature of colonial regimes and vice versa.

Nitobe Inazō was an especially prominent leading figure amongst the bureaucratic and academic elites who opposed settler colonies while acknowledging the role of colonialism in relieving the population problems. As a professor teaching colonial policy at Sapporo Agricultural College (*Sapporo nōgakko*) in the 1890s and Tokyo Imperial University in the 1910s, Nitobe espoused colonial studies (*shokumingaku)*, that is, the scientific study of the principles of colonial government. His lectures at Tokyo University on colonial policies reflect his distinctive view of colonialism as an evolving system of rules over time: from political and militarist expansion into foreign territories, to the diffusion of advanced cultural values to the

[226] The former types of colonies ("where trade, resource extraction, or port facilities were primary") are categorized as "exploitation colonies"; while the latter (where the colonizers permanently settled in with political and cultural baggage from the metropole) are "settler colonies." For historically different forms of colonialism, see Robert Young, *Empire, Colony, Postcolony* (Chichester, West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., 2015), 31.

colonized peoples. Nitobe's well-known phrase that "colonialism is the spread of civilization (*Shokumin wa bunmei no denpa*)" represents not only a euphemism for military and economic expansionism, but also his aspiration for colonialism as a civilizing mission to be fulfilled in Japan's neighboring colonies.[227]

Although the ways in which Nitobe justified colonial expansion seemingly resemble Social Darwinism, he did not overlook the drawbacks of civilization, particularly the economic hardships and social conflicts caused by industrial development. Interestingly, Nitobe's ambivalent position toward civilization remained unproblematic because he understood colonialism as a part of the international order rather than as a pseudo-natural law—i.e., the survival of the fittest. For Nitobe, internationalism, or "the coordination of many powers" by his definition, was a historical condition in which a nation could expand itself into other nations.[228] In other words, colonialism was not incompatible with the international system unless a nation's expansion into other territories disturb an equilibrium among the colonizing powers. Nitobe noted that whereas Social Darwinist thinking was merely the dominant rhetoric used among the nineteenth-century Western powers for justifying colonization, it was the international order—manifested as diplomatic relations and international

[227] Nitobe Inazō, et al. *Nitobe Hakase shokumin seisaku kōgi oyobi ronbunshū* (Collections of lectures and dissertations by Dr. Nitobe on Colonial Policies) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1943), 172.

[228] At the Institute of Pacific Relations (IPR) Conference held in Kyoto in 1929, Nitobe, who at the time served as the head of the Japanese delegation and a chairman of the conference sessions, gave a speech about Japan's preparedness for international co-operation. This speech clearly reveals his distinctive understanding of internationalism not merely as a system of diplomatic relations, but as "the coordination of many powers of mind—of intellect, emotion and will" that should be educated and trained for obtaining a membership of international society. "Nitobe Says Japan for Co-operation—Head of Japanese Delegation to Kyoto Conference Tells Nation's Will to Aid," *The Trans-Pacific*, November 7, 1929, 9.

laws—that sanctioned colonial expansions in the twentieth century.[229] Given that, nationalism and colonialism were harmoniously embedded in Nitobe's aspirations for internationalism.

While Nitobe firmly justified colonialism under the rubrics of civilization and internationalism, the question as to which form of colonialism Japan should adopt remained problematic. For Nitobe, the high population density and resultant social issues in Mainland Japan were indispensable considerations for shaping the policies of colonial government. Regardless of the fact that "*shokumin*," colonization in Japanese, originally referred to "planting people," Nitobe often conveyed skepticism about settler colonies as the preferred option for the Japanese Empire. There were largely two reasons for Nitobe's opposition to Japanese settlement in the colonies: his critical view of Malthusian overpopulation concerns and the infeasibility of a mass migration large enough to solve social problems in the Mainland. The former reason was undergirded by many cases of European nations such as Belgium, whose population was relatively small but who colonized Congo in pursuit of its commercial interests; or

[229] In his articles and lectures, Nitobe repeatedly highlighted close links between colonialism and nationalism, and between nationalism and internationalism. In a lecture titled "Japan's Colonization," Nitobe defined the history of colonization as that of a nation's self-assertion, implying that a national unity was a necessary condition for colonial expansion. Meanwhile, at the IPR Conference in 1929, he also noted that "the international mind is the expansion of the national." This statement gives a glimpse into his view of internationalism as a harmonious, coordinated regime consisting of different nations. Nitobe Inazō, "Nihon no shokumin (Japan's Colonization)," in *Nitobe Inazō zenshū* (The complete works of Nitobe Inazō) vol. 21 (Tokyo: Kyōbunkan, 1986), 483-493. "Opening Address at the Kyoto Conference of the Institute of Pacific Relations (Given on October 28, 1929)," in *The Works of Inazō Nitobe* vol. 5 (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1972), 352-359. For colonialism and nationalism embedded in Nitobe's internationalist aspirations, see Thomas W. Burkman, *Japan and the League of Nations: Empire and World Order, 1914-1938* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008), 142-164.; Alexis Dudden, "Japanese colonial control in international terms," *Japanese Studies* 25 no. 1(2005): 1-20; Kitaoka Shinichi, "Nitobe Inazō ni okeru teikoku shugi to kokusai shugi (Nitobe Inazō's imperialism and internationalism)," in *Tōgō to shihai no ronri* (Logics of unification and rule), ed. by Asada Kyōji, vol. 4 of *Iwanami kōza kindai nihon to shokuminchi* (Iwanami lecture series: modern Japan and its colonies) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1993), 179-203.

