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**Negotiating Gender Equality in Daily Work:
An Ethnography of a Public Women's
Organisation in Okinawa, Japan**

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**PhD in Social Anthropology
University of Edinburgh
2010**

Declaration

I declare that this work has been composed entirely by me and is completely my own work. No part of it has been submitted for any other degree.

Yoko Narisada

29 July 2010

Abstract

This doctoral research is a contribution to the understanding of social activism and its socio-cultural formation in postcolonial Okinawa. It is based on eighteen months of fieldwork including participant observation and interviews at a public women's organisation, Women's Organisation Okinawa (WOO). This project centres on the lived practices of staff who attempted to produce and encourage gender equality in the public sector under neoliberal governance. I demonstrate through ethnographic analysis how the practice of law and social movements is distinct from the ideals of such movements as well as the particular individuals involved in them.

WOO was established in the public sector by local government in alliance with various grassroots groups in Okinawa in the late 1990s. WOO embraced the dreams, hopes and anticipations of various actors - users and workers - who had been involved in the establishment, but in reality, it also contained various contradictions. First, WOO was a new workplace for those who wanted to work in activism and be paid for their work, but also reproduced precarious, low-waged, gendered labour. Second, WOO was a site which put law into practice, but it revealed that law internalised the inconsistency between what people had originally expected of the law and what law enacted as a result of institutionalisation. Third, WOO unexpectedly became a focal point of contact between neoliberal and feminist governance through public services and the requirements of performing accountability for citizens and for feminist activism. Thus frontline practitioners attempted to bridge the gap between ideal, reality, law and practice and to negotiate with neoliberal and feminist governance in the labour process.

This thesis demonstrates how the inconsistencies between ideal and reality arose in the daily working practices of staff positioned between citizens, laws and social movements. More precisely, it explores how staff attempted to negotiate, accommodate and struggle with the gap between ideal and reality through their lived experience, rather than fiercely resisting or merely being subject to a form of governance or reality. In doing so, the thesis reveals how unstable and problematic the notion of 'gender equality' was as it was deployed at WOO.

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Abbreviations and acronyms

Act	Act on the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the Protection of Victims (Japan)
Action Plan	Action Plan of Okinawa Prefecture for the Solution of Women's Issues
AWW	Association of Women's Wings
Basic Law	Basic Law for a Gender-Equal Society (Japan)
Beijing Conference	United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
DEIGO	development, equality, innovation, global and Okinawa
DEIGO Plan 21	Action Plan of Okinawa Prefecture for the Realisation of a Society in which Both Men and Women Participate (1993)
DEIGO Plan 2002	Okinawa Prefectural Plan for Participation of Both Men and Women
DMS	Designated Management System
EEOL	Equal Employment Opportunity Law (Japan)
GARIOA	Government and Relief in Occupied Areas (US)
GHQ	General Headquarters of the Allied Forces (Japan)
HRAF	Human Relations Area Files (US)
HWW	House for Working Women
<i>Ikoru</i>	Organisation for Human Rights for Working Women (Osaka)
ILO	International Labour Organisation
ISO	International Organisation for Standardisation
ISSJ	International Social Service Japan
IWCC	International Welfare Counselling Centre (Okinawa)
JFBA	Japan Federation of Bar Associations
JICHIRO	All-Japan Prefectural and Municipal Workers' Union
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party (Japan)
LPSL	Local Public Service Law (Japan)

NGO	non-governmental organisation
NHK	<i>Nippon Hoso Kyokai</i> , Japan Broadcasting Corporation
NPM	New Public Management
NPO	not-for-profit organisation
NWEC	National Women's Education Centre
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OHRDF	Okinawa Human Resources Development Foundation
OIEF	Okinawa International Exchange Foundation
OIHF	Okinawa International Exchange & Human Resources Development Foundation
OL	office lady
OOPP	Okinawa Prefectural Ordinance for the Promotion of Participation of Men and Women
OTUA	Okinawa Prefectural Trade Union Association
OWAMV	Okinawa Women Act Against Military Violence
PSB	Pacific Science Board of the National Research Council (US)
QCC	Quality Control Circles
REICO	Rape Emergency Intervention Counselling Organisation Okinawa
San Francisco Treaty	Security Treaty between Japan and the United States
SIRI	Scientific Investigation of the Ryukyu Islands (US)
SOFA	Status of Forces Agreement
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USCAR	United States Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands
Vision	Vision for Participation of both Men and Women (Japan)
WDL	Worker Dispatching Law (Japan)
WIDG	Women's Issues Discussion Group (Okinawa)
WOO	Women's Organisation Okinawa
WOOF	Women's Organisation Okinawa Foundation
WWN	Working Women's Network (Osaka)

Glossary

<i>ainoko</i>	a mixed-blood child
<i>buchô</i>	Director-General
<i>byôdô</i>	equality
<i>Amerasian</i>	American-Asian mixed-blood
<i>chôsei</i>	arrangement
<i>danjo kyôdô sankaku</i>	participation of both men and women or gender equality
<i>danjo kyôdô sankaku shakai</i>	a society in which both men and women participate or a gender-equal society
<i>danjo byôdô</i>	gender equality
<i>genjûmin</i>	natives
<i>goshujin</i>	master
<i>gunyôchi ryô</i>	rent for land occupied by the US military and paid by the Japanese government
<i>gyôsei</i>	administration
<i>haken</i>	despatched workers
<i>hataraku fujin no ie</i>	House for Working Women
<i>hijôkin shokuin</i>	part-time workers (in the public sector)
<i>hiseiki rôdô sha</i>	non-regular workers
<i>hoshu</i>	conservatives (in Okinawa)
<i>ikusei</i>	cultivation
<i>inagugwansu</i>	women ancestors (Okinawan language)
<i>ippan kenmin</i>	general prefectural citizens
<i>jendâ no shiten</i>	gender perspective
<i>jiko kakushin</i>	self-innovation
<i>jinruikan</i>	The House of Peoples
<i>jiritsu</i>	autonomy, self-regulation
<i>josei or onna</i>	women
<i>josei gaku</i>	women's studies
<i>josei kanren shisetsu</i>	women's organisations
<i>josei mondai</i>	women's issues

<i>josei mondai no kaiketsu</i>	solution of women's issues
<i>jûmin kihon daichô bangô</i>	Resident Registration Number
<i>juri</i>	prostitute (Okinawan language)
<i>kakushin</i>	reformists (in Okinawa)
<i>kansei wâkingu pua</i>	working poor produced by governments
<i>kanchô</i>	Executive Director
<i>kanmin sonpi</i>	despising people, respecting officials
<i>kansei wâkingu pua</i>	working poor produced by governments
<i>karate</i>	martial art developed in the Ryukyu Islands
<i>keihatsu</i>	indoctrination
<i>ken</i>	prefecture
<i>kenmin</i>	prefectural citizens
<i>kessai</i>	official final approval
<i>kian sho</i>	official drafts
<i>kintô</i>	parity
<i>koreki</i>	census (family) register
<i>kôzô kaikaku</i>	Structural Reform
<i>kyokuchô</i>	Secretary-General
<i>kyôyô</i>	liberal arts
<i>minzoku gaku</i>	folklore studies
<i>moai</i>	mutual support networks (Okinawan language)
<i>munchû</i>	Okinawan kinship group (Okinawan language)
<i>netsui</i>	zeal
<i>non-pori</i>	apolitical
<i>nôryoku</i>	ability
<i>Okinawa jinmin tô</i>	Okinawa People's Party
<i>Okinawa kenkyû/gaku</i>	Okinawan studies
<i>Ochakumi</i>	making a cup of tea in the workplace
<i>okusan</i>	married lady or madam
<i>Ôshima tsumugi</i>	mud-dyed silk pongee made in Amami Ôshima Island
<i>rinji shokuin</i>	temporary workers (in the public sector)
<i>riyô sha</i>	users

<i>sanka sha</i>	participants
<i>sasen</i>	relegation to lower position
<i>sayoku</i>	left-wingers
<i>seiki rôdô sha (seishain)</i>	regular workers
<i>shien</i>	help
<i>shikkô ukagai</i>	administrative documents for official final approval
<i>shimin</i>	citizens
<i>shitei kanri sha seido</i>	Designated Management System (DMS)
<i>shiyô sha futan</i>	principle of pay on use
<i>shokutaku shokuin</i>	contract workers (in the public sector)
<i>shukan</i>	chief
<i>shusa, shuji</i>	manager
<i>sotetsu jigoku</i>	palm hell
<i>taishô</i>	subjects/objects
<i>taitô</i>	equity
<i>tatami</i>	a floor covering made from dried rushes
<i>tôtômei</i>	ancestral memorial tablet (Okinawan language)
<i>uchinâ mûku</i>	Okinawan son-in-law (Okinawan language)
<i>unai</i>	sisters or sisterhood (Okinawan language)
<i>yamaton yome</i>	Japanese daughter-in-law (Okinawan language)
<i>yarigai</i>	fulfilment
<i>yôsei</i>	training
<i>yûshiki sha</i>	well-informed people
<i>yuta</i>	shamans (Okinawan language)
<i>watakusa</i>	private money (Okinawan language)
<i>zaidan hôjin</i>	private foundation
<i>zainichi</i>	Koreans in Japan
<i>zenzai</i>	sweet red-bean broth

Chapter One

Introduction

Introduction

When she decided not to renew her contract for the following year, Uehara-san (a pseudonym) murmured that she wondered whether the Japanese government intended to exhaust her by allowing her to work hard under the low-waged and precarious working conditions at the Women's Organisation Okinawa (WOO), such that she was unable to engage in any feminist activities outside of WOO.¹ In the late 1990s, WOO, in which public services which encouraged gender equality were supplied to citizens, was established in the public sector by local government in alliance with various grassroots groups in Okinawa in Naha City, the capital of Okinawa Prefecture, Japan. Working at WOO was surely significant for her in that she believed that she was working for 'gender equality'. But WOO guaranteed her neither permanent employment nor a reasonable salary. Rather, she was employed on a low-waged fixed-term contract because she was seen as a woman rather than a worker. Moreover, she was deemed to be not a skilled practitioner with gender knowledge but an unskilled clerk, and was sometimes compelled to struggle against the administrators for her projects' approval. While she strove for gender equality through work at WOO, she found herself embedded in 'gender issues', which WOO was supposed to solve. Although she began working at WOO full of passion, she left a year later. However, by using a feminist informal network, she succeeded in coming back to work at WOO again in 2006, after working at another public women's organisation in Okinawa for two years. She said that WOO had deteriorated and was completely controlled by local politics and the Prefectural Government

¹ The word '*san*' is a title which can be used with either gender in Japanese. In the workplace, we tended to call our colleagues by their surnames with '*san*' added at the end. If our colleagues had the same surnames, we called them by their first names with '*san*' to distinguish them. As I will explain ethnographically in the following chapters, the concepts of 'feminist' and 'feminism' are never fixed and monolithic, rather they are always formed by the contexts of everyday lives at WOO. However, I avoid using inverted commas for 'feminist' and 'feminism' for ease of reading throughout this thesis. Moreover, I do not intend to overlook both the inconsistency and diversity concerning 'feminism(s)' in everyday lives at WOO, but I use 'feminism' rather than 'feminism(s)', because Japanese language does not distinguish between the singular and the plural.

Office. A year later, she left WOO again. She is now working for the private sector in a post which has nothing to do with gender equality.

This thesis is a contribution to the understanding of social activism and its socio-cultural formation processes in post-colonial contemporary Okinawa. More generally, it demonstrates through ethnographic analysis how the practice of law and social movements is distinct from the ideals of such movements. The thesis focuses on the lived practices of feminist contract workers who formed an informal network of grass-roots social movements in Okinawa, and who worked and strove for gender equality at WOO. Like other public women's organisations in Japan, WOO produced a new workplace for feminists to work in activism and to get paid for this work in the public sector, but it also reproduced precarious, low-paid, gendered labour. I question how the inconsistencies between the ideal and reality were created in the daily working practices of contract workers in post-colonial Okinawa. In doing so, I examine how a public women's organisation unexpectedly became a focal point of contact between neoliberal and feminist governance through projects such as counselling and empowerment programmes, as well as through the requirements of performing accountability for citizens. On the one hand, under neoliberal governance, a public women's organisation is expected to be a consumerist independent organisation for the supply of good public services to citizens who are also autonomous subjects able to choose and complain about public services. On the other hand, it is expected to be autonomous and independent from local government and bureaucracy in order to realise gender equality under feminist governance. Likewise, it also requires citizens to be legal autonomous subjects who actively participate in projects aimed towards achieving gender equality. I show how workers tried to negotiate, accommodate, and struggle with the gap between the ideal and reality through their lived experience at WOO rather than fiercely resisting or being subject to various forms of governance.

This introductory chapter has six sections. I look first at the geo-political, historical and socio-cultural contexts of Okinawa to clarify how the thesis situates Okinawa as a contested area in relation to Japan and the United States. Second, I turn to Okinawan studies not only as a discipline but also as a product of political and socio-cultural practices in the name of academia. I do not focus on Okinawan studies

in the ethnographic chapters. But, whilst I see the thesis as part of Okinawan studies in English, it is necessary to point out how Okinawan studies have developed in Japan and the United States and produced the implicit relationship between imperialism, colonialism, post-colonialism, militarism and academism. Third, I show how the Japanese government has promoted gender equality in terms of law and how public women's organisations have taken part in promoting gender equality in Japan. I also draw attention to how law brought about the contradictions and gap between law and reality, which was incorporated in the daily work of public women's organisations. Fourth, I set out the central questions of the research and explain the key terms used in the analysis. I explain how my thesis tackles theoretical questions such as the politics of categorisation, of subject formation and of governance. Fifth, I discuss ethical issues to do with confidentiality and openness in a highly politicised research site, and explain how I collected the data and organised it into themes. I describe my methodological stance including my positionality in this research. Finally I provide an outline of the thesis.

1. The contexts of Okinawa

First of all I shall clarify the meaning of several terms in this thesis pertaining to 'Okinawa'. When using terms such as 'Okinawa', 'the main island of Okinawa' and 'the Ryukyu Islands', I refer to a geopolitical and socio-cultural space which corresponds to the Ryukyu Islands, excluding the Amami Islands, which administratively belongs to Kagoshima Prefecture. By 'Okinawa Prefecture' I mean an administrative organisation in local government, an administrative space that excludes the Amami Islands from the Ryukyu Islands, and an administrative unit. At times, as will be clear from the context, I also mean Okinawa Prefecture when using the general term 'Okinawa'.