Italy and Ireland, who because of their high population density became sender countries of migrants, mostly to the United States, at the turn of the twentieth century. Nitobe used these European cases as references to support his point that there was no essential link between overpopulation and colonization.[230] With regard to the second reason, Nitobe noted that the promotion of Japanese settlement in the colonized territories was only a temporary and passive measure that was ineffective in relieving the Japanese people of the population pressure in the Mainland. Nitobe's persistent skepticism about the promotion of colonial settlements is well exemplified in his statement at the IPR Conference in 1929 that "emigration afforded no possible aid to the nation's problem."[231]

Then, for Nitobe, what was an ideal form of colonial government to solve the population problems in Mainland Japan? Throughout his long-term career as an expert in colonial studies, Nitobe put more stress on economic development in Japan's colonies than on colonial settlement policy. In particular, his experience as a colonial officer serving for the Taiwan Government General in the 1900s provided him with an example of successful colonial government policies. During his stay in Taiwan, Nitobe initiated a series of economic development policies ranging from the industrialization and mechanization of sugar production to market expansion for the sugar trade. Nitobe's efforts to promote the sugar industry influenced his thoughts on the principles of colonial government. One of the principles was that the process of

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[230] Nitobe Inazō, et al. *Nitobe Hakase shokumin seisaku kōgi oyobi ronbunshū*, 11-13; Nitobe Inazō, "Shokumin no shūkyoku mokuteki (The ultimate goal of colonization)," reprinted in *Nitobe Hakase shokumin seisaku kōgi oyobi ronbunshū*, 382-401. Originally published in *Hōgaku kyōkai zasshi* 31 no. 12 (1913).

[231] "Japan's Soul is in Its Food Problems—Professor Nasu Says Food and Population Questions Are Very Deep," *The Trans-Pacific*, November 21, 1929, 11.

integrating the economy of the colonies with that of the metropole—by investing capital, reforming agriculture, rationalizing production, exploiting native resources and workers—was crucial for Mainland Japan to overcome the limits of productivity and sustain the livelihoods of its population.[232] According to his view, colonization was a part of the economic planning of the metropole, and more fundamentally, the population policies of the metropole.[233]

The idea of integrating colonial policies into the population policies of Mainland Japan did not remain a minority view, but was reflected in the reports of the Investigation Committee and resonated with Nitobe's contemporaries. As shown above, the report on population solutions outside of Mainland Japan outlined an agenda for developing resources in colonial and foreign territories. The priority goal of colonial or semi-colonial development was to sustain the Japanese population or even advance their lives in Mainland Japan rather than to improve the living conditions of the native people in the colonies. Another report by the Committee on increases in productivity ("*seisanryoku zōshin ni kansuru tōshin-an*," submitted to the government in December, 1929) also included an agenda for increasing the supply of natural resources both from domestic and foreign territories, which echoed the idea of combining colonial economic development with metropolitan governmentality.[234]

Meanwhile, Yanaihara Tadao, who was a disciple of Nitobe at Tokyo

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[232] Nitobe, "Nihon no shokumin," 483.

[233] As for Nitobe's plan to promote the sugar industry in Taiwan, Ryū Fumihiko notes that colonial industrialization played a crucial role in the economic policies of the Japanese Empire, particularly in terms of the colonial division of labor between Mainland Japan as core and its colonies as periphery. While I agree with Ryū's point, my analysis also sheds light on the importance of population policies in shaping the economic plans of the Empire. Ryū Fumihiko, "Nitobe Inazō no Taiwan tōgyō seisaku to shokumin shiso no tenkai (The development of Inazō Nitobe's Taiwan sugar industry policy and his colonial thoughts)," *Asia bunka kenkyū* 14 (2007): 73.

[234] Jinkō shokuryō mondai chōsakai, *jinkō-bu tōshin setsumei*, 83-84.

University and followed in his footsteps by assuming the chair in colonial policy between 1923 and 1937, had a view similar to Nitobe's about solutions for the population problems in the Mainland. Inspired by the thoughts of Marx and Lenin, Yanaihara emphasized that the central issue of the population problems lay in unemployment, while criticizing as a fear-mongering tactic the Malthusian hypothesis about the lack of food production. Although Yanaihara did not overlook various possible options for relieving the population problems in the Mainland, ranging from industrial and technological development to emigration or settlement in the colonies, he concluded that the primary solution was the improvement of socioeconomic systems. In particular, Yanaihara noted that emigration had limited effects on the decrease in absolute population size; and furthermore, Japanese emigrants were outnumbered by immigrants from the colonies. Yanaihara's initially skeptical attitude toward the promotion of emigration and settlement in the colonies as a solution for population problems culminated in his opposition to the program of mass migration to Manchuria in the mid-1930s.[235]

In September 1931, two years before Nitobe died, the Kwantung Army invaded Manchuria following the Mukden Incident. The Japanese military operations in Manchuria lasted more than a year and resulted in the founding of the puppet state

[235] Yanaihara's thoughts on population problems in both national and international contexts, and possible solutions including emigration, colonization, and social, technological, economic improvement, are found in his book titled "*Jinkō mondai* (Population problems)." (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1928). Also, for secondary sources on Yanaihara's thoughts on emigration and colonization, see Susan C. Townsend, *Yanaihara Tadao and Japanese Colonial Policy: Redeeming Empire* (Richmond: Curzon, 2000), 70-98; Yang Shin Park, "The New Horizons of Colonial Policy Studies and Recognition of Manchurian Problems - Focusing on Tadao Yanaihara's Arguments," *Journal of Manchurian Studies* 21(2016): 157-188; and Murakami Katsuhiko, "Yanaihara Tadaō ni okeru shokuminron to shokumin seisaku (Yanaihara Tadaō's theory on colonialism and colonial policy)," in *Iwanami kōza kindai nihon to shokuminchi* vol. 4., 205-237.