Annexation to Japan

'Okinawa' is a relatively new name given to the islands belonging to Okinawa Prefecture among the Ryukyu Islands (about 1,200 km in length from south to north). The Ryukyu Islands consist of 146 subtropical islands in the Pacific Ocean to the southwest of Japan proper, northeast of Taiwan and the Philippines. The capital of

Okinawa Prefecture, Naha City, is situated on the main island of Okinawa, the northern part of the Ryukyu Islands.

Historically, Okinawa used to be called the Ryukyus and was an independent kingdom. In 1429, the first Shôshi King unified the Ryukyu Islands. The Ryukyus were a trading centre in East and South Asia through relations with China. However, in 1609, Satsuma, which was one of the Japanese feudal domains in the Tokugawa period (lasting from 1603 to 1868), invaded the Ryukyus. Thereafter, the Ryukyus became a semi-independent country, paying tribute to China and Japan through the Satsuma domain. In 1868, the reign of the Tokugawa family ended and the construction of a modern nation-state under the Emperor Meiji began. In 1879, owing to the implementation of national land reform, the Ryukyus were annexed as Okinawa Prefecture by Japan, which integrated the Okinawan people almost completely into the Japanese governmental, economic, and socio-cultural structure. The King of the Ryukyus was deposed and Okinawa acquired a new Japanese prefectural governor from Japan proper.

Battle of Okinawa

During the Second World War, the main island of Okinawa was the most important among the Ryukyu Islands both for the Japanese Armed Forces and the US Armed Forces as the threshold of Japan proper (see Appleton 1948; Okinawa Times 1971). Consequently, the Japanese Armed Forces forced residents to supply their lands for use as military bases in 1944 (Arasaki 1986: 196). The Battle of Okinawa began in March 1945 with the landing of US Forces, and officially continued until June 1945. This battle led to the deaths of over 240,000 Okinawan and Japanese people (which amounted to one quarter of the Okinawan population), including numerous civilians, not only by US and Japanese fire, but also by forced 'mass suicide'. Okinawan civilians were forced to commit 'mass suicide' by the imperial military rather than become prisoners of the US Armed Forces (Miyagi 2000, 2008). Okinawan people were also killed as suspected spies by the Japanese forces, because they spoke Okinawan dialect rather than standard Japanese (and sometimes even despite the fact that they spoke Japanese).

Women were involved in the Battle of Okinawa not only through military fire

but also in terms of sexuality. Firstly it is notable that there were more than 130 military sexual slavery centres for Japanese soldiers all over the Ryukyu Islands (Takazato 1996: 45). The 'military slaves' were those who were forcefully or through deceit taken from Korea to work as sex workers in Okinawa (see Fukuchi 1992; Gima 1996; Kawada 1987; Nikkan kyôdô 'nihon gun ianjo' Miyako jima chôsa dan 2009; Uehara 1977; VAWW-NET Japan 2002). Secondly, 'Amerasian children' were born from the beginning of 1946, since American soldiers had started to rape Okinawan women as soon as they invaded Okinawa in March 1945 (Kichi guntai wo yurusanai onna tachi no kai 1995). These Amerasian children were called 'mixed-blood child' (*ainoko*). Not only in Okinawa, but also in Japan proper, 'the biracial offspring of war are at once more offensive and intriguing because they bear the imprint of sex as domination', no matter how they were born (as a result of 'romantic love' or rape) (Field 1993: 39).

Post-war colonisation

During and after the Battle of Okinawa, the US forces built military bases on 45,000 acres of the land which they appropriated (Arasaki 1986: 196). As a result, Okinawa lost two thirds of its farming areas (ibid.: 197). Since the US forces said that they would pay landowners one tenth of a bottle of coca cola per 3.3 square metres a year, unsurprisingly most landowners did not make a contract with them (ibid.). When the Security Treaty between Japan and the United States (San Francisco Treaty) was ratified in 1952, the Ryukyu Islands came 'under its trusteeship system with the US as the sole administering authority' (Article 3). In other words, the US gained 'the right to exercise all and any powers of administration, legislation and jurisdiction over the territory and inhabitants of' the Ryukyu Islands (ibid.). As a result, Okinawans 'remained a stateless people, neither Japanese nor American citizens' (Johnson 1999: 6). Okinawa thus became the air base for the Korean War and the Vietnam War during the Cold War.

Since the occupation, Okinawans have organised various kinds of protests, movements, and activities against the US military. First and foremost, their protests were for their lands. They tried to stop the US military from invading and occupying their lands by bulldozers and guns, and campaigned for the return of their lands from

the US military. It is well known that women of the Isa-hama region tried to protect their rice fields from the US military forces by holding a sit-in in front of bulldozers in the 1950s. It is also notable that farmers of Ie Island refused to use violence against the American soldiers who tried to occupy their lands, and started a non-violent movement in 1955 through *kojiki kôshin* (beggars' procession) to let other Okinawans know about the issue and gain the return of their lands (Ahagon 1972; 1992). While some landowners kept campaigning for the return of their lands, others agreed on a 'pay-as-you-go basis' (House of Representatives, Committee on Armed Forces 1956). The landowners organised an association of all the landowners in Okinawa to negotiate with occupation institutions in June 1953. The Association did not have enough power to directly resist land requisition by the US forces, though 'it was significant to institutionally unite all the landowners of militarised lands together' (Arasaki 1986: 198). The Association kept trying to increase the rent. Thus, in the 1950s, the landowners tried to protect their rights over their lands and lives. In contrast, in the 1960s, they protested against militarism, wars, and the presence of the military bases (ibid.: 200). The US forces wanted to expand their military bases, as a base from which to attack North Vietnam, but the landowners refused to make a contract. The anti-war, anti-militarist movement liaised with the struggle for ethnic liberation from the US military occupation, which attempted to regain their lands from the military occupation and to 'revert' to Japan.

However, even after the reversion to Japan in 1972, the US military bases remained in Okinawa. Moreover, the Japanese government came to rent the lands from Okinawans and paid the landowners on behalf of the US forces. The government also increased the rent drastically by a factor of 6.9 in 1972 and the rent rose again between 1992 and 1975 by a factor of nine (Arasaki 1986: 201). Consequently, more and more landowners came to accept a contract. Land for many landowners became 'the object of speculation' from being a measure of agricultural production (ibid.). However, at the same time, the anti-bases movement persisted, as did various crimes and air crash accidents caused by US military personnel. Both Okinawan and Japanese people have protested against a new US military air base in Henoko, the northern part of the main island of Okinawa, for more than 2,000 days (as of 10 October 2009).

Working in Okinawa

While rice has been the main agricultural product in Japan proper, Okinawa has been famous for sugar cane agriculture. Consequently, Okinawa was deeply damaged by the worldwide steep fall in sugar prices in the 1920s and 1930s. This damage was called *sotetsu jigoku* (palm hell), because people in Okinawa faced severe famine, and were poisoned by eating palm trunks before they had been treated to remove their toxic properties. Ichiro Tomiyama, a Japanese economic historian, points out that the drastic fall in sugar prices was caused not only by the global market reorganisation of the sugar industry, but also by the positionality of Okinawa in Japan (Tomiyama 1990: 39-44). Like other capitalist countries, Japan had a problem of over population in domestic farm villages, but in the case of Okinawa the Japanese government did not try to solve the issue. As a result, many of the population left Okinawa Prefecture for Japan proper or overseas (e.g. the South Pacific Islands delegated to Japanese rule) as an extremely cheap labour force. This labour flow has influenced the labour market in Okinawa Prefecture ever since; it is still dependent on contract employment in Japan proper, such as in the car industry where one-third of employees come from Okinawa Prefecture. In 2007, 35% of workers found work outside the Prefecture through public employment security offices in Okinawa Prefecture (Doi 2009: 165).

Okinawa Prefecture has a population of 1,377,708 excluding a population of 48,490 US military personnel and their families (Okinawa ken 2009: 1-2). The minimum hourly wage in Okinawa Prefecture is the lowest in Japan and, in 2009, is 629 yen (£3, at the exchange rate of 200 yen per pound sterling) in contrast to the national average of 713 yen.² Between July and September 2009, the unemployment rate in Okinawa Prefecture was 7.1%,³ while the national average was 5.4%.⁴ Thus the labour market has more difficulties in Okinawa than in Japan proper. In Okinawa, the biggest labour market was the US military bases before the 'reversion' to Japan in

² Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (available on-line: <http://www2.mhlw.go.jp/topics/seido/kijunkyoku/minimum/minimum-02.htm#01>, accessed 10 April 2010)

³ Okinawa Prefecture (available on-line: http://www.pref.okinawa.jp/toukeika/lfs/lfs_index.html, accessed 10 April 2010).

⁴ Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (available on-line: <http://www.stat.go.jp/data/roudou/sokuhou/4hanki/ft/pdf/06000.pdf>, accessed 10 April 2010).

1972. During the 1960s, the bases had approximately 50,000 employees, including shop attendants, accounting officials, repair persons for electronics, and chefs. The number of employees has dramatically reduced since 1969. The US had to reduce labour costs because of the economic recession during the 1960s, and more than 40,000 jobs were lost. This caused widespread unemployment which became a serious social problem that still remains (Asahi Shimbun, 13 May 2004). Now the US military bases have about 8,700 employees in Okinawa (ibid.) and as a result, the public sector (Okinawa Prefecture and 41 municipalities) became the biggest employer in Okinawa Prefecture.⁵ Currently, 42 prefectural and municipal local governments have 260,103 employees, including non-regular workers (Okinawa ken rôdô kumiai sôrengôkai 2009). Today in Okinawa, working for the public sector (not as a non-regular worker) means being ‘middle-class’ (Doi 2009: 157).

I now turn to ‘non-regular workers’ in Okinawa Prefecture. There are several different English translations for these workers, some of which overlap with one another, but, in this thesis, following the OECD translation of *Employment Outlook 2009*,⁶ I use ‘non-regular workers’ for *hi seiki rôdô sha* in comparison with ‘regular workers’, *seiki rôdô sha*. Non-regular workers include part-time, ‘dispatched’ (*haken*),⁷ fixed-term contract, contract and other types of workers who are not

⁵ By the public sector I mean both local governments (government sector) consisting of Okinawa Prefecture and 41 municipal local governments and the third-sector institutions established by local governments. There are various third-sector organisations including WOO, which is positioned between the public sector and the private sector. The third sector is established by the government sector and managed by a third body, but usually local government officials are seconded to the third body, because local governments financially support the sector.

⁶ *OECD Employment Outlook 2009* defines ‘non-regular workers’ as those who work shorter hours and have lower hourly wages than regular workers (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 2009). However, as many point out, non-regular workers, including part-time workers, work almost the same hours or more in Japan (see Nakano 2006; Takenobu 2008). Therefore, I define non-regular workers not in terms of working hours but in terms of their working conditions such as fixed-term and non-permanent contracts. Local governments and the Japanese Government sometimes exclude and sometimes include contract workers, temporary workers and dispatched workers from non-regular workers in their statistics.

⁷ The Worker Dispatching Law (WDL) was enforced in 1985 in Japan. WDL enacts that a dispatching company should make a contract with a dispatched company and send a dispatched worker there for a dispatched period so that a dispatched worker is employed not by a dispatched company but by dispatching one. WDL ‘originally limited worker dispatching to a very limited range of specialist activities, such as legal services, accountancy and acting’ (Bishop 2005: 152). Yet the revised WDL (1996, 1999, and 2004) drastically expanded the range of worker dispatching, including the manufacturing sector and clerking office jobs as a series of deregulation policies. This revision helped employers to substantially reduce labour costs and produced a large number of non-regular workers. There were 3,810,000 dispatched workers in 2008 (Kôsei rôdô shô 2008) (available on-line: <http://www.mhlw.go.jp/houdou/2008/12/h1226-3.html>, accessed on 20 October 2009)

permanent regular workers. Okinawa Prefecture has the highest rate of non-regular workers, 40.7 %, among 47 prefectures in Japan (Sômu shô 2008). The public sector is the biggest employer not only for regular workers but also for non-regular workers in Okinawa. There are various forms and names of non-regular employment in the public sector. They are differentiated from one another mainly according to their legal status in the Local Public Service Law (hereafter, LPSL),⁸ but in fact, the names and forms of employment are respectively determined by each local government and it is not clear which law and article applies (JICHIRO 2003: 10; JICHIRO 2008: 4-6). Non-regular workers legally include the following three categories of employment: (1) contract workers (*shokutaku*) who work full-time or part-time (less than 40 hours and mostly 35 hours a week) with special skills on fixed-term contracts based on Article 3-3-3 of LPSL, (2) temporary workers (*rinji shokuin*) who work full-time on six-month fixed-term contracts (legally renewed once, but often illegally renewed after a week or month's interval) based on Article 22 of LPSL, and (3) part-time workers (*hijôkin shokuin*) who work less than 40 hours on fixed-term contracts (legally renewable for three years, but illegally for longer terms) based on Article 17 of LPSL.⁹ WOO contract workers are supposed to work for 40 hours a week with special skills on one-year fixed-term contracts based on Article 3-3-3 of LPSL.

There are 8,881 non-regular workers in the public sector in Okinawa Prefecture (Okinawa ken rôdô kumiai sôrengôkai 2009) according to a survey carried out by a communist trade union, Okinawa Prefectural Trade Union Association (OTUA) since 2006. This number comprises 33% of all the public sector workers in the Prefecture. The proportion of non-regular workers of Okinawa Prefecture is higher than the national average by about 6% (JICHIRO 2008). In addition, three out of forty-one municipalities have over 50% and eleven have over 40% non-regular workers (Okinawa ken rôdô kumiai sôrengôkai 2009). Unfortunately, OTUA did not investigate the gender ratio and so we do not know how this labour market is gendered. But JICHIRO, the All-Japan Prefectural and Municipal Workers' Union,

⁸ The Local Public Service Law was enacted in 1950. This law can be seen in English. <http://nippon.zaidan.info/seikabutsu/2001/00561/mokuji.htm>

⁹ These non-regular workers in the public sector call themselves *kansei wâkingu pua* (working poor produced by governments) to appeal to the public, secure their employment and improve their working conditions in Japan including Okinawa (Kansei wâkingu pua kenkyûkai 2010).

also carried out a nationwide survey of non-regular workers in the public sector in 2008 which found that more than 80% of non-regular workers are women in the public sector (JICHIRO 2009: 22-23). In the light of the JICHIRO survey, it is very likely that the proportion of women amongst public sector non-regular workers is rather high and that the non-regular labour market of the public sector is highly gendered in Okinawa Prefecture. Between 2002 and 2003, WOO had 68% of non-regular workers on one-year fixed-term contracts and they were all female.

2. Okinawan studies

In this section, I look at how Okinawan studies (*Okinawa kenkyû* or *Okinawagaku*) have been historically and geopolitically established and developed because the historical and geopolitical positionality of Okinawan studies is deeply bound up with the contexts of my thesis. In this sense, it is crucial to trace how Okinawan studies have been linked with Japanese colonialism and the US occupation, in order to situate the ethnographic chapters.

Okinawa as the origin and the boundary

Anthropological research on Okinawa, including folklore studies (*minzoku gaku*), started full-scale in the 1890s after the annexation by Japan.¹⁰ Since then, for Japanese anthropologists and folklorists, Okinawa has been a significant research field although each discipline had distinctive viewpoints on Okinawa. While Okinawa meant ‘the close other culture’ for anthropologists, it was ‘the origin of Japanese culture as a part of Japan’ for folklorists (Choi *et al.* 1996: 468-469). In 1884, an anthropological association was established in Japan for the first time. Not only Okinawa but also Taiwan, Korea, the Kuril Islands, the South Sea Islands and Manchuria were investigated as places which made a new boundary for Imperial Japan (Tomiyama 2002: 81-83). That is, anthropology tried to define new people living in new territories, especially Okinawans (to the south) and Ainu (to the north), in accordance with physical distinctions as races: how they are different from and similar to the Japanese race (*ibid.*: 82-83, 92-93). In this sense, these investigations

¹⁰ Okinawans, Japanese, Chinese and Koreans have also conducted research and written on the Ryûkyû islands before the Meiji era (see Beillevaire 1999).

explored how anthropology could define Japanese in contrast to Okinawans and Ainu as others. As Tomiyama suggests, this is because Japanese people also were investigated by western researchers, such as Edward S. Morse who was famous for a discovery of a shell mound in Omori, and who introduced anthropology and archaeology to Japan. Japanese anthropologists then wanted to study 'Japanese', including people in new territories.

Folklore studies of Okinawa also began under Imperial Japanese colonialism (Murai 1995: 187-196) when several folklorists, such as Kunio Yanagita and Shinobu Origuchi visited Okinawa and met Okinawan scholars, such as Fuyu Iha and Kôei Sakima, in 1921 (Akamine 1996: 63). Folklorists tried to find similarity to Japanese culture and the origin of Japanese culture in Okinawa. However, this attracted the criticism that it would be impossible to conclude that Okinawa could be a key to explaining all of Japanese folklore (Oto 1950). Thus such folklore studies were bound up with Japanese Orientalism (Murai 1995: 194), which could conceal the Japanese colonisation of the Ryukyu Islands (Choi *et al.* 1996: 468). It is noteworthy that these folklorists and Okinawan scholars paid rapt attention to the supposed 'spiritual power' of Okinawan women and Okinawan women's political status in folk tales (Iha 1919, 1938; Origuchi 1965; Sakima 1926, 1982; Yanagita 1940). This was the beginning of a representation of 'Okinawan women' as special beings.

Okinawan studies and the military occupation

For anthropology in the United States, Okinawan studies started as part of the preparation for the Battle of Okinawa.¹¹ To prepare for the battle, the American forces asked three American anthropologists, George Peter Murdock (1897-1985), Clellan S. Ford (1909-1970) and John W. M. Whiting (1908-1999), to produce *The Civil Affairs Handbook – Ryukyu (Loochoo) Islands* (1944) (Office of the Chief of the Naval Operations, Navy Department 1944; Tomiyama 2002: 250). Like Ruth Benedict (1954),¹² they read literature regarding Okinawans and the Ryukyu Islands, and undertook a survey of Okinawans who were in the US (Naha Shi Sômu Bu Josei Shitsu 2001: 24). The Civil Affairs Handbook was based on Cross-Cultural Files

¹¹ For a discussion of the anthropology of Japan during the war, see Ryan 2004.

¹² See Yoneyama (1999b, 2003) for an insightful critical analysis of *The chrysanthemum and the sword: patterns of Japanese culture* written by Benedict (1954) in terms of liberal multiculturalism.

which Murdock had established at Yale University and these files became the Human Relations Area Files (HRAF) which were used as information files for Area Studies to define and compare all the cultures in the world (Maretzki 1962: 97). The Handbook clearly positioned Okinawans of the Ryukyu Islands as being different from the Japanese. It was believed that it would be easier to colonise Okinawa by separating the Ryukyu Islands from Japan and by stressing that Okinawa had been colonised by Japanese Imperialism; thus the United States could liberate Okinawa from Japan (Beillevaire 1999: 186-187; Inoue 2007: 79). The authors of the Handbook came to Okinawa with the US Armed Forces during the Battle of Okinawa and stayed there as officers of the Civilian Affairs Department for several months (Ford 1951; Okinawa Times 1971).

For social scientists who formulated the military government research planning and operations for the battle, ‘the months following the landing were to be the test of their science applied to the practical problems of dealing intelligently with a conquered people, in accordance with military directives’ (Ford 1951: 175). Murdock was Lieutenant Commander and dared to introduce women’s suffrage in Okinawa despite the fact that most Okinawan male civilian leaders insisted that even the Civil Code did not allow women as individuals to vote and that suffrage was premature (Okinawa Times 1971: 112). Thanks to Murdock’s command, Okinawan women voted in September 1945 for the first time and before Japanese women’s suffrage was introduced in 1946.¹³ According to a memoir of Clellan S. Ford, it appears that these anthropologists drew a parallel between military success in invasion and occupation, and the success of social sciences, rather than questioning the use of anthropological research for military invasion and occupation (Ford 1951: 175-176).¹⁴

¹³ Quoting Susan Pharr (1981), Lisa Yoneyama notes that ‘the Americans viewed their increasing presence as eloquently indicating the success of universal suffrage in “improving women’s status” from that of the period before the Occupation’ (Yoneyama 1999b: 191). It is also notable that such success would be used for another invasion and occupation. Yoneyama points out that ‘[i]t remains crucial that remembering the occupation of Japan as a “success” *prior to* the beginning of war proved effective in preparing the public, both here and abroad, for the preemptive military strike the US government was about to launch against Iraq’ in the US (Yoneyama 2005: 886).

¹⁴ Clellan S. Ford served as a Lieutenant, US Navy Reserve, in military government research planning and operations during the war, and then became an associate professor of anthropology at Yale University and executive director of HRAF (Ford 1951: 182). For him, Okinawa ‘had been selected as an ideal base from which to launch a death-dealing blow to the enemy’s homeland’ (Ford 1951: 175).

Murdock, Whiting and Ford took part in the project of the US military occupation plans in spring 1943 (Tomiyama 2002: 251). They focused not only on the Ryukyu Islands but also on the South Sea Islands, especially Micronesia, under Japanese Imperialism, and produced the framework of Area Studies in the process of the plans for occupation and government by the US forces (Bashkow 1991: 179; Tomiyama 2002: 251). In January 1946, Murdock organised the National Research Council and established the Pacific Science Board (PSB) of the National Research Council with Harold Coolidge, Harvard University in 1948 (Tomiyama 2002: 251). The Government and Relief in Occupied Areas (GARIOA) had sufficient funds from the United States army to build an independent section, the Scientific Investigation of the Ryukyu Islands (SIRI), for research on the Ryukyu Islands under the military occupation in 1951 (Kerr 1958: xiii; McCune 1999: 4). SIRI published numerous research reports on the Ryukyu Islands, such as *Karimata – A Village in the Southern Ryukyu Islands* (Burd 1952), *Studies of Okinawan Village Life* (Glacken 1953), *The Island of Amami Oshima in the Northern Ryukyus* (Haring 1952), *Ryukyu Kingdom and Province Before 1945* (Kerr 1953), *Post-War Okinawa* (Pitts et al. 1955), and *Anthropological Investigation in Yaeyama* (Smith 1952) (Tomiyama 2002: 340). It is noteworthy that it seemed important for these researchers to stress the value and high quality of their research by focussing on the problems and lack of Okinawan studies conducted by Japanese and Okinawans. For instance, William P. Lebra points out that ‘the writings of these individuals [Japanese researchers and Okinawan amateur folk-historians] have been based on very brief periods of field research (more in the nature of tours than protracted field studies), on personal reminiscences, or on the interpretation of old Okinawan literature’ (Lebra 1966: viii). He concludes that ‘[e]xcessive reliance on old literature and a lack of extensive field research have tended to produce studies which are either highly subjective and speculative or simply catalogues of the more obvious facets of this culture’ (ibid.).¹⁵ In this way, it is possible to find the desire to show ‘the colonizer’s ability to represent colonized

¹⁵ Lebra stresses that he conducted nine-month field research on ‘Okinawa religion’ ‘in 1953-54’ and ‘field data were gathered in all parts of Okinawa, from informants in more than one hundred communities’ (Lebra: 1966: v, vii). However, it is a misunderstanding that there was no ‘extensive fieldwork’ in Okinawan studies, because most Okinawan and Japanese researchers have established lifelong relationships with informants rather than one-time fieldwork (Kawahashi 2002; Wacker 2001). See a different analysis about Okinawan shamans from Sered (1999) in English (Rokkum 1998).

cultures' in his research (Minh-ha 1989: 71). Furthermore, these reports were also useful and necessary for the ongoing occupation.¹⁶ This was because it was considered that Okinawan 'civilian employees of the occupying military organization needed to gain some historical perspective for their task' (Kerr 2000: xiii). There was 'the dual purpose of advancing the broad anthropological horizon in the Orient and providing the information of administrative value to the civil administration of the island' (Inoue 2007: 80, cited in Smith 1952: 1). More precisely, as I have shown above, there was a close connection between the success of social sciences and the military occupation. The framework of these Area Studies was born under the US military plans of occupation and governance (Bashkow 1991: 179).

Several of the SIRI reports were modified and republished as academic works (Glacken 1955; Kerr 1958; Lebra 1966).¹⁷ Such social scientific research was not only used for the occupation but also consumed by academia. In this sense, it might not suffice to say that 'American anthropologists who studied Okinawa in the 1950s and the 1960s also inherited and exhibited the problems of Orientalism' by referring to Edward Said's work (1978) (Inoue 2007: 80). Rather, we should consider how Orientalism, in other words, 'the colonizer's ability to represent colonized cultures,' helped the compatibility and the implicit relationship between social sciences and military occupation and colonisation (Minh-ha 1989: 71). Accordingly, '[a] subversion of the colonizer's ability to represent colonized cultures can only radically challenge the established power relations when it carries with it a tightly critical relation with the colonizer's most confident characteristic discourses' (ibid.). Otherwise, we might overlook the fact that European Orientalism was taken over by the US imperialist power with military bases in East Asia (Chow 1991: 7). Okinawan studies are thus inseparable from the US militarism, imperialism, and academism.

'Okinawan women' in Okinawan studies

'Okinawan women' have been studied as 'special beings' or 'different beings' in folklore studies and anthropology in Japan and Okinawa. It is important to consider

¹⁶ For example, both Murdock and Coolidge suggested that James Malcolm Lewis, Brigadier General of the United States Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands (USCAR), should ask George H. Kerr, a former US diplomat, to make the above SIRI report (Kerr 1953) in 1952 (Kerr 2000: xiii).

¹⁷ Shannon McCune points out that some of the above research was conducted not only by the researcher himself but also with the assistance of his wife (McCune 1999: 4).

carefully the politics of representation of 'Okinawan women' in the context of Okinawan studies in Japan. There are both similarities and differences between Japanese primitive culture and Okinawa in these representations. The specificity of 'Okinawan women' is divided into two discourses and forms of representation. Firstly, they have been represented through the occupation to show Okinawan women's mercantile activities and abilities. For example, 'Okinawan women' who were especially engaged in fishery in Itoman Village, the southern part of the main island of Okinawa, were described as 'independent merchants' who bought fish from their spousal fishermen and sold them at a market in Naha City (Noguchi 1969; Kato 1994). They held '*watakusâ*' (their own private money) which they inherited from their mothers and also raised through hawking. However, '*watakusâ*' has been described recently as evidence for women's financial independence (Okuno 2005; Takagi 2007); women used '*watakusâ*' when they needed money for their family, such as when they wanted to repair their familial dwelling (Noguchi 1969). Secondly, 'Okinawan women' are described as having 'spiritual power' (Iha 1919, 1938; Muratake 1992; Tanaka 1992; Yanagita 1969). It is found that 'Okinawan women' played a religious and spiritual role in rituals of the Ryukyu Kingdom and in the domestic sphere in Okinawan classic literature (Iha 1919, 1938; Yanagita 1969). In anthropology, it was pointed out that the 'spiritual power' of 'Okinawan women' protected not only their family (male family members) but also the whole society (Mabuchi 1955). This discourse of representation became widespread not only in Japan but also in the wider world (Higa 1996; Muratake 1992; Needham 1980; Sered 1999; Tanaka 1992; Uematsu 1983).

However, questions about the fixed 'positive' representation of women were raised from various perspectives (Wakao 1985; Miyagi *et al.* 1997). For instance, Hirofumi Tsuboi, a folklorist, points out that the emphasis on women's spirituality might end up closing the door to women's daily life by only focussing on women's role in religion (Tsuboi 1985: 25). Thus Tomoko Akatsuka, a folklorist, questions whether folklore studies have described the way women actually live (Akatsuka 1996: 679). Ajiro Fukuda, also a folklorist, notes that women play a role in supporting men rather than acting as subjects, even if they are involved in public religious services (Fukuda 1989). In this respect, it is noteworthy that some folklorists

delicately suggest in Okinawan studies that women are not goddesses because they can use their spiritual power not for themselves but only for their brothers (Miyagi 1979: 48; Sumiya & Kreiner 1977: 249). Moreover, a feminist scholar in religious studies claims that such a 'spiritual' role of women in religious services tends to complement the male-centred system (Ogoshi 1997: 155). Aiko Ogoshi doubts whether other women are respected in reality, even if a particular woman is positioned as spiritual being at the top of a society (ibid.: 154). That is to say, 'spirituality' might be the reverse of the same coin of powerlessness of women in daily life (Ueno 1988: 139). In addition, it should be noted that the emphasis on women's spirituality in Okinawan studies has been used not simply as 'the alibi to make discrimination against women invisible' (Okano 1993: 29), but also to indicate the similarity and difference between Japan and Okinawa under the colonial and post-colonial relationship between them. Thus we need to draw attention not only to one specific image of 'Okinawan women' but also to 'inheritance issues as well as the sex industry concerning the US military bases and sightseeing in Okinawa' (Wakao 1985: 91). This is because the representation from the outside might suppress women in reality (Miyagi *et al.* 1997: 15).