of Manchukuo in February 1932. The continued aggressive policy and military operations in the Manchurian region in the early 1930s put Nitobe, who had emphasized international cooperation while denying Japan's interest in colonizing Manchuria and Mongolia, in a difficult position. Between 1932 and 1933, he took a lecture trip to the United States in the capacity of the Chairman of the Japanese delegation of IPR. A series of lectures Nitobe gave to American audiences reveals the dilemma between his long-term aspirations for internationalism and the growing military expansionism in the Mainland. Despite this newly unfolding conflict in Manchuria, however, the question of incorporating the economic resources of the colonies into solutions for the population problems in the metropole remained unproblematic. In one of his lectures given in 1932, Nitobe's comment about Manchuria as "the lifeline of Japan" reveals his persistent effort to justify the fact that colonization was essential for the lives of the Japanese population.[236]

> I have said, over and over again, that unless Japan can develop industries, she cannot exist. In the country itself there are not sufficient materials for industry, little coal, less iron, and a very small amount of oil. All these are found in abundance in Manchuria, and Japanese capital has developed the mines. Then, even for the prosperity of our agricultural industry, we must import fertilizers, and the best of them, soya bean cakes, are obtainable in Manchuria. This is why that region is called the lifeline of Japan.[237]

As seen so far, Japanese governmental elites had put emphasis on colonial

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[236] The slogan "Manchuria as Japan's lifeline" was used by politicians and militarists who supported Japanese expansion into Manchuria. Matsuoka Yōsuke, who was a diplomat and known for his speech condemning the League of Nations and announcing Japan's withdrawal in 1933, is credited as the first person to use the phrase "lifeline." This slogan was used to propagate a utopian image of Manchuria, as well as the importance of its territory for Japan's national defense and economic development. Townsend, *Yanaihara Tadao and Japanese Colonial Policy*, 177-178; Park, "The New Horizons of Colonial Policy Studies and Recognition of Manchurian Problems," 171.

[237] Nitobe, "The Manchurian Question and Sino-Japanese Relations (xi.21.1932)," in *The Works of Inazō Nitobe*, 231-232.

development as a means to support the population in the metropole, while the promotion of settlement colonies had remained a vexed question until the early 1930s. The creation of Manchukuo in 1932 marked a watershed in the discourse of population problems in Japan. The utopian image of Manchuria as fertile soil for Japanese settlers and as an outlet for an overflowing population in the metropole gained ascendancy throughout the 1930s due to the impact of the Manchurian settlement campaign. How did governmental elites respond to this new frontier? How did the establishment of Manchukuo create a new condition for Japan's population policies? With a focus on the Research Institute, the next section delves into the remaking of population policies after the founding of Manchukuo.

Agrarian-Imperialism and the Resurrection of Malthusian Rhetoric

The early 1930s was a turbulent period in Japan in both political and economic terms. The domestic political scene in Mainland Japan witnessed a succession of short-lived cabinets due to the growing military influence and the instability of the parliamentary system that symbolized the end of so-called Taishō Democracy. The rise in militarism was more evident in international politics. A series of Japan's militarist and imperialist moves—from Japanese territorial expansion into Manchuria in 1931 to the creation of Manchukuo in 1932 to Japan's withdrawal from the League of Nations in 1933—opened a rapid path toward Pan-Asianism, an imperialist vision that would replace internationalism. Meanwhile, the Japanese economy between 1930 and 1932 was shaken by the repercussion of the Great Depression. In particular, the rural economy was more vulnerable than were urban areas due to the sharp decline in

agricultural prices and income levels. Rural problems (*nōsōn mondai*) emerged as a major issue to be addressed during the Shōwa Depression.[238]

It was against this backdrop of political and economic turmoil that the Institute for the Research of Population Problem was founded through co-operation between the government and private sectors. The original decision to establish a permanent research institution for the study of population problems was made in 1931 by the Imperial Diet. A series of replacements for the prime minister, however, impeded a budgetary allocation for the founding of the Research Institute.[239] After three years of delays, the Institute was finally founded on October 27, 1933, under the military government led by former admiral Saitō Makoto. The birth of the Institute was an outcome of cooperation between the state, private, and academic sectors. The Home Ministry proposed the bill to form a research organization, while private foundations funded it by giving it two thousand yen in the first year of its establishment. Its members included governmental elites who were previously involved in the Investigation Committee, such as Nagai Tōru, Ueda Tejirō, Nasu Hiroshi, statistician and politician Yanagisawa Yasutoshi, and businessman Inoue Masaji. Under the

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[238] Compared to 1926, rice prices dropped by 50% in 1931 and annual agricultural income per household fell from 1,162 to 414 Yen. Sericulture was one of the most damaged parts of the Japanese rural economy during this period due to the sharp decline in demand for Japanese silk. The prices of raw silk dropped by one-third between 1925 and 1929, and another one-third in 1931 alone. Penelope Francks, *Rural Economic Development In Japan: From the Nineteenth Century to the Pacific War* (London: Routledge, 2006), 209-217; Thomas R. H. Havens, *Farm and Nation In Modern Japan: Agrarian Nationalism, 1870-1940*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), 135-141.

[239] Hamaguchi Osachi (in office between March 1931-April 1931) was shot by a member of an ultranationalist secret society and was forced to resign due to severe injuries. Wakatsuki Reijirō who replaced Hamaguchi was ineffective in controlling the military and eventually resigned after serving as Prime Minister for only seven months. For another six months, from December 1931 to May 1932, Inukai Tsuyoshi was in office, but he also failed to control the growing power of the military. After Inukai was assassinated, Saitō Makoto, who was a former admiral in the Imperial Japanese Navy, became Prime Minister from May 1932 to July 1934. After that, the cabinets were taken over mostly by military men until the end of the Asia-Pacific War. Marius B. Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2000), 590-592.

leadership of the first chairman Yanagisawa, the Research Institute was involved in a wide array of activities—investigations of population problems and possible solutions, holding public lectures, publishing an official organ titled "*Jinkō mondai*" (with a total of 24 issues between February 1935 and March 1944), and attending international population conferences (e.g. the IUISPP Conference in Berlin in 1935).[240] The members of the Institute served as a bridge between the government and the academy through these diverse activities.