3. Gender, law and Japan

In this section, I explore how gender equality has been developed in terms of law in Japan and how legislation has paradoxically produced and deepened the gap between reality and the ideal. I also draw attention to how public women's organisations played a part in bridging the fissure between them as a praxis site for both social movements and administration geared towards gender equality. Lastly, I point to neoliberalism, which is rooted in public women's organisations.

Gender and law

Japanese women have obtained various domestic legal statuses in public, at work, and at home since the loss of World War II by virtue of General Headquarters (GHQ) of the Allied Forces, supranational and domestic feminist movements, and international organisational pressure from organisations such as the International

Labour Organisation (ILO) and the United Nations (UN).¹⁸ Various domestic laws were newly established and revised, and I show how some of these were linked with domestic and international situations. First of all, under the GHQ of the Allied Forces, several laws were issued and revised. In 1945, the Election Law for women's suffrage was revised and Japanese women were granted suffrage for the first time in 1946. Yet, it should be noted that various women's groups for suffrage such as the League for the Attainment of Women's Political Rights (1924) and the Women's Suffrage League (1925) were established long before the war and its members promoted the suffragist movement (Mackie 2003: 61-63). In 1947, the new Constitution was issued and referred to equality between the sexes for the first time under GHQ.¹⁹ In 1948, the Civil Law was revised under GHQ and the patriarchal family system which was bound up with the emperor system was abolished.²⁰ Secondly, the Japanese government ratified and issued laws under international pressure in the 1980s and the 1990s. Previously, the UN had sponsored World Women's Conferences from 1975 and adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1979. The Japanese government signed CEDAW in 1980. To ratify CEDAW, 'Japan made three main adjustments to national laws': (1) the revision of the Nationality Law from patrilineal to bilineal principles, (2) the revision of the Education and Science Ministry's teaching guidelines of home economics which was to be learned by both female and male students in junior and high schools, and (3) the enactment of the Equal Employment Opportunity Law (EEOL) in 1985 (Yoneda 2002: 1).²¹ It is notable that 'CEDAW sets [up] a report system in which ratified countries are committed to submit national reports regularly to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on new measures they have taken to comply with their treaty obligations and on existing obstacles' (ibid.). Therefore, NGOs and trade

¹⁸ For discussion in English of gender, sexuality and public policy in Japan, see Mackie forthcoming.

¹⁹ It is well known that Beate Shirota Gordon drafted the section of the new Constitution that concerns women's human rights (Gordon 1997).

²⁰ It took ten years for Okinawa to welcome the revised Civil Code in 1957 because Okinawa was under US military occupation.

²¹ As I shall show in Chapter Two, the Nationality Law was revised not only by the Japanese government's decision, but also by the voices of stateless children, their mothers and counsellors from Okinawa. It should be noted that the Equal Employment Opportunity Law is the English translation and rather different from the original Japanese title, the Law on Securing of Impartial Opportunity and Treatment between Men and Women (*danjo koyô kikai kintô hô*).

unions which aim to establish gender equality (equal payment and treatment between men and women) in the workplace have lobbied and made contact with the Committee members in person, and put pressure on the Japanese government especially since the UN Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing (hereafter, Beijing Conference) in 1995 (Yoneda 2006: 1-2). These grassroots feminist groups have annually visited the ILO and made contact with its staff members to observe several ILO conventions, such as the ILO Convention 156 on workers with family responsibilities and ILO Convention 175 on part-time work.²² In this sense, in combination with the grassroots movements, ‘this report system has contributed to the acceleration of gender equality policies in Japan’ (Yoneda 2002: 2).²³

The Japanese government has made and remade a national plan for establishing gender equality since the 1975 UN First World Conference on Women in Mexico. Thus such international conferences, organisations and laws affected not only Japanese national laws and policies to promote gender equality, but also regional and local policies. To realise a gender-equal society in Japan, the state requires both international cooperation and the commitment of local governments. This top-down linkage is also entangled with the bottom-up links between local grassroots-movements (NGOs) and state-initiated projects (Sharma 2006, 2008), as well as regional movements and international networks such as the Beijing Conference (Leve 2001; Riles 2001).²⁴

Lost in translation: ‘A society in which both men and women participate’

²² Working Women’s Network (WWN), a NGO working for gender equality in the workplace in Osaka City since 1995, reports its international activities (available on-line: <http://wwn-net.org/?cat=5>, accessed on 5 October 2009).

²³ However, it should be also noted that these international and global conventions ‘lack the force of nation-state laws’ and ‘any direct form of sanction or coercion but work through forms of shaming, internal and external pressure, and negotiation and reciprocity’ (Merry 2006: 162). In a way, the UN conferences such as the Beijing Conference including NGO forums play a role of exemplifying that these conventions cannot sanction nation states (Riles 2001: 8). As I shall show in the following chapters, ‘the acceleration of gender equality policies’ is not necessarily connected with the promotion of gender equality in reality at WOO (Yoneda 2002: 2). However, as I shall show in Chapter Two, attending UN NGO forums had a significant meaning for the feminist anti-militarist social movement in Okinawa.

²⁴ Lauren Leve, referring to Pigg (1992) and Weisgrau (1997), points out that ‘[r]ecent anthropological studies of development and NGOs have pointed out that development – whether top-down or bottom-up – necessarily takes shape within local histories and sets of relations’ (2001: 116).

In 1996, a panel of experts submitted 'The Vision for Participation of both Men and Women' (hereafter, The Vision) to the Hashimoto Ryutaro Prime Minister (Liberal Democratic Party, 1996-1998) (Naikakufu danjo kyôdô sankaku kyoku 1997). It was not until The Vision was published that we came to know what the government meant by 'a society in which both men and women participate'. The Vision was clearly distinct from the existing plans and policies for women made by the government (Osawa 2002: 40-55). The Vision has several significant points. Firstly, it aimed not only to establish 'equality of opportunity' but also 'equality of outcome' (ibid.: 42). An employer cannot say that the reason why a woman cannot get promoted, even if she has the same qualifications as a man, is that she has not made an effort. It became possible for women to contend that when a company has arranged different career courses for women and men, this amounts to unequal treatment between women and men and this is surely indirect discrimination against women. Secondly, The Vision notably adopted 'the poststructuralist conception of gender as of the early 1990s that is not premised on biological sex differences' (Osawa 2002: 42-46; Ueno & Osawa 2001: 23-29). That is, as Judith Butler states, socio-cultural gender precedes biological sex, and gender defines sex, not vice versa (Butler 1990). It considers that both gender and sex are cultural productions and that gender enacts sex. Thirdly, The Vision changed its target group from women and children to both men and women, except where positive action for women and violence against women were concerned (Osawa 2002: 47). In this sense, The Vision recast women's issues as gender issues and men came to be targeted as those who should rethink themselves in terms of 'sexism', 'pay gaps between men and women', 'double standards', 'gender roles', 'sexual harassment', 'domestic violence', 'sexual violence', 'misogyny', and so on.

The Basic Law for a Society in which Both Men and Women Participate (hereafter, the Basic Law) was enacted in 1999 and was based on The Vision (1996). The Preamble of the Basic Law states:

... it is vital to position the realization of a society in which both men and women participate as a top-priority task in determining the framework of 21st-century Japan, and implement policies related to promotion of formation of a Gender-equal Society in all fields. This law is hereby established in order to clarify the basic principles with regard to formation of a Gender-equal Society, to set a course to this end, and to promote efforts by the State and

local governments and citizens with regard to formation of a Gender-Equal Society comprehensively and systematically.²⁵

Many feminist activists, researchers, lawyers, practitioners, and central and local government officials, expected that the Basic Law would make a difference to the practical and realistic promotion of gender equality, especially in the judicial process (Tsunoda 2002). For example, Mari Osawa, a member of the panel of experts for The Vision, has stressed the practical judicial possibilities of the Basic Law (Ueno & Osawa 2001: 33-44). Although a basic law cannot define any obligation or right of the state in Japan, it makes it possible to establish alternative laws and policies and put a different interpretation on the existing laws (ibid.: 34). Moreover, the National Machinery for a Society in which Both Men and Women Participate was established for overarching negotiation with all the ministries and was ranked above all the ministries in 2001. Osawa highlights that this National Machinery can intervene in policy-making and the law-making process under the Basic Law (ibid.: 37).

However, the Basic Law includes both compromise and conflict. While the Basic Law used ‘parity’ (*kintô*) and ‘equity’ (*taitô*), it deliberately avoided the word ‘equality’ (*byôdô*) to which The Vision referred (Osawa 2002: 41; Ueno & Osawa 2001: 18-19). This indicates that The Vision could refer to ‘gender equality’ (*danjo byôdô*), because it was not a law. In this sense, it is noteworthy that, thanks to the occupation of the General Headquarters of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (1945-52) in Japan, only the Constitution refers to ‘equality’ (*byôdô*) among Japanese laws (Ueno & Osawa 2001: 18-19).²⁶ Accordingly, the Basic Law embraces a trade-off between the ideal and reality as a result of ‘institutionalisation’ of the social movements (Cockburn 1991: 2).

It is apparent that there is an unbridgeable gap between ‘a gender-equal society’ and ‘a society in which both men and women participate’ (Ueno & Osawa 2001: 16). Osawa admits that business executives, politicians, and bureaucrats do not like the word ‘equality’ in Japan, and policymakers, including herself, avoided using ‘gender-equality’ and adopted ‘a society in which both men and women participate’

²⁵ This is the official English translation of the Japanese government (available on-line: http://www.gender.go.jp/english_contents/basic_law/index.html, 15 July 2010).

²⁶ The Japanese Constitution states that ‘all of the people are equal under the law and there shall be no discrimination in political, economic or social relations because of race, creed, sex, social status or family origin’ (Article 14).

as a euphemism (ibid.: 17-21). Chizuko Ueno asserts that ‘a society in which both men and women participate’ is ‘full of conspiracies’ (ibid.: 16), especially in the light of the fact that the Japanese government chooses ‘gender-equality’ in the English translation, for the international community. The English translation of the Basic Law, which can be seen on the website of the Japanese government, uses ‘a Gender-Equal Society’ for ‘a society in which both men and women participate’ in Japanese. Therefore, the ambiguity of ‘a society in which both men and women participate’ is lost in translation. Yukiko Tsunoda, one of the most influential feminist lawyers in Japan, claims that such ambiguous Japanese translation of gender equality might result in taking a step away from the original stress on equality (Tsunoda 2002: 8-15).

Taking the law-making process and such concerns into consideration, the gap between ‘gender equality’ and ‘a society in which both men and women participate’ indicates the inconsistencies between the ideal and reality. On the one hand, the gap between them tells us that it was impossible for the Japanese government to establish a law for gender equality by adhering to the term ‘gender equality’. On the other hand, the Basic Law chose substance (the establishment of the law) over appearance (adhering to the word ‘gender equality’) in between the ideal, ‘gender equality,’ and reality, ‘a society in which both men and women participate’. Therefore, the Basic Law has both the poststructuralist conception of gender as an ideal and its ‘ambiguous’ name as reality. The gap between them was incorporated into public women’s organisations such as the one where I conducted research as a praxis site.

Public women’s organisations

In 1977, the National Women’s Education Centre (NVEC) was established by the Japanese government, the first time that a public women’s organisation had been established in Japan. Until 1977, there were only private women’s organisations including shelters, consumers’ centres, community-based women’s organisations, the Young Women’s Christian Association, and other Christian organisations in Japan. By 1984 the number of public women’s organisations exceeded private ones (Arima *et al.* 1995: 37) and now, about 90% of women’s organisations including privatised organisations are established in the public sector (Sakurai 2008: 9). In addition, most

public women's organisations changed their names from women's organisations to 'organisations in which both men and women participate' (*danjo kyôdô sankaku sentâ*) after the Basic Law was promulgated in 1999. I use the term 'women's organisations' rather than 'organisations for both men and women's participation' in this thesis, because local feminists have tried to resist the change of names. In Okinawa, only Naha Municipal Women's Centre did not change its name, but Naha City Council changed the section name from Women's Policy Section (*josei shitsu*) to the Section for both Men and Women's Participation (*danjo kyôdô sankaku shitsu*) in 2001, though staff members wanted to change it to 'the Gender Equality (*danjo byôdô*) Section' (Miyagi 2002: 62).

Public women's organisations have various roles and expectations from various actors and institutions. Firstly, for (local) governments, a public women's organisation is a frontline organisation to supply public services towards gender equality and to let citizens know about law and policy on gender equality. In this sense, the staff were frontline practitioners who interpreted citizens (service receivers) law and policy on gender equality. Secondly, for social movements or feminist activists and scholars, a public women's organisation is a political arena where social movements can bring their own ideas and thoughts into the public (government) sector. Contract workers rather than local government officials are required to display and perform 'accountability to the women's movement' in the public sector (Eisenstein 1996: 86-100). Thirdly, for those who are interested in gender equality, gender justice, or sexuality politics, a public women's organisation appears as an ideal workplace where one can be engaged in political goals as paid work. Such people 'value the chance to engage in feminist activism and be paid for it' (Martin 2005: 96). Moreover, it is significant for them to make use of gender and sexuality knowledge for paid work. In this sense, WOO is an arena where a worker can connect labour, political action, and intellect in the workplace (Virno 2004: 50-71). All three factors are differently involved in public women's organisations, but they sometimes overlap with one another.