It should be noted that the rise of militarism and the protracted economic crisis, on both the domestic and international scenes, impacted the purpose of the Research Institute. Despite the fact that the Research Institute succeeded the previous Investigation Committee to pursue scientific and comprehensive studies of population problems, there was a notable difference between the two organizations in the scope of their investigations: in contrast to the former Committee that maintained its negative outlook toward Japanese emigration and settlement to the colonies, its successor paid serious attention to the "emigration and settlement" option as a promising solution to the population problems in the Mainland. Yanagisawa's speech at the first open lecture of the Research Institute, held in Tokyo in December 1933, exemplifies the government elites' shifting opinion on the relationship between population problems and colonization. In his opening speech, Yanagisawa highlighted the two main goals of the Research Institute from domestic and international standpoints: one goal was to pursue scientific investigations of solutions to population problems and general demographic phenomena; whereas the other goal was to study colonial policies that

[240] For the brief history of the Research Committee, see Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūkai, *Jinkō mondai kenkyūkai 50-nen ryakushi*, 25-39.

would promote Japanese emigration and settlement into the colonies, and contribute to the growth of the Japanese race.[241] Yanagisawa's idea of associating the metropole's population problems with colonial settlement policies marked a sharp departure from the previously dominant skepticism among government elites toward colonization.

The increasing attention among the members of the Research Institute to emigration and settlement in colonial territories is also reflected in the scope and content of their investigations. In pursuit of the comprehensive and professional studies of population problems and their optimum solutions, the Institute subdivided its research projects largely into five categories. The five categories included demographic trends and their impact on industry, the distribution of population and agricultural resources, overpopulation and employment, emigration, and population control.[242] Among these five different research projects, the subjects of agriculture and emigration directly addressed the interconnected issues of colonization, emigration, and settlement. What were the decisive factors causing this shift from widespread skepticism toward embracement in the elites' view of colonization? Japan's de facto acquisition of Manchurian territory in 1932, regardless of its official status as a sovereign state, brought a new vision for population policy planning, mainly due to its large territory. The revised Malthusian outlook, which struck a

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[241] Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūkai, *Jinkō mondai kōenshū* (A collection of lectures on population problems) vol. 1 (Tokyo: Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūkai, 1934), 5.

[242] Five different teams were responsible for conducting research on each assigned project, and each team was headed by a different director in accordance with their field of expertise. For example, economist Ueda Tejirō led the research on demographic trends and its impact on industry and trades, while professor of agricultural economics Nasu Hiroshi headed the team studying the distribution of population in rural and urban areas in relation to the limits of food and agricultural products or land economy. In addition, Nagai Tōru, Inoue Masaji, and government officer Shimomura Hiroshi served as the directors responsible for different research projects on overpopulation and employment, emigration policies, and population control policies, respectively. Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūkai, *Jinkō mondai kenkyūkai 50-nen ryakushi*, 34-5.

balance between population size and agricultural products, or between food demand and arable land supply, gradually gained acceptance among governmental elites.

Nasu Hiroshi, who served as a director of the research team studying the distribution of population in relation to the land capacity and agricultural products of the metropole was the quintessential figure of pro-emigration elites. As mentioned above, as a prominent advocate of agrarianism (*nōhonshugi*), Nasu had demanded Japanese farmers' emigration to the colonial territories as a solution to the lack of arable land, even before the Manchukuo was founded. His initial support for Japan's colonial expansionism was based on the assumption that the exploitation of land, the intensity of labor utilization, and the supply of fertilizer had already reached their limits in the Mainland.[243] Before 1932, Nasu was not alone in supporting the emigration of the Japanese farming population, although this pro-emigration idea was highly unpopular among many experts in population problems due to their doubts about the feasibility of mass migration. The so-called Katō group—a group of government bureaucrats and experts who advocated an agrarian ideology under the leadership of right-wing agrarianist Katō Kanji—had been an active promoter of Japanese colonial migration to Korea and Manchuria since the 1920s.[244] The creation

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[243] Hiroshi Nasu, *Aspects of Japanese Agriculture: A Preliminary Survey* (New York: International secretariat, Institute of Pacific relations, 1941), 107-119. This book is a revised edition of *Land Utilization in Japan* published in 1929.

[244] Katō Kanji (1884-1967) was a prominent agrarianist who was involved in youth education in rural areas such as Yamagata and Ibaraki prefectures, and was also an advocate for the colonization of Manchuria and Mongolia. A group of bureaucrats and scholars who echoed Katō's agrarian imperialist ideal took part in his agrarian movement, which ultimately developed into the so-called Katō group. The members of the group included Katō himself, Nasu, Hashimoto Denzaemon of the Kyoto University Department of Agriculture, Ishiguro Tada'atsu of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Ikoma Takatsune of the Ministry of Colonial Affairs, Sō Mitsuhiko as the head of a Mantetsu-affiliated agricultural training center, Yamazaki Yoshio of Fuji Kōgyō Company in Colonial Korea and so forth. For Katō Kanji and the Katō group, see Asada Kyōji, "Manshū nōgyō imin seisaku no ritsuan katei (The process of planning the policy of peasant emigration to Manchuria)," in *Nihon teikokushugika no*

of Manchukuo finally provided Nasu and his agrarianist colleagues in the Katō group with a feasible opportunity to realize the ideal of colonial expansionism blended with his longstanding agrarianism.