It is said that unlike in other countries, governments rather than social movements took the initiative in establishing women's organisations in Japan especially after Japan ratified CEDAW in 1985 (Ueno *et al.* 1995; WIN-L 2001). As I

have shown above, the Japanese government had to visibly promote gender equality for the ratification of CEDAW. Therefore, especially after the 1980s, it was not hard for local governments to establish public women's organisations in the name of women's policy and to grant a base for the activities of women's groups (Zenkoku fujin kaikan kyôgikai 1999: 132). In this sense, it might be hard to see these public women's organisations at large as 'feminist organisations' which have a specific feminist ideology, values, goals, and outcomes (Martin 1990).

Although governments took the initiative in playing a role in establishing public women's organisations in Japan, we should not overlook the fact that 'femocrats' as 'inside agitators' played a vital role in making plans, policies, laws, and women's organisations too (Eisenstein 1996). Following Hester Eisenstein, by femocrats I mean 'feminists in the bureaucracy' (1996: xi), that is, central and local government officials who proclaim themselves as feminists and make an effort to promote gender equality from inside of their organisations. Furthermore, as I will show in Chapter Two, many people and various groups were directly and indirectly involved in the establishment of WOO. Therefore it is hard to say that only local governments established public women's organisations in Okinawa. In this sense, public women's organisations might be 'counterpublics' 'where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counterdiscourses to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs' and to 'invent new terms for describing social reality' (Fraser 1992: 123), no matter what governments intend administratively. That is, public women's organisations appeared not only for the development of policy on gender equality but also as a new public sphere (Hori 2007).²⁷

Neoliberalism and New Public Management

First of all, let me clarify the use of the term 'neoliberalism' in this thesis. Neoliberalism became on a grand scale and well-known under the Japanese Prime

²⁷ However, there are two presuppositions, which Fraser (1992) takes for granted. Firstly, the conception of 'counterpublics' or a 'new public sphere' presumes that 'individuals of different constituencies have equal access to and are represented within the political sphere' (Lowe 1996: 144). This presupposition masks 'the degree to which strata and inequalities continue to exist' (ibid.). Secondly, Fraser does not try to assess the way of governing others (Koyama 2003) and the self in 'counterpublics' (Cruikshank 1999: 59-61). I will discuss these points in Chapter Five.

Minister Junichiro Koizumi's Structural Reform (*kôzô kaikaku*) in the late 1990s (Kumazawa 2007: 197). As in other countries, the key vocabularies of neoliberalism under the Structural Reform included market fundamentalism, privatisation, economic liberalisation, consumerism, small government, and self-responsibility. As I shall show in the ethnographic chapters, WOO was embedded in these newly widespread, but rather vague and inconsistent ideas of neoliberalism 'in its ideology and practice' (Comaroff & Comaroff 2000: 305). In the light of this, by neoliberalism I broadly mean a formation of political and socio-cultural practices, which are directly and indirectly linked with these ideas and vocabularies, but are not fixed and might bring about unexpected and unplanned reactions and outcomes (see Coles 2007; Ong 2006; Sharma 2008). Consequently, I deem neoliberalism not only as a top-down imposition from the Japanese government by law but also as a socio-cultural product on a daily basis.

In the early 1980s, as part of neoliberalism, Japan welcomed the New Public Management (hereafter, NPM), which was introduced into the public sector in the UK and other western countries in the 1970s. NPM is 'a label which has been used to characterize observable changes in the style of public administration' (Power 1997: 42). The privatisation of the public sector and the reduction of the number of public sector workers started in Japan in the 1980s (Kashida 2009: 195). The three biggest public sector organisations were privatised one after another – Japan Tobacco (1985), Nippon Telegram and Telephone Corporation (1985), and Japan Railways Group (1987) – and the number of workers was reduced radically and the trade unions were destroyed.²⁸ Since, unlike in the UK and the US, the economy did not collapse until the early 1990s in Japan, neo-liberalism and NPM took place in Japan later than in western countries (Ninomiya & Hareyama 2005; Shirakawa 2008). However, although, as in other Asian countries, the Japanese government 'selectively adopted neoliberal forms in creating economic zones and imposing market criteria on citizenship' since then, there were numerous critiques of neoliberalism in the US and other countries (Ong 2006: 1). In short, NPM introduced privatisation into the public sector and succeeded in reducing the number of public sector workers in the name of

²⁸ In the notorious case of Japan Railways Group, over a thousand members of the trade union who were against the privatisation were fired.

consumerism and accountability for citizens.

It is noteworthy that several local governments, such as Tokyo Metropolitan Government and Osaka Prefecture, tried to sell or close public women's organisations by stopping their financial support.²⁹ In 2003 when the Japanese government amended the Local Autonomy Law, local governments introduced the new Designated Management System (*sitei kanrisha seido*, DMS), which entrusted the management and operation of regional public-related facilities to both volunteer and private sectors under free market principles. DMS was introduced into the public sector, including women's organisations, to improve service quality and efficiency. Many public women's organisations tackled a severe survival game under NPM.

Yoko Sakurai, Executive Director of the National Council of Women's Organisations, suggests that no matter if one agrees with NPM or not, public women's organisations all over Japan are now under NPM and therefore it is time for them to start to carry out 'self-assessment' as accountability for governments and citizens (Sakurai 2008: 2). She defines NPM as consisting of four core features in Japan: (1) competitive free market principles (including privatisation), (2) performance management systems, (3) consumer choice, and (4) accountability (Sakurai 2008: 2). Public women's organisations are required to introduce these four principles into their management by governments and by citizens. Thus self-assessment practice is essential for public women's organisations to survive under NPM and can be seen as the performance of 'accountability' 'through the twin passage points of economic efficiency and good practice' (Strathern 2000: 1-2). In this sense, Sakurai's call for women's organisations to act as 'public bodies' is inseparable from 'self-checking practices now described as evidence of their accountability to the state' (Strathern 2000: 4). In Chapter Three, I will explore how NPM is embodied at WOO by showing a citizen's request and WOO's response to her, and the unexpected events at WOO which ensued from the application of a concept of consumerism and the reduction of operating costs.

²⁹ There is a clear difference between public women's organisations, which have faced a crisis of survival in these two regions. In Osaka, there were various protests, including several demonstrations and a petition against the Osaka Prefectural Governor's decision about the abolition of a public women's organisation in 2008 (Asahi Shimbun, 15 January 2008; Japan Times, 25 March 2008). In Tokyo, there was not such a radical protest in 2002 (Ueno & Takenaka 2002; Ueno & Higuchi 2003).

4. Situating the research in theory

During my fieldwork I came across not only various kinds of dreams, hopes, and anticipations in the process of promoting a gender-equal society under law but also various forms of conflict, doubt, perplexity, contradiction and difficulty at WOO. These coexisted, overlapped and interacted with each other rather than having a separate existence. To understand such complex daily experiences at WOO, I examine several research questions through the ethnography in this thesis. My central research question is how do various actors, such as the staff and users, attempt to bridge the gap between the ideal, reality, law, and practice in the process of negotiating gender equality at WOO? In other words, I examine how the notion of 'gender equality' was unstable, ambiguous, problematic, contextual, and contingent in the public sector of contemporary post-colonial and neoliberal Okinawa. This central research question is complemented by three supplementary research questions. First, what kinds of governance exist at WOO, and how do they work? This involves considering how people collectively and individually, as well as intentionally and unintentionally, respond to various modes of governance. It also involves considering who is governed, how they are supposed to be governed (and how comprehensively they are governed), and how WOO plays a role in governing them. The second supplementary question is how does one become a subject in subordination? This involves not focussing solely on resistance or submission in various forms of governance, and it sheds light on the unstable and contingent relationship between individuals and the expected outcomes of various forms of governance. My third supplementary question is what do categories such as women, contract workers, feminists, and Okinawans mean? This involves considering how such categories operate, are questioned, and transformed around WOO. I thus draw attention to how a contract worker negotiates and challenges these *a priori* categories in regard to gender equality in the labour process. In the following section, I provide an outline of the theoretical basis of the thesis and clarify the terms used.

This thesis aims neither to represent Okinawans, Okinawan women, Okinawan culture, Okinawan workers, contract workers, female workers, neoliberalism, public sector culture, nor social movements. Rather, firstly, I demonstrate how categories such as women, men, Okinawans and Japanese are

contingent, relational, unstable, transformed, and re/defined through the projects and the labour process at WOO. Secondly, I explore how a person inconsistently becomes, or goes back and forth, between a contract worker, a feminist, an oppressed woman, a domestic violence victim, an obedient worker, a public service supplier, and so on. Thirdly, I elucidate how neoliberalism and social movements as forms of governance coexist together at WOO rather than being inimical (Cruikshank 1999). In sum, my thesis demonstrates through ethnographic analysis how one ‘promote[s] new forms of subjectivity’ (Foucault 1982: 216). In this section, I provide an outline of the theoretical basis of the thesis.

A note on categorisation

I presuppose neither ‘Okinawans,’ nor ‘women’ as an *a priori* category, which tends to ‘take as self-evident the identities of those whose experience is being documented and thus naturalize their difference’ (Scott 1992: 25). To explain, let us consider categorisations of ‘Okinawans’ in Okinawan studies, and of ‘female workers’ in labour studies.

Firstly, there is an extensive literature on Okinawan ethnic identity, especially Okinawan resistance identity against Japan and/or the US (occupation) (Allen 2002; Asato 2003, 2008; Bhowmik 2008; Hein & Selden 2003; Inoue 2007; Roberson 2003). Although it is essential to analyse how resistance identity is constituted in Okinawa to problematise post-colonialism and militarism, there seems to be a pitfall in such research. Some research presupposes ‘Okinawan identity’ as an *a priori* category to analyse ‘resistance’ or ‘social movements’ in Okinawa. This might be ‘to show the impact of silence and repression on the lives of those affected by it and bring to light the history of their suppression and exploitation’ (Scott 1992: 25). But, as Joan Scott suggests, ‘the project of making experience visible precludes critical examination of the workings of the ideological system itself, its categories of representation (homosexual/heterosexual, man/woman, black/white as fixed immutable identities), its premises about what these categories mean and how they operate, its notions of subjects, origin, and cause’ (ibid.). Scott’s argument has resonated with what Ichiro Tomiyama is concerned with in Okinawan studies (1990, 2002). Tomiyama questions how a category of ‘Okinawans’ is given *a priori* in

Okinawan studies (Tomiyama 1990: 75). He discloses how a category of ‘Okinawan workers’ were constituted in between Japanese and Korean workers in the Japanese labour market during the 1920s and 1930s (Tomiyama 1990, 2002). Thus, for Okinawan studies, it seems crucial to me to be aware that ‘experience’ is ‘not the origin of our explanation, but that which we want to explain’ (Scott 1992: 38). Both Scott and Tomiyama draw critical attention to a process of creating subjects rather than analysing them based on an existing category (e.g. Mollona 2005; Nash 1979). On account of this view, Michiko Higa, an historian of ‘Okinawan women’, criticises existing research on female Okinawan spinning mill workers in Japan proper (Fukuchi 1985) for its insistence that they were female victims (Higa & Aniya 1994). Higa asserts that such research ultimately overlooks the workers’ enjoyment of their wage labour and freedom from patriarchal family and kinship, though they sent most of their salaries to their families in Okinawa (ibid.).³⁰

Secondly, there is extensive research on female wage labourers in Japan in labour studies, history, legal studies, gender studies, economics, labour economics, sociology, politics, literature, and anthropology.³¹ There are also anthropological and sociological ethnographies, which are published in English, about different types of female workers in Japan (see Allison 1994; Babior 1993; Faier 2007, 2009; Kondo 1990a; Lo 1990; Martinez 2004; Mock 1996; Ogasawara 1998; Roberts 1994; Saso 1990).³² However, Kimiko Kimoto, a sociologist, points out that most research tends to analyse women’s labour in accordance with ‘stereotypes’ about sexual division of labour in the domestic sphere (as wives and mothers) (Kimoto 2003: 19).³³ For example, Emiko Takenaka, a pioneer of labour studies about women, explains that the reason why women’s labour is cheaply exploited is because women are supposed to be engaged in domestic chores and child care (Takenaka 1989). Yet Kimoto is concerned that such an approach might end up being fraught with pitfalls of

³⁰ Likewise, as for Filipina women who work in hostess bars in Japan, Faier points out that ‘[d]espite the stigma attached to these jobs, many women suggested that they enjoyed aspects of this work, describing it as a time when they felt independent, and sometimes glamorous, and enjoyed relatively large salaries’ (Faier 2008: 644).

³¹ There is also a massive volume of research on housewives in Japan (e.g. Kotani 2007; Nakao 2009; Ueno 1982a, 1982b).

³² For discussions of gendered non-regular employment in English, see Bishop 2005; Houseman & Osawa 2003; and Keizer 2008.

³³ Her monograph in Japanese (Kimoto 2003) was translated into English (Kimoto 2005), but I have quoted from her original text.

stereotyped gender roles (Kimoto 2003: 13). Instead, she suggests that it is imperative to critically investigate how ‘women’s labour’ is produced in the labour process rather than explaining ‘women’s labour’ by their gender roles in the domestic sphere (ibid.: 20-22). This reminds us that ‘[f]eminist critique ought also to understand how the category of “women,” the subject of feminism, is produced and restrained by the very structures of power through which emancipation is sought’ (Butler 1990: 2, see also Bacchi 1996; Mackay 2001). Thus we must examine how ‘female labour’ and ‘female subjects’ are constituted socio-culturally and historically through the discourse of insisting on gender roles based on biological sex, in the workplace as well as in research.

The above arguments on categorisation resonate with Dorinne Kondo’s ethnography of factory workers in Tokyo. She aptly claims that ‘[r]egnant images of Japan, Inc., fostered in a milieu of increasing Japanese economic preeminence, stressed familiar themes of lifetime employment, harmony, homogeneity, diligence, and a “Confucian ethic,” said to be characteristic of all workers in Japanese industry and generally characteristic of Japanese society’ (Kondo 1990a: 50). She adds that ‘[c]ollective identities like “the Japanese” or “Japanese concepts of self” no longer seem...to be fixed essences, but rather strategic assertions, which inevitably suppress differences, tensions, and contradictions within’ (ibid.: 10).³⁴ Furthermore, Lieba Faier, in her recent ethnography of Filipina migrants in rural Japan (2007; 2008; 2009), urges us to look to the way ‘meanings of Japaneseness and Filipinoness’ are produced and transformed ‘across relations of difference’ rather than ‘focussing on Filipina migrants or rural Japanese residents as independent cultural groups’ (Faier 2009: 4).