The start of a trial peasant emigration plan in 1932 was the outcome of coordination between the agrarian-imperialist elites, the Kwantung Army, and the Ministry of Colonial Affairs (*Takumu-shō*). In February 1932, when the Kwantung Army was planning to establish a puppet state in Japan's newly acquired territory, Nasu and Hashimoto Denzaemon—both prominent professors of agricultural economics and the members of the Katō group—offered consultation to the Kwantung Army about the promotion of Japanese emigration to Manchuria. In their consultation, Nasu and Hashimoto underlined the core purposes of their promotion of peasant emigration, including the protection of land ownership through land reclamation and policy making, mass emigration for security reasons, and coordinated efforts to train Japanese immigrants in Manchuria.[245] The blueprint for promoting Japanese peasants' emigration and settlement in Manchuria, suggested by these two brains of the Katō group, was embraced by the Kwantung Army, which attempted to utilize the peasant population primarily for military and security reasons—i.e., for security against anti-Japanese guerilla forces.

Meanwhile, the Katō group also contacted the bureaucrats of the Ministry of Colonial Affairs who initially objected to the emigration campaign. Three agrarianist

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Manshū imin (Emigration to Manchuria under Japanese imperialism), ed. Manshu iminshi kenkyukai (Tōkyō: Ryūkei Shosha, 1976), 24-29; Louise Young, *Japan's Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 318-322; and Sung-Mo Lim, "The Conflict between the Kwantung Army and the Korean Government General over the Agricultural Emigration Policy to Manchuria and its Consequence," *Journal of Japanese History* 29 (2009): 139-141.

[245] Asada Kyōji, "Manshū nōgyō imin seisaku no ritsuan katei," 7-8.

members of the group, Katō, Ishiguro Tada'atsu, and Sō Mitsuhiko, took the initiative to draw up a plan for "the emigration of 6,000 people to Manchuria and Mongolia (*Manmō rokusenjin imin an*)." This plan not only sought the promotion of peasants' mass emigration, but also specified target regions for the mass emigration campaign. The main targets were the Tōhoku (North East region of the Mainland), Hokuriku (Northwestern region), and Kantō regions, all which struggled with land shortages and poor peasant populations.[246] The Ministry of Colonial Affairs eventually welcomed the Katō group's outlook on the relief of poor peasants through the promotion of mass emigration. Both the Kwantung Army and the Ministry of Colonial Affairs, regardless of the different goals they embraced, join forces to execute the trial plan for Japanese peasant emigration and settlement in Manchuria between 1932 and 1935. Over four years, a total of 1,667 households, recruited on a nation-wide scale, moved to and resettled in Manchuria.[247] The relative success of the trial emigration campaign eventually grew into the Kwantung Army-initiated "One Million Households to Manchuria Plan" in 1936, that is, a full-blown campaign for Japanese settlement in Manchuria.[248]

As the advocates for the promotion of peasant emigration to Manchuria gained ascendancy among bureaucrats, military men, and agrarian-imperialist scholars, the Research Institute jumped on the "Manchurian-solution" bandwagon. In April 1936, when the Kwantung Army and the Army Ministry of Japan were drawing up a five-year plan for the "One Million Households to Manchuria," the leading members of the

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[246] Ibid., 25-8.
[247] Manshūkoku Tsūshinsha, *Manshū Kaitaku Nenkan* (The yearbook of Manchuria Colonization) (Tokyo: Howa shuppan, 1986), 129. This volume was originally published in 1944.
[248] For the "One Million Households to Manchuria plan," see Ibid., 44-50.

Institute submitted two proposals to Prime Minister Hirota Kōki: one proposal addressed the promotion of emigration and settlement in general while the other specifically focused on the issues of emigration to Manchuria. Both proposals manifested the members' concerted effort to terminate the protracted controversy over emigration and to place a high priority on the promotion of Japanese emigration and resettlement to solve the population problems in the Mainland. The specific demands of the Research Institute to promote emigration as a fundamental solution for population growth were as follows: 1) the establishment of national migration policies, 2) diplomatic efforts to build amicable relationships with host countries, 3) the revision of the "Migrants' Protection Act (*Imin Hogo hō*, passed in 1896)," 4) investigations of new lands suitable for Japanese emigrants, 5) the installment and management of economic and social facilities to help Japanese migrants settle and stabilize their livelihoods, 6) protection of Japanese migrants, 7) promotion of economic relations between the host countries and Japan, and 8) education and advertisements about migration.[249] All these demands converged on a single goal, that is, the establishment of comprehensive national migration policies.[250]

Meanwhile, another proposal by the Research Institute titled "*Manshū imin ni kansuru kengi* (A proposal on emigration to Manchuria)" confirmed the growing

[249] Jinkō mondai kenkyūkai, "Ishokumin shinkō hōsaku ni kansuru kengi (A policy proposal for the promotion of emigration and settlement)," *Jinkō mondai* 1 no. 4 (1936): 16-24.

[250] In the proposal for the promotion of emigration and settlement, the Research Institute notes that private sectors must take a leading role in promoting the campaign for emigration and settlement, while the government plays a subsidiary role such as regulating the emigration campaign and protecting Japanese settlers. However, this statement contradicts the basic premise of this proposal, namely, "establishing comprehensive national policies on migration and settlement inside and outside the Mainland." This self-contradiction reflects the Institute's self-censorship and its wariness of international opinion, given its loaded comment that "the government should avoid being misunderstood as directly planning and managing the migration campaign." Ibid. 17-20.

importance of Manchuria as an outlet for Japan's overflowing peasant population. Unlike the above-mentioned proposal that addressed population problems in general, the proposal on emigration to Manchuria mainly dealt with the problems of rural areas and supported the extension of the campaign to promote collective peasant emigration to Manchuria. The logic behind this approval was that overpopulation was the main cause of rural poverty, which reiterated the agrarian-imperialist argument in favor of peasant migration. This overpopulation theme was a rhetoric of displacement in two senses. On one hand, the theme displaced the pressing agricultural crisis and increasing interregional disparities, and reduced complex actual socio-economic issues to the problem of population size.[251] On the other hand, the overpopulation theme displaced the agenda for a comprehensive government of population, and revived a Malthusian panacea, that is, the control of population size. The Research Institute's proposal for the promotion of emigration and settlement in Manchuria symbolizes the resurrection of Malthusian logic in combination with contemporary agrarian-imperialism.