As I show ethnographically in the following chapters, WOO is a political arena where administrative, academic, activist, and local categories of women, men, workers, activists, Okinawans, Japanese, victims, citizens, subjects, feminists, and the apolitical, cannot help being questioned in the labour process. For example, a category of ‘women’ is essential for many projects of WOO. It targets especially ‘women’ as an administrative category under law and policy, while ‘men’ as an additional category also exists. Moreover, as I shall show in Chapters Six, as in

³⁴ See also Kondo (1990b) for a critique of essentialism.

WOO's case, most staff members of a public women's organisation are employed as 'women' and work under gendered working conditions. As a result, a public women's organisation has re/defined and re/produced a category of 'women' which is not coherent through its projects and the labour process. I therefore examine what these categories mean, how they operate, are questioned and transformed around WOO. In doing so, this thesis draws attention to how a contract worker negotiates and challenges *a priori* categories such as women, contract workers, feminists, and Okinawans in the labour process at WOO.

Becoming a subject in subordination

This thesis questions how one becomes a subject in subordination rather than focussing solely on resistance or submission. Michel Foucault prominently notes:

There are two meanings of the word *subject*: subject to someone else by control and dependence, and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge. Both meanings suggest a form of power which subjugates and makes subject to (Foucault 1982: 212).

This theory of subject formation allows us to explore how one 'struggles against subjection, against forms of subjectivity and submission' rather than solely 'against forms of domination (ethnic, social, and religious)' or 'against forms of exploitation which separate individuals from what they produce' (ibid.). Though she mostly agrees with Foucault's theory, Judith Butler points out that Foucault 'does not elaborate on the specific mechanisms of how the subject is formed in submission' (Butler 1997: 2). For Butler, it is crucial to consider the *double* process of subject formation. That is to say, how does one become a subject in subordination? Saba Mahmood applies this concept of subject formation to her ethnography of the women's mosque movement in Egypt, which cannot be explained by 'the simple binary of resistance/subordination' (Mahmood 2005: 9). In doing so, she critically analyses anthropological research which takes resistance as liberal and progressive evidence. Retrospectively reconsidering her earlier works, Lila Abu-Lughod problematises resistance-seeking as romantic, and feminist analysis as misattributing instances of women's resistance to feminist politics which has nothing to do with them (Abu-Lughod 1990b). However, Mahmood argues:

While Abu-Lughod's attention to understanding resistance as a diagnostic of differential forms of power marks an important analytical step that allows us to move beyond the simple binary of resistance/subordination, she nevertheless implies that the task of identifying an act as one of 'resistance' is a fairly unproblematic enterprise (Mahmood 2005: 9).

Accordingly, Mahmood suggests that such an enterprise fails to problematise the universality of the desire for liberal and progressive thoughts to be free from 'relations of subordination' and, 'for women, from structures of male domination' (Mahmood 2005: 10).³⁵

The fifteen contract workers at WOO were diverse. For some, working for WOO meant working for gender justice, no matter how WOO was embedded in bureaucracy and neoliberalism. As I have briefly shown above, especially for self-proclaimed feminist contract workers, working for WOO was seen as a way 'to engage in feminist activism and be paid for it' (Martin 2005: 96).³⁶ However, they had to work on gendered, low-waged, one-year fixed-term contracts. As a result, unlike its mission statement aiming to promote gender equality and to let women act as subjects, they found themselves embodying women's oppression through working for WOO. Moreover, their knowledge concerning gender was not necessarily valued by the administrators. Unsurprisingly and undoubtedly, both labour processes and working conditions of contract workers were gendered (Acker 1990) and they had to accept the fact that they were subject to this gendered labour system and structure. In this sense, it was hard to think of themselves as ideal, independent feminist subjects at WOO. WOO is full of contradictions and conflicts concerning gender equality and

³⁵ Mahmood's concern resonates with what Kimberley Coles problematises in the process of promoting democracy in post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina (2007). The propensity for progress and liberalism is conspicuous in the discourse of democracy.

³⁶ By feminist contract workers I mean contract workers who proclaimed themselves as feminists in this thesis. Even if one identified her as a feminist, others might not approve or accept that she was a feminist. As I shall show in Chapter Seven, a process of becoming and being a feminist was contextual and relational rather than self-evident and fixed. There were various meanings of being a feminist at WOO. In this sense, it is more precise and appropriate to call them 'self-proclaimed "feminists"' by using inverted commas for the word 'feminist'. I am fully aware that naming is clearly crucial to examine socio-cultural practices of the staff at WOO. However, for ease of reading, I shall call those people feminist contract workers without the word 'self-proclaimed' and converted commas for 'feminists' throughout the thesis. Moreover, I do not intend to simplify the differences between the staff in terms of gender equality, but I call those who were not very happy with and indifferent to the idea of gender equality 'non-feminists' for ease of reading. Likewise, I call those who were against gender equality 'anti-feminists'. I intend that this simplified term does not undermine the importance of the complex process of being a feminist, non-feminist, and anti-feminist.

justice for contract workers.³⁷ The more a feminist contract worker tried to be a feminist, the more she found herself in a dilemma, between being a subject and submission. To think of this dimension, it is crucial to steer away from the binary of resistance and subordination, and examine how one becomes a subject in submission. A process of a contract worker trying to be a subject might be a process of ‘making incomplete’ a ‘feminist’ rather than making a perfect one (Strathern 1993). How does a contract worker face a dominant code or norm concerning gender and a critical mode of gender justice and gender equality? This thesis demonstrates how ‘[t]he subject forms itself in relation to a set of codes, prescriptions, or norms and does so in ways that not only (a) reveal self-constitution to be a kind of *poiesis* but (b) establish self-making as part of the broader operation of critique’ (Butler 2005: 17). I will ethnographically illustrate how a feminist contract worker performatively becomes a subject in subordination in Chapter Seven.

Some key terms

Here I clarify the meaning of several key theoretical terms: modes of governance, governmentality, neoliberal governance, and feminist governance, which are used throughout this thesis, in order to make my argument clear. First, by a mode of governance I broadly mean the way in which one is expected to be governed and controlled not only in terms of the top-down power of the state (and local government) but also through one’s own subjectivity which makes one voluntarily act as a self-responsible, self-governing subject. I explain this in more detail below where I clarify what I mean by governmentality. I suggest that there are various modes of governance involved in the process of aiming to promote gender equality at WOO, and this is demonstrated in the ethnographic chapters of the thesis. However, I do not wish to insist that one is completely controlled by a form of governance. Rather, I try to ethnographically delineate how people face and negotiate with the expectations of a mode of governance rather than regarding it as a total, closed, system of control. In so doing, I do not mean to undermine extensive critical analysis and research on governance, which focuses on the way in which people are governed.

³⁷ There were also some contract workers who could not engage in specific ‘gender issues’, because they had personally experienced them in the past and therefore did not want to be in touch with them anymore.

However, I want to shed light upon how people might *not* necessarily respond to a form of governance in the way in which much of the existing research has shown and assumed. This exploration of a mode of governance will lead us not to a well-known analytical outcome based on the dichotomy between subjection and resistance but instead to a reconsideration of more complex daily experiences, which might not be reducible to existing analytical frames.

In the light of this, I draw attention to various different actors, such as the staff members of WOO, consisting of the local government officials and contract workers, users, participants, and clients of WOO, citizens of Okinawa Prefecture, and lecturers and guest speakers at WOO who were individually and collectively engaged in WOO and its agenda through daily practices. I also ethnographically examine how these different actors were involved in law, policy, the public sector, drawing up the mission statement of WOO, and feminist politics - activities which have produced diverse modes of governance. I believe that such ethnographic exploration of various modes of governance makes it possible to consider how we tend to take for granted what we call neoliberalism, post-colonialism, feminism, consumerism, social movements, and gender equality, and to scrutinise them not as fixed, global, universal phenomena but as processes of historical, political, socio-cultural, and individual practices.

Second, by governmentality I mean the way in which people are made to be governable through various strategies and techniques, which neoliberalism and feminist politics may employ. Following Foucault (1991), the concept of governmentality includes not only the state control of citizens but also one's control of the self. In this sense, the term 'governmentality' overlaps with a mode of governance in this thesis. In this view, WOO cannot be a power free institution, which is filled with dreams and anticipations of gender equality. Rather, WOO re/produces various kinds of power between the state, law, policy, local governments, social movements, WOO, and different people. WOO embraces conflicts and contradictions regarding the politics of government, too. Moreover, this understanding of governmentality also leads us to consider how various actors, such as feminist staff members, non-feminist staff members, clients, government officials, and citizens, try to control themselves in the process of promoting gender equality in

the public sector. This illuminates how these actors attempt to transform themselves and to account for themselves under the law and the policy for gender equality as well as under feminist politics. Chapters Five and Seven consider how we govern ourselves through our own subjectivity in the name of gender equality. I show how WOO unexpectedly became a focal point of contact between neoliberal and feminist governance through its agenda and practices. However, I use the term ‘a mode of governance’ rather than governmentality in this thesis to illuminate how people are at once expected to be governed, are not governed, are between being governed and not being governed, and are far from the discourse of government.

Third, by neoliberal governance I mean a form of governance, which so-called ‘neoliberalism’ produces through individual daily practices and through top-down, legal and administrative procedures. As I have shown in the previous section of this chapter, by neoliberalism I mean Japanese neoliberalism, which includes the New Public Management, market fundamentalism, privatisation, economic liberalisation, consumerism, small government, and so on. This thesis draws attention to how various neoliberal strategies positioned individuals who came to WOO and attempted to transform them in the process of governing them through projects of WOO such as seminars about gender studies, workshops for those who have experienced domestic violence, and counselling in the name of law. I see such attempts and practices as neoliberal governance.

To examine such neoliberal governance, this thesis focuses on a public sector institution, WOO, as a site where neoliberal governance flourishes in different ways. I came across various modes of neoliberal governance, such as consumerism, privatisation, and the discourse about autonomous citizenship, which can be found in other public sector institutions in Japan, during my fieldwork. For instance, in Chapter Three, I examine how consumerism as part of the New Public Management overwhelmed the public sector, including WOO, in Okinawa, and how this consumerism attempted to transform individuals into citizen-subject-consumers who voluntarily came to a public sector institution as active citizens, to judge what kind of public services would be good, and to act as self-responsible, self-governing subjects. In Chapter Four, I turn to how a form of neoliberal governance attempted to control those who came to WOO and used public services at WOO through the process of

counting and enumerating them. I show how people were counted and enumerated in the public sector in the process of making a gender-equal society in Okinawa Prefecture.

However, as noted above, this examination does not mean that I intend to focus on solely the process of governing and being governed in this thesis. I also look at how individuals faced and negotiated with neoliberal governance on the ground in daily life at WOO. Through the ethnography presented in the thesis, I suggest how individuals were expected to be governed, as well as how they did not act in the way in which neoliberal governance expected or in the ways in which existing research has assumed. In other words, I shall show how neoliberal governance may have failed, and at the same time how such attempts may result in unexpected outcomes.

Lastly, by feminist governance I mean a form of governance that feminist politics produces through individual daily practices. More concretely, by feminist governance I mean the way in which one is expected to be transformable or governable in order to realise gender equality. As I show in Chapter Two, WOO was established as a women's organisation in the public sector by local government in alliance with various grassroots groups in Okinawa. As a result, WOO embraced both the concept of gender equality, which was developed through the feminist anti-militarist social movement against the US military forces in Okinawa, and the institutionalised notion of gender equality, which was, however, at odds with the ideals of gender equality. The institutionalisation of such a radical social movement on the one hand made it possible to establish WOO in the public sector, but at the same time this institutionalisation could not help transforming the dreams and anticipations of gender equality, which were produced and cultivated through the social movement. Thus WOO subsumed and produced the ideal which the social movement attempted to pursue, and the reality which the staff members and users faced in everyday lives through their projects. As a result, the frontline practitioners attempted to bridge the gap between 'a gender-equal society' as an administrative institutionalised term and gender equality for which the social movement actors longed. Moreover, it is significant to note that not all the staff members necessarily wanted to work at WOO so as to pursue their feminist politics or gender justice.

Therefore, as I will demonstrate in Chapter Seven, it was indispensable for feminist contract workers to introduce feminist politics into WOO and to its staff members who might have been indifferent to feminist politics or the promotion of gender equality.

This thesis focuses on how, like neoliberal governance, feminist politics worked as a mode of governance. For instance, as I show in Chapter Five, WOO and its staff members expected to transform participants into active, autonomous, self-controlled citizens through an assertiveness training class which was the most popular programme at WOO. This kind of expectation of transformation of the self was shared especially among feminist staff members at WOO. Under this expectation, one is expected to voluntarily come to a public women's organisation, to actively attend various programmes, to learn about various gender issues, such as domestic violence, through these programmes, to solve one's own gender issues, and to promote gender equality in society. Moreover, as I show in Chapter Seven, as a result of the introduction of feminist politics into WOO by feminist staff members, it became the unofficial daily routine of the staff members to think about what they did in terms of gender at WOO, no matter how much they were interested in feminist politics. That is to say, feminist politics also came with the expectation that workers should be autonomous and responsible for themselves in a public women's organisation. In this sense, it is crucial to examine how feminist governance attempts to produce people who are sensitive to gender equality and can be autonomous and self-controlling in order to promote gender equality in a public women's organisation. Thus this thesis draws attention to how this mode of feminist governance worked and what kind of subjects are re/produced in the very process of promoting gender equality in everyday lives at WOO.

Nevertheless, through the ethnographic chapters, I emphasise that, like neoliberal governance, feminist governance might not be perfect. Even if the staff members wanted to change participants through the assertiveness training class, expectations of feminist governance could not transform all of them in the way in which they wanted to change. Moreover, even if the feminist staff member tried to be a feminist subject who was sensitive to gender equality, but worked under precarious gendered working conditions, this does not necessarily mean that she was totally

governed. What I want to demonstrate through this thesis is how various actors under neoliberal and feminist governance could change and destabilise the existing meanings of governance, being governed, being subject to a form of power, and being a subject. By so doing, I want to scrutinise how neoliberal governance and feminist governance overlap with each other in terms of a mode of governance, though they are rather different from each other in terms of their historical backgrounds and final goals.