Seen in the broader context of the shaping of population policies during the interwar period, the goal for these policies drastically shrank from the optimization of life to that of population quantity. In comparison to the agenda for the comprehensive government of the population set by the Investigation Committee, the Research Institute limited its function to the regulation of population size in proportion to the

[251] Louise Young points out that the overpopulation theme was employed as a rhetorical tactic. According to Young, "it was not distress caused by overpopulation, but rather the unevenly felt agricultural crisis that led certain regions to promote Manchurian emigration." Young, *Japan's Total Empire*, 330. My analysis of overpopulation also sheds light on its discursive dimensions, that is, the social process in which the overpopulation theme emerged as a form of rational knowledge, instead of overpopulation as an established fact.

production of food resources and arable land areas. However, this changing agenda cannot simply be understood as a regression. The government's changing perception of the Japanese population and its aim toward quantifiable resources for the sake of Japan's imperialist expansion not only intervenes into a linear narrative of Foucault's history of governmentality, but also shines a new light on the population in a state of flux, or the ambiguity of the population at the nexus of governmentality and colonialism. The mobilization of Japanese peasants for the promotion of collective emigration and settlement in Manchuria is a typical example of overdetermined life—life oscillating between a population and an ethnic group (*minzoku*), the end and the means of the modern government, and a national and an imperial subject. The following statements exemplify that the governmental elites constantly reorder the Japanese population—ranging from the government's concern for their welfare to its view of the population as a labor resource for the state's colonial expansion, and to its vision of them as imperial subjects representing Japan's superiority.

> When considering the origin of Manchukuo, there is no question about the importance of Japanese immigration to Manchuria in establishing the social and cultural basis for consolidating and developing a special relationship between Japan and Manchuria. Notwithstanding, it is of urgent necessity to pay special attention to the issue of migration to Manchuria in terms of a solution for population problems. … There are a few things to keep in mind when talking about farming immigrants in Manchuria—particularly preparing them sufficiently for a different climate, culture, and style of living from Japan to prevent a "brilliant but vain attempt," and to make full use of Japanese farmers' superior technology, management skills, and civilized life to achieve coexistence and co-prosperity between Japan and Manchukuo, as well as to lead cultural improvement in rural areas in Manchuria.[252]

> When the military regime took over the government after the February 26

[252] Jinkō mondai kenkyūkai, "Manshū imin ni kansuru kengi," *Jinkō mondai* 1 no. 4 (1936): 25-26.

Incident in 1936, the role of the Research Institute became highly limited to a supporting role in implementing national policies. The government elites who once pursued governmentalizing the nation by mobilizing a wide range of state apparatuses for the welfare of the population now turned to mobilizing the population—in particular, its health, labor force, fertility, and daily lives—in conformity with the national population policies. The government elites' pro-emigration stance in the mid-1930s might have been a harbinger of this transition of the goal of population policies from social and welfare reforms to the mobilization of human resources.

However, governmental elites cannot simply be considered as victims or passive supporters of escalating militarism. Given the goal to centralize population policies under the national policy set by the Investigation Committee, the government elites themselves laid the stepping stone for integrating various bureaucratic, social, and scientific apparatuses into a unified national policy for population control. As a successor to the Committee, as soon as the Sino-Japanese war broke out, the members of the Research Institute also strongly demanded a comprehensive system of population policies in preparation for a protracted war.[253] As a result, the National Institute of Population Problems (*Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūsho*), an affiliated organization with the Ministry of Health and Welfare, was established in August 1938. After its establishment, the National Institute took charge of population control and gave priority to enhancing national physical strength and to increasing Japan's population

[253] In the first and the second national meetings of the Research Institute, held in November 1937 and October 1938, respectively, the participants of the meetings discussed the need for a national institute that would integrate population policies. *Jinkō mondai kenkyūkai 50-nen ryakushi*, 56-7; Jinkō mondai kenkyūkai, *Dai ni kai jinkō mondai zenkoku kyōgikai hokoku-sho* (A report from the second national meeting of population problems) (Tokyo: Jinkō mondai kenkyūkai, 1939), 42-43.

from 70 million to 100 million by 1960.[254] Despite the different goals of the population policies of the interwar and wartime regimes, the interwar plan to establish a comprehensive, scientific system for population control survived and even came to fruition under the wartime regime.

Japanese Population in Question, Governmentality in Flux

Through the lenses of different discourses of Japanese population that were developed by government elites, this chapter traced the process of the formation of population policies during the interwar period. The trajectory of interwar population policies reveals the leading role of the elites in designing and establishing a comprehensive and scientific approach to controlling, optimizing, and managing the Japanese population. The two interwar research organizations, the Investigation Committee and the Research Institute, and the two bureaucrat-cum-intellectuals, Nagai and Nitobe, are concrete examples of "governmentality from below," and "governmentality in flux." While the former underlines the roles of social and intellectual circles in initiating and developing the integrated and systematic management of the population for its welfare, the latter highlights different goals and strategies within such social sectors, and how forms of governmentality change depending on the political context—e.g., the Japanese Empire—that conditions the pattern and the scope of population, territory, and economy. In particular, the fact that government elites embraced colonialism as part of their solution to the population

[254] Takaoka Hiroyuki explains the direction of population policy was to integrate population problems into the problem of the Yamato race. This wartime discourse of homogenizing the population was led by Tachi Minoru and Koya Yoshio, both the leading members of the National Institute of Population Problems. For the transition in population policy during the wartime and the roles of the National Institute of Population Problems, see Takaoka *Sōryokusen taisei to fukushi kokka*, 169-197.

problems in the metropole sheds new light on the relationship between colonization and governmentality: colonial expansion was indispensable for the development of governmentality in the Japanese Empire. Meanwhile, the creation of Manchuria in 1932 marked a watershed for interwar population policies, resulting in the reordering of the population as human resources and as the Japanese race. In sum, the population continued to be problematized and the form of governmentality remained in a state of flux in the Japanese Empire during the interwar period.

In July 1937, the Second Sino-Japanese War began and Japan entered into a state of war that lasted until August 1945. The total war system (*sōryokusen taisei*) integrated various political, economic, and social apparatuses into a unified and rationalized system that required full-scale mobilization of resources for war.[255] Human resources, whether they be military forces or labor forces, were not an exception. The Ministry of Health and Welfare established in January 1938 played an important role in integrating the population policies into a unified national policy with an aim to mobilize, manage, and reproduce human resources. Under the total war system, the focus of population control shifted from overpopulation and colonization to "healthy soldiers and healthy citizens (*kenhei kenmin*)." Neither overpopulation nor rural problems, allegedly caused by the overflowing population in rural areas, was a pressing concern for the bureaucracy, the military, and the government elites during wartime. This sudden shift certainly does not imply that the nation's war effort finally cured the longstanding overpopulation problem. As the wartime slogan "healthy

[255] Yamanouchi Yasushi, "Total-war and system integration: a methodological introduction," in *Total War and 'Modernization,'* ed. Yamanouchi Yasushi et al., (Ithaca, N.Y.: East Asia Program, Cornell University, 1998), 3-4.

soldiers and healthy citizens" symbolizes, it was rather the redefining of the Japanese population as mobilizable human resources that invalidated the resurrected Malthusian logic.

Given this, questions about the impacts of the government elites' plan for population control in the total war system arise: Is wartime population control connected or disconnected from the interwar population policies? What is the relationship between the interwar and the wartime social systems in Japan if viewed from the perspective of the history of population policies? Although it will require further detailed research on wartime population policy to answer the aforementioned questions, any question about the link between interwar and wartime population policies cannot be reduced to a simple "continuity versus discontinuity" choice. A series of population policies during the wartime, including the National Eugenic Law (*kokumin yūsei hō*) in 1940, the Outline for the Establishment of Population Policies (*jinkō seisaku kakuritsu yōkō*) in 1941, and the National Physical Strength Act (*kokumin tairyoku hō*) in 1941 clearly "modified" the preceding social reform plans and population discourses developed by governmental elites during the interwar period. Meanwhile, the wartime population policies "transformed" the main goal and the scope of governmentality: under the total war regime, the population policies aimed at increasing both quantity and quality of its population, not only on eugenic grounds, but, more fundamentally, for the nation's war efforts and the prosperity of the Empire. Total war governmentality even expanded the boundary of the population to include colonized people who were previously excluded from population policies.

[256] To sum up, changing forms of governmentality and different ways in which the population was problematized are the keys to understanding the relationships between the interwar and wartime regimes.

[256] Takashi Fujitani explores the wartime transition of the form of governmentality in colonial Korea, which he calls "the polite racism" of the total war regimes. According to Fujitani, the governmentality of wartime colonial Korea was redefined in a way that "individuals and subpopulations came to be targeted as worthy of life, education, health and even to some degree happiness, precisely because these systems came to regard the health and development of even abject populations as useful for the regime's survival, prosperity, and victory in war." Although I agree with Fujitani's point on the integration of Koreans into the population during the wartime period, my analysis of governmentality in the total war regime does not echo "the polite racism." The reason is that even in the metropole, the population as the target of the government remained in the making throughout interwar and wartime periods. Hence, the integration of colonized people cannot simply be understood as a form of racism, whether it be exclusive or inclusive, but as a product of wartime governmentality within the broader scope of the Japanese Empire. Takashi Fujitani, *Race for Empire Koreans As Japanese and Japanese As Americans During World War II* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 26.

CHAPTER 6
Conclusion:
The Reappraisal of Interwar Japan through the Lens of Population Discourse

This dissertation originated from a simple question: Why and how does population matter? Numerous documents published in Japan during the interwar period invariably included remarks about the "*jinkō mondai*" despite a lack of consensus on the substance of the population problem among contemporary social scientists, social reformers, and government elites. These interwar intellectuals' attempts to diagnose various social ills using the catch-all notion of a "population problem" provide a glimpse of the pervasive discourse on population between 1920s and 1930s. As repeatedly emphasized in this dissertation, the prevalence of this population discourse must be understood as an obvious symptom of the growing attention among contemporary Japanese intellectuals to the population in order to study, manage, and optimize both its size and quality. Therefore, this dissertation attempted to dissect the discursive structure of the population problem and grasp multiple layers within the discourse while avoiding taking the problem at face value. The first step in dissecting the population discourse was to reappraise it as the process of "problematizing the population." In other words, the population problem is a product of diverse modern apparatuses that are bureaucratic, scientific, and social. Through examining different groups and individuals who sought to problematize the Japanese population and solve that problem, whatever it referred to, this dissertation

aimed to answer comprehensively the simple, yet significant question of why and how population mattered in interwar Japan.

Answering the abovementioned question required two different lenses through which the multifaceted discourse of the population could be addressed: clarifying it from a micro-perspective, on one hand, and placing it in interwar history using a macro-perspective, on the other. At the micro level, the definitions, solutions, and underlying political agenda of the population problem were so varied that among those who were addressing the problem there were often conflicts and disagreements over how to solve it. The complete disagreement between the Japanese government and birth control advocates over the promotion of birth control typifies this cacophony within the population discourse. While the government elites opposed birth control because of its ineffectiveness in solving overpopulation in Mainland Japan, birth control advocates, particularly Neo-Malthusian social reformers, maintained that the scientific use of contraceptives was the ultimate way of curbing population growth and improving the quality of the Japanese population. This antagonism between the government and birth control activists only worsened as the Home Ministry issued the Harmful Contraceptive Devices Control Regulation in 1930 and suppressed the promoters of birth control afterwards. Meanwhile, dissonance also existed amongst birth control supporters. Despite the fact that different birth control groups spoke with one voice to spread scientific knowledge of birth control and effective contraceptive methods, these groups kept rearranging themselves and remaining divided, mainly, though not exclusively, along ideological lines. The age-old debate between Malthus and Marx on overpopulation was succeeded by the debate between Neo-Malthusian