Governance and responses

This thesis poses two theoretical questions. Firstly, it asks how a mode of governance works. Rather than referring ‘only to political structures or to the management of states’, I refer to ‘the way in which the conduct of individuals or of groups might be directed: the government of children, of souls, of communities, of families, of the sick’ (Foucault 1982: 221). Secondly, it questions how people collectively and individually, as well as intentionally and unintentionally, respond to various modes of governance. These questions are not independent of each other. Rather, they overlap and are subsumed within all of the ethnographic chapters from Chapter Two to Chapter Seven.

Barbara Cruikshank beautifully shows that there is a method or technology which is used ‘as often by neoconservatives as by feminists and the left’ (Cruikshank 1999: 68). She considers ‘a technology of citizenship – a method for constituting citizens out of subjects and maximizing their political participation’ (ibid.: 67). It can be ‘an unquestionably noble or radical political strategy’ as well as a tool to govern women and the poor (ibid.: 68). This technology mobilises not only domestic violence victims in a feminist organisation but also the poor in the government sector who are both expected to be empowered as subjects. Then it ‘produce[s] citizens who are capable of governing themselves, of acting in their own interests and in solidarity with others’ (ibid.: 3). This is a mode of governance. Following Foucault (1983), she clarifies that ‘governance’ is “‘conduct of conduct” or “governmentality”, forms of action and relations of power that aim to guide and shape (rather than force, control, or dominate) the actions of others’ (ibid.: 4).

WOO, as a public body, internalises and uses such a technology of citizenship.

For instance, a citizen is expected to be an autonomous subject who can choose and participate in a programme at WOO not only in the discourse of social movements but also in the discourse of neoliberal governance. That is to say, WOO unexpectedly becomes a focal point of contact between neoliberal governance and feminist demands through specific projects. On the one hand, under neoliberal governance or NPM, WOO is expected to be an independent consumerist organisation to supply better public services to citizens who are also autonomous subjects who can choose and complain about public services. On the other hand, it is expected to be autonomous and independent from local government and patriarchal administration in order to realise gender equality under feminist demands. Likewise, it also requires citizens to be legal autonomous subjects who actively participate in projects aimed towards gender equality, not only in the name of neoliberalism or what Nikolas Rose calls 'advanced liberalism' (Rose 1996a: 61), but also in the name of feminism. Chapter Three and Chapter Five ethnographically demonstrate how neoliberal governance and feminist demands overlap with each other at WOO. Chapter Three focuses on consumerism, while Chapter Five centres on how participants in a programme for gender equality are embedded in the technology of citizenship at WOO.

Furthermore, a feminist claim to the state to redress a gender injustice has been controversial. One wonders if a feminist 'could...use state power to improve women's lives' (Eisenstein 1996: xviii). On the one hand, some feminists have eagerly tried to use state power to exercise opposition to sexual harassment and pornography (Dworkin 1981; Langton 1993; MacKinnon 1979, 1989, 1993; MacKinnon & Dworkin 1998), while they acknowledge that 'state power is irrevocably masculine' (Eisenstein 1996: xviii). On the other hand, others are sceptical about such a claim to the state (Brown 1995; Butler 1990, 2000). For instance, Judith Butler claims that '[t]he legacy of Antigone's defiance appeared to be lost in the contemporary efforts to recast political opposition as legal plaint and to seek the legitimacy of the state in the espousal of feminist claims' (Butler 2000: 2). More concretely, Wendy Brown is concerned that 'the state does not simply handle clients or employ staff but produces state subjects, as bureaucratized, dependent, disciplined, and gendered' (Brown 1995: 195). However, quoting Frances Piven

(1990), Cruikshank suggests that although ‘women’s subjectivities are constrained by the conditions of their production in the welfare state,...the constitutive power[s] of the state do not *determine* women’s subjectivity’ (Cruikshank 1999: 60-61, emphasis in original). She notes that ‘[l]iberal democratic society is not wholly the realm of domination and discipline, nor does it contain the promise captured in the slogan “civil society against the state”’ (ibid.: 61).

As I have shown above, in Japan, various laws were established and revised, not only by the state and international pressure but also by various networks of individuals and grassroots groups consisting of victims, counsellors, frontline practitioners, lawyers, politicians, and scholars. For instance, many individuals and groups on a supra-partisan basis were involved in the establishment of the Act on the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the Protection of Victims (hereafter, the Act) in 2001 (see Tsunoda 2002). The Act was legislated not by bureaucrats but by supra-political party members of the Diet. While there were strong anti-state power arguments among male leftwing intellectuals who insisted that the Act would end up allowing state power (police power) into the domestic sphere, the advocates contended that the domestic sphere was never safe for women (Tsunoda 2002: 10). Moreover, since they found the original Act unsatisfactory to protect victims in reality, various grassroots groups and individuals lobbied and appealed to the Diet members to revise it. For instance, some lawyers and counsellors suggested that several women had been killed by divorced husbands and by unmarried partners, since the original Act had targeted only legally married couples. After being amended in 2004 and 2008, the Act now states that the term ‘spouse’ refers to both unmarried and divorced couples (Article 1).

A public women’s organisation is a practical arena where different kinds of conflicts and contests around laws concerning gender equality meet together. A public women’s organisation produces and embraces feminist, neoliberal, and state governance. They are inseparable. While Cruikshank focuses on forms of governance (1999), my thesis draws attention to how people respond to different modes of governance. Who is governed? How are they governed in practice? What does governing mean? How do frontline practitioners play a role in governing citizens and themselves (see Rose 1996b)? Are they totally governed? In the following

ethnographic chapters, I explore how a public body, its users and its staff act through diverse modes of governance and what this brings about.

5. Methodology

This PhD research project is based on fieldwork which included participant observation and interviews at a public women's organisation, Women's Organisation Okinawa (WOO), in Naha City, Okinawa Prefecture, carried out between March 2002 and September 2003, for the duration of which I worked at WOO, and lived in Naha City. I worked as a contract worker on a one-year fixed-term contract between April 2002 and March 2003. After my first visit to WOO in 1997, I established some informal networks with public women's organisations and grassroots activist groups in Okinawa. Thanks to these networks, as I show in Chapter Seven, I was able to obtain this job through one of my friends who was working at WOO at the end of March 2002 when I was looking for a job.

I had originally planned to examine gender relations in contestations over ancestral memorial tablets' inheritance, first, in relation to the Japanese government's compensation for wives of war dead during the Pacific War, and second, in relation to the Japanese government's compensation for lands occupied by the US military in Okinawa. I consulted a professor at the department of Social Anthropology in the Ryukyu University about conducting fieldwork for this research. Thanks to his advice and support, I began my fieldwork on the island of Ikei, a small island, which is located in the eastern part of the main island of Okinawa, in January 2002. But I met with an accident, which made me to decide to leave the island in the middle of March 2002. I then moved to Naha City. I consulted the same professor about my next field site, and he introduced me to a community group, which owned common land occupied by the US military bases. When I began working at WOO, I also started to conduct fieldwork on this community group. I sought to discover, as part of my originally planned research project, how the issue of ancestral memorial tablets' inheritance was dealt with, what kind of gender issues existed in general in Okinawa, and how these issues were interpreted and dealt with at WOO. Thus I did not originally intend to conduct research about the organisation itself and its workers, and, accordingly, did not ask for permission to do so. On the contrary, I asked for

formal permission of the island of Ikei and the community group in Naha City, and both of them approved my research and fieldwork.

However, as I shall show in the following chapters, I found that there were various issues in which I could not help becoming involved, such as the politics of empowerment, our precarious, low-waged, gendered working conditions, and power relationships between contract workers and seconded official government officials at WOO. I reported to my supervisor that I might want to write about WOO as my PhD thesis, when I started working at WOO. However, I was not sure what kind of thesis I could write about WOO at that time. As a result, I kept making field notes about my everyday life at WOO, and at the same time I continued conducting another fieldwork on the local community group.

One of the biggest problems my colleagues and I faced at WOO was the precarious and poorly remunerated working conditions of WOO. We tried to improve these conditions by networking with contract workers at various public women's organisations in Okinawa. I wrote about the working conditions at WOO in several journals. My colleagues encouraged me to do so and were pleased with the publications. This was because we thought that it was essential to make this issue public, but it was considered too risky to write something about public sector institutions using one's real name in Okinawa, especially if one wanted to continue working in the public sector. Colleagues read, proof read, and provided me with comments on the journal articles. After I left WOO in March 2003, I decided to write about WOO for my PhD thesis and told several former colleagues about my writing.

The following methodology section has three parts. First, I look at the recent debates on ethics in anthropology in relation to dilemmas raised by my own research project which was conducted without gaining formal approval from the organisation studied. Secondly, I discuss the methodological and genre difficulties embedded in politicised field studies such as mine. I then show how I reached decisions about the reporting of data, and explore how ethnographically rich texts can be produced in these circumstances. Lastly, I show how I undertook my fieldwork by explaining what I mean by participant observation, given my own involvement as a contract worker. I also describe how my data was constructed and analysed.

Ethics and responsibility in research

The Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK and Commonwealth (hereafter, ASA) adopted new Ethical Guidelines for Good Research Practice (hereafter, the ASA Guidelines) in 1999. The ASA Guidelines ‘are aimed at helping anthropologists to reach an equitable and satisfactory resolution of their dilemmas’ (Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK and Commonwealth 1999: 10). The ASA Guidelines discuss (1) relations with and responsibilities towards research participants, sponsors, funders, employers, colleagues, and discipline, (2) relations with own and host governments, and (3) responsibilities to the wider society. The Guidelines state that ‘[a]nthropologists have a responsibility to anticipate problems and insofar as is possible to resolve them without harming the research participants or the scholarly community’ (ibid.: 1). Not only in the UK, but also in the US and other European countries, ethical codes have emerged as a fashionable topic for anthropological discussion since the late 1990s (Pels 1999: 101).

However, Ian Harper, who was a member of the committee of the ASA responsible for the ethical guidelines between 2004 and 2007, and Alberto Corsín Jiménez point out that ‘for an increasing number of anthropologists – particularly those who find themselves in complex contemporary fields of research and “studying up” – the current ASA guidelines don’t offer much grounding to think through their research sites and issues’ (Harper & Jiménez 2005: 11). This is because such guidelines for research ethics tend to lead to ‘the codification of ethics and to ethical discourses of a legalistic and judicial kind’ and ‘focus on the research process and its methodological aspects rather than the broader concern of anthropology as a field of critical enquiry’ (ibid.: 10). Harper and Jiménez suggest that ‘the robustness of an anthropological ethics should not be confined to consideration of the political relationships we have with our research subjects’ (Harper & Jiménez 2005: 10). Rather, these guidelines should be seen as a starting point for thinking through questions of the ethical (Harper & Mookherjee 2009: 10). It is crucial to examine what notions of ethics and responsibility mean on the ground to both researchers and their research subjects under institutional or political relations (Harper & Jiménez 2005: 11). To do so, the ASA Ethics blog was set up to promote the open interaction between researchers, research subjects, and the publics, including postgraduate

students who might 'find themselves caught in' 'the ethical situations' rather than for 'a precautionary and defensive professional autonomy' (ibid.: 12).

As part of this emergence of ethical codes as 'a fashionable topic' in anthropology (Pels 1999: 101), and for wider institutional reasons, it is now mandatory for PhD research projects to be evaluated for their ethical considerations - usually when the research proposal is presented to the review board prior to conducting fieldwork. At the University of Edinburgh, projects must receive ethical approval from the relevant School within its particular College. However, when I submitted my research proposal in August 2001, the code of research ethics of the College had not yet been established and there was at that time no formal procedure for the ethical approval of proposed PhD research. I have to admit that if I had submitted a research proposal concerning research to be conducted without official permission from WOO my proposal would have been unlikely to have been approved. However, I would like to add that if I had requested permission to conduct research on contract workers and various modes of governance from WOO, the administrators would almost certainly not have allowed me to conduct this kind of research either. In the light of this, my research seems not to comply with the relevant ethical policies. However, if I had been not a staff member of WOO but just a researcher, I might not have been able to participate in the dilemmas and contradictions of promoting gender equality at WOO with other staff members in the way that I did. I suggest that it is possible that like myself, many researchers face unexpected issues, which they cannot help but problematise, in their field sites, and that in practice these are different from what they assume or expect beforehand. Thus, as Nancy Scheper-Hughes has put it, 'there are times one must ask if is more important to strictly follow professional code or to intervene' (Scheper-Hughes 2009: 14). Such an attempt makes it possible to reconsider the notion of ethics in research in different contexts.

This research was not intended to be covert originally, but turned out to be so in the end. While I was working as a contract worker, I occasionally wanted to think about and examine what was going on at WOO, not specifically as research, but in order to understand our experiences. As I show in the ethnographic chapters, my colleagues would also express dilemmas and concerns about their work, which they

could neither understand nor interpret immediately. I gradually came to want to reconsider our experiences in my PhD thesis. This thesis is thus an ethnographic attempt to have those experiences make sense. Interestingly, the same applies to other research carried out in institutional contexts in Japan. For instance, the anthropologist Yasushi Uchiyamada (2005) has written about a Japanese governmental think tank in Tokyo where he worked as a full-time researcher for five years. In a similar way, he did not intend to conduct research on this organisation originally, but decided to analyse his own and his colleagues' experiences after he left. Without requesting permission of the think tank, he critically analysed power relationships between researchers and central government officials in the workplace. In another case, Ryoji Ihara (2003), a sociologist, carried out covert fieldwork as a contract worker at Toyota to examine the labour process of contract workers at Toyota. Masaki Saruta (2007) points out that it is not easy to undertake critical research on Toyota, which has enormous financial, political, and social power. Therefore, long-term critical research on personal management and ethnographic research on non-regular workers, such as Ihara's on Toyota, are both unusual and important (ibid.). In the light of these examples, it seems accepted by some anthropologists at least, that in some situations, 'covert research is sometimes necessary for gaining access to secretive behavior' to expose social problems such as the abuse of power (Lederman 2009: 11). In this sense, I think that conducting research in this way was necessary in order to gain access to the way in which feminist contract workers struggled with the gap between the ideal and reality in the process of promoting gender equality.