reformers and proletarian birth control activists. Whilst the former considered overpopulation on the Japanese Mainland as an irrefutable statistical fact, the latter unfavorably characterized this Malthusian stance as bourgeois ideology. In the same vein, while birth control was a scientific tool to fix the side effects of capitalist modernization from a Neo-Malthusian perspective, proletarian activists stressed the proletarians' exclusive use of birth control as a temporary, defensive measure under the capitalist mode of production. In this light, these different claims within birth control groups contributed to the economic, political, and ideological reconfiguration of birth control, population, and reproduction.

At the macro level, the population discourse reveals the interplay between scientific progressivism, nationalism, and imperialism, and thus, changing patterns of modernity during the interwar period. Japan's interwar period can be understood as the crucial stage for reorganizing modernity in the aftermath of the World War I at both domestic and transnational levels. The so-called "Great War" had a global effect on the overhaul of Western modernity, mainly anchored in European civilization, individualism, and Social Darwinism. In particular, population issues—namely, population degeneration and decreasing birth rates—became a pressing concern among Western intellectuals who attempted to reconstruct modernity through controlling the size and quality of population. Against this backdrop of growing concern about population issues, Neo-Malthusianism and the eugenic discourse that emerged after the late nineteenth century became the linchpin of the interwar population discourse: Neo-Malthusianists who initially aimed at poverty relief and women's empowerment through artificial birth control began to embrace eugenic

ideas and broaden the scope of their movements to include the achievement of optimum population size and racial improvement. The population discourse, in a global context, provided a utopian vision of reformed modernity by presenting itself as "science."

The multifaceted discourse of the population problem in interwar Japan can be situated in this transnational post-World War I discourse. Harry Harootunian's notion of "co-eval modernity"—highlighting "contemporaneity yet the possibility of difference" in modernity within a worldwide context—rightly grasps the nature of modernity as a shared temporality that is unevenly experienced in different societies.[257] As a latecomer to modernization and capitalist development, Japanese society went through distinctive patterns of the population crisis (i.e., high fertility and high mortality) and economic depression (i.e., increasing rural and urban disparity). Hence, although Japanese intellectuals, social reformers, and bureaucrats who participated in the population discourse shared a scientific progressivism with their European and U.S. counterparts, their solutions were not simply limited to reproductive control, but also closely tied to the reconstruction of *Japanese modernity*. In other words, different solutions to the population problem hinged upon different visions of the politico-economic systems in Mainland Japan. Here, it should be noted that the population discourse in the Japanese metropole was unavoidably bound up with nationalism and imperialism. The dual project of Japan's modernization since the Meiji period, namely nation-building and empire-building, led to ambiguity and complexity in categorizing the population: the population discourse in the metropole

[257] Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity*, xvi-xvii.

tended to abstract the population as "Japanese" while obliterating complex social relations—e.g., migration and resource exploitation—conditioned by the expanding territory of the Japanese Empire. For the governmental elites, in particular, colonial expansion and exploitation were essential to relieving the population pressure and ultimately, to the government of life in the metropole.

As seen so far, this dissertation used both microscopic and macroscopic lenses to provide a complex picture of interwar Japan: a heterogeneous realm including the population discourse and the process of remodeling modernity through integrating scientific progressivism, nationalism, and imperialism. The reappraisal of the history of Japan's interwar period is the first crucial step toward a more thorough understanding of the politics of population and sexual reproduction during the wartime period and in the aftermath of the Japanese Empire. Although the wartime and postwar population discourses are beyond the scope of this dissertation, the following points are worth noting.

Throughout transwar Japan, the goals, patterns, and scope of the population discourse went through marked changes. The difference between the interwar and the wartime population discourses can be summed up by the transition from population to human resources as the target of problematizing. The wartime population policy that centered on "healthy soldiers and healthy citizens (*kenhei kenmin*)" and the encouragement to "give birth and multiply (*umeyo fuyaseyo*)" typifies the shifting direction of population discourses from solving the population problem—notably overpopulation—and its resultant social issues toward ensuring maximum efficiency, productivity, and supply of

the wartime workforce. In the meantime, the postwar population discourse became interwoven with the New Life Movement, national reconstruction, and economic recovery amid the ruins of the protracted total war. The Japanese government, which originally suppressed birth control during the prewar and wartime periods, took the initiative in launching a family planning program in 1952 in order to address overpopulation.[258]

However, the marked difference between the interwar, wartime, and postwar population discourses should not be understood as a complete discontinuity. The lingering impacts of the interwar population discourses on the wartime and postwar policies reveal how the total war system and the postwar government *modified*, if not preserved, various apparatuses for problematizing the population as a necessary step toward winning the war and reconstructing the nation-state, respectively. The impacts of the interwar discourses in regards to population problems include the unified and systemic control of the Japanese population, and the governmental and scientific interventions into reproductive health on eugenic grounds. While the former factor resembled the interwar population policies developed by governmental elites, the latter was linked with sociomedical movements for birth control and eugenics during the interwar years. Understanding the lingering influences of population discourses throughout transwar Japan challenges the "continuity and discontinuity" dichotomy in modern Japanese history by casting a new light on the relationship between interwar, wartime, and postwar governmental structures. Such an understanding will help us

[258] Ogino Miho, "From natalism to family planning: population policy in wartime and the post-war period," in *Gender, Nation and State In Modern Japan*, ed. Andrea Germer et al. (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2014), 203-206.

answer more thoroughly the primary question of this dissertation: *Why and how did population become a political problem in modern Japan?*

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