Even without formal ethical approval, this research should be seen as grounded in a sense of responsibility towards my research subjects, especially those whom I shared most time and thoughts with during my fieldwork. Here I follow Marilyn Strathern's distinction between ethics, which 'is a social actor frequently enrolled to justify auditing practices, yet as frequently seen as betrayed by or in resistance to them' (Strathern 2000: 5). In my case, I did not intend to focus on a particular informal group of staff members at WOO. However, I found myself being rather close to feminist contract workers in particular, rather than the administrators and other staff members. Once I became close to them, I found that it was difficult to

hold a completely neutral position in the workplace. I became a member of the informal group of feminist contract workers, and as a result gained much information through this group network. Although this research project might infringe aspects of formal and professional ethical codes, I had and continue to have a strong sense of responsibility in relation to those feminist contract workers in particular. This sense of responsibility, I hope, does not result in merely in 'ethical talk', which might end up producing neoliberal self-auditable selves (Pels 2000; Strathern 2000). Through this thesis, I want to stress that it is important to explore how the researcher can open up research possibilities, which do not use ethical codes for self-defence (see Harper & Jimenez 2005: 12).

However, at the same time, I also want to bear in mind 'a contradiction in terms' that a feminist ethnographer might end up exploiting her informants and their rapport when she interviews and writes about women (Oakley 1981). Moreover, it is also crucial to remember that 'elements of inequality, exploitation, and even betrayal are endemic to [feminist] ethnography' (Stacy 1991: 114). In this sense, it is important to make it explicit that this thesis is an ethnographic account achieved chiefly by the researcher's interpretations rather than a reciprocal collaboration with research subjects (*ibid.*). It should be noted that I could not ask all of my former colleagues or research subjects, including the feminist contract workers, to read this whole thesis before its submission, though seven of my former colleagues read and commented on several early versions of the following chapters. In this sense, I agree that even if one is a 'participant-insider', it might be inevitable that 'colleagues and co-workers [are] unjustifiably offended by a misunderstanding of [one's] project and a misreading of [one's] analysis as damning criticism' (Mosse 2005: ix-x). Indeed, it is more than likely that one's colleagues would have 'different' understandings and readings of one's project and analysis. Accordingly, I do not wish to insist that this thesis is a perfect ethnographic account of WOO, with which all my research subjects would agree. Neither do I think that I can take full responsibility for all my research subjects by writing this thesis. Rather, through this whole thesis, I have attempted to explore the notion of responsibility and ethics in research by reconsidering the relationship between the researcher and research subjects before, during, and after fieldwork.

Research data in politicised field studies

This research is a highly politicised field study, which explores various modes of governance and power relationships involved in the process of promoting gender equality in the public sector. In this section, I look at the methodological and genre difficulties that are embedded in highly politicised field studies such as mine. I then discuss how the researcher can produce rich texts in these circumstances which require strict confidentiality.

I came across several methodological difficulties during my fieldwork and writing up because I had not asked for official permission. This limited both how I could conduct fieldwork and what I could write about WOO to a certain extent. First, I could not attend all the meetings at WOO because I was a contract worker who was not allowed to attend decision-making meetings. Although I attempted to collect information from hearsay, it cannot be denied that this restriction on attending meetings prevented me gaining access to some information at WOO.

Second, it was impossible for me to carry out formal surveys, including interviews and questionnaires, of staff members and users of WOO. My ethnographic data is primarily based on daily observation and informal talks with my research subjects. As a result, this thesis does not include any formal statements or interviews of the staff members of WOO, including the administrators, such as the Executive Director and the Secretary-General. More concretely, the thesis cannot present what my research subjects thought about various issues, with which I have dealt in the thesis, officially and formally. The thesis has tended to focus on what they talked about among colleagues in daily life rather than official and formal answers in research questionnaires. This lack of information on formal understandings of WOO, especially of the administrators, may be a weakness of the research. I have to admit that the thesis cannot describe how the administrators officially regarded various issues, such as the gendered working conditions of female contract workers and on-going politics in WOO and Okinawa. As a result, the thesis cannot explore the gap between their professed opinions and their daily informal practices.

Third, as noted above, while I was rather close to the informal group of feminist contract workers, I found myself keeping a certain distance from other

informal groups, the administrators in particular. Because I was not granted official approval for my research project from the organisation, it was natural that I should have come to get along with the feminist contract workers rather than the administrators. This has resulted in another lack of concrete voices of the administrators in my ethnographic data. Although I talked with the administrators in the workplace almost every day, such talks were not as often and intimate as with the feminist contract workers. This might have resulted in my field data unfairly and exclusively relying on the feminist contract workers rather than all staff members of WOO or particular members of staff. This may lead a distinct absence of detailed voices of staff members apart from the feminist contract workers in the thesis. As a result, some ethnographic writing may give an impression that my analysis is not reasonably fair to other staff members, especially the administrators who were sometimes in conflict with the feminist contract workers.

Fourth, I have left out some data from my fieldwork to protect confidentiality. In other words, I have tried not to use ethnographic events, which might specify a particular person at WOO, and which might provoke political conflicts at WOO and in Okinawa. I have carefully selected several ethnographic events which would not damage my research subjects and field site. As a result, I decided to use less ethnography in Chapters Three and Seven. However, because of this, the amount of ethnographic detail I present in the following ethnographic chapters may not be sufficient enough to explain and support my argument. But in the light of this possible weakness of my research, I have attempted to explore the notion of responsibility for this highly politicised research site, WOO, through this thesis.

It is necessary to protect the confidentiality of research subjects, but this may also impact on the production of rich texts in these circumstances. Let me take a look at how I have tried to keep a balance between them. To protect confidentiality as much as possible, I have taken several measures. I use a pseudonym, WOO (Women's Organisation Okinawa), for the public women's organisation throughout this thesis. There are about ten public or semi-public organisations concerned with gender equality and women in Okinawa Prefecture. These organisations include an organisation for working women, an organisation for women in farming villages, a

counselling centre, a shelter for sex workers, a shelter for domestic violence victims, women's centres, gender equality centres, and so on. Thus I mix up workers and backgrounds of several women's organisations in Okinawa Prefecture to make them less recognisable. I have also changed many people's names and backgrounds and have adopted pseudonyms for all the staff at WOO. I have used a mission statement, regulations, pamphlets, official and unofficial archives, annual reports, and other material from WOO, but in order to protect confidentiality I do not provide references for them. Furthermore, I have changed several ethnographic contexts in my ethnographic writing so that my research subjects cannot be easily recognised and identified by readers, including my former colleagues. All of this might produce a loss of specificity and accuracy, but I think that some degree of ambiguity, and therefore confidentiality, should take precedence.

At the same time, I try to do my best to produce an ethnographically rich text to describe what was going on at WOO in the ethnographic chapters. Until I submitted my first draft of this thesis, I had wondered if I should anonymise the name of the prefecture (Okinawa Prefecture) to protect the identity of WOO and its staff. However, it was also indispensable to take into account postcolonial, historical, geopolitical, and socio-cultural Okinawan contexts in order to explain how WOO was positioned. Therefore, I finally decided to clarify the Okinawan contexts and specify the name of the prefecture in this thesis. By doing so, I wanted to draw attention to the way in which WOO was embedded in the local context of contemporary postcolonial Okinawa rather than preserving complete anonymity among 47 prefectures in Japan. I also decided to disclose that WOO is located in Naha City, the capital of the prefecture. This was because Naha City is the biggest city in Okinawa, and most prefectural organisations are located in Naha City. Because of its size, it seemed possible to preserve anonymity in Naha City. There is clearly a limit to the extent to which the researcher can produce ethnographically rich texts in highly politicised studies. However, I hope that this thesis, which focuses on a highly politicised arena, has balanced these conflicting demands while preserving anonymity.

Fieldwork

In this section, I describe first how I undertook fieldwork at WOO, and clarify what I mean by participant observation. Secondly, I show how my data was constructed and how it is analysed in the following chapters.

This research project is based on eighteen months of ethnographic fieldwork, including participant observation. This ethnographic fieldwork was conducted while I was working as a contract worker at WOO and after I left there until I left Okinawa in October 2003. By participant observation, I mean that I observed my research subjects through working with, staying with, talking with, and listening to them in the workplace, after work, and on weekends almost every day for eighteen months. Like most of the other contract workers, I worked on two shifts (morning and evening) for about eight hours a day for twenty days a month at WOO. The Okinawan language is rather different from standard Japanese, but, like Okinawans in other workplaces, all the staff members spoke standard Japanese with typical Okinawan expressions, words, and accents, which I mostly knew already. Therefore, as a native Japanese speaker I did not have any language difficulties at WOO. As noted above, I kept field notes about what I did, observed, and heard there every day. Although I could not take detailed notes all the time while I was working at WOO, I tried to remember what happened or write brief notes on my notebook in the workplace, and made proper field notes with my laptop at home. Therefore, my participant observation includes daily conversations and observations through my participation. In addition, I also conducted informal, face-to-face interviews with two former local government officials who knew about my research project after I left Okinawa between 2004 and 2008. Furthermore, my former colleagues have provided me with oral information, documents, and written material, since I left WOO. This thesis is based on all of these materials.

During my fieldwork, I worked as a contract worker, and was in charge of planning and holding seminars concerning gender studies and of publishing quarterly newsletters of WOO in the Projects Section at WOO. I organised six seminars about gender studies between April 2002 and March 2003. I routinely helped other staff members to hold workshops, symposiums, and seminars. Like other staff members, including contract workers, I attended monthly meetings of WOO and meetings of the Projects Section to discuss all the projects at WOO. We would go to pubs and

restaurants after work. For instance, the staff members of the Projects Section had a dinner together nearby once a month. I came to know my individual colleagues through my daily work and after-work socialisation. I also received phone calls from users, local government officials, staff of other public and private women's organisations, and so on at the main office on a daily basis. I occasionally dealt with users at the reception desk especially when the staff members of the Letting and Accounts Section were busy. Thus, I came to know a number of users and participants through seminars and reception work.

Moreover, during my fieldwork, I was also involved in several informal groups inside and outside WOO. Through these informal group networks, I came to know various staff members who worked for other public women's organisations and local governments in Okinawa Prefecture. With these people, I was constantly engaged especially in two groups: a group for contract workers who work for public women's organisation in Okinawa, and a study group called the Okinawa Gender Theory Group. The former group was established to discuss and improve gendered working conditions of contract workers in public women's organisations in Okinawa in June 2002. We, about ten women, met up after work fortnightly, exchanging information and helping each other. We also contacted staff members of public women's organisations in mainland Japan. The Okinawa Gender Theory Group consisted of about ten people who worked at public women's organisations and for gender equality policy in local governments in Okinawa. We met up on the first Saturday of each month to discuss on-going gender issues in Okinawa and papers concerning gender equality policy. Several of these people were also actively involved in local feminist anti-militarist activism in Okinawa. This engagement made it possible for me to look at WOO not only from the inside but also from the outside.

This thesis is based on the diverse experiences of my research subjects at WOO, which I shared with them. I have attempted to analyse and examine several typical cases as well as some exceptional cases of our experiences. I have selected the particular events that I describe in the following chapters both because they encapsulate how contract workers experience working at WOO, and because they illuminate in important ways the contradictions and constraints under which these workers operate. Both during and after fieldwork, when I was analysing my data,

these striking recurrences of typical forms of interaction recorded in my notes, encouraged me to consider (and reconsider) the structural and institutional constraints that underlay such experiences. For instance, my field notes showed the ways in which the staff members kept counting users, clients, and participants in various contexts of their daily work under neoliberal governance (see Chapter Four). At the same time, I also tried to grasp and articulate the significant exceptional events recorded in my field notes in the process of analysing my data. For example, I came across reactions and responses of the staff members and users towards neoliberal and feminist governance, which I could neither understand nor explain in the existing academic discourses about neoliberalism. In this thesis, I have attempted to reconsider the existing academic discourses, which tend to be taken for granted, based on these particular ethnographic events, rather than merely accepting such discourses.

Thus although, as I have described, problems of confidentiality, limit the amount and forms of ethnographic detail I can present in this thesis, the way I have selected certain experiences or events from my field notes is broadly in line with the methods employed by other social anthropologists working in less sensitive contexts. I do not wish, however, to conclude that we had the same experiences. I have tried to explore how various actors, such as feminist contract workers, the administrators, non-feminist staff members, and citizens, individually and collectively experienced these typical scenarios and exceptional events which I ethnographically describe in the following chapters. This attempt, I hope, will lead us to reconsider taken-for-granted academic discourses, which might overlook how workers see themselves and their labour in daily work.

My material data showed that a well-known critical theory against governance, such as the politics of empowerment, is not necessarily applicable to the various ethnographic instances found at WOO. As I show in the ethnographic chapters, I came to analyse how people unexpectedly acted against or beyond what the existing theories have presumed and taken for granted. I found that these theories tended to focus on the process of governing and being governed without paying attention to interactive, dynamic relationships between people and governance. In other words, these critical studies did not draw attention to how people acted towards

various kinds of governance on the ground and in practice. Therefore, I have tried to organise the material into themes, such as the politics of empowerment or the politics of enumeration which existing research has already examined, but has not focussed on from an ethnographic perspective.

I am not Okinawan but Japanese. Three contract workers, including myself, were Japanese among twenty-two staff members at WOO. As I shall show in Chapter Six, being an Okinawan and a Japanese is destabilised in daily life rather than fixed. Lastly, in the light of this status quo at WOO, let me touch upon the politics of representation concerning Okinawan studies. The politics of representation of 'Okinawa' has been discussed by mainly Okinawan scholars and some Japanese and Korean scholars (Choi *et al.* 1996; Hokama 1992; Ikeda 2007; Nomura 2005, 2007; Shimabukuro 2007). For example, Yoneko Hokama, a historian of Okinawan women, asserts that outsider researchers should not conveniently distort Okinawan women's activities for their research purposes (Hokama 1992). She is concerned that a Japanese historian dramatised events during which women attempted to abolish the traditional custom of washing bones (*senkotsu*), in which women had washed bones of the dead of their relatives in the Ryukyu Islands, as a women's liberation movement. In addition, Choi *et al.* remind us that Okinawan studies have much to do with Japanese and American colonisation, and the Ryukyu Islands are a pilot fieldwork site for Japanese undergraduate and postgraduate students who plan to conduct professional fieldwork abroad afterwards (Choi *et al.* 1997: 467-481). However, this issue has been recently discussed not just as an academic issue of representation, but to draw attention to Japanese and Americans who are involved in social movements and live and work in Okinawa (Nomura 2005, 2007a, 2007b; Shimabuku 2007).³⁸ This view raises the issue that Japanese researchers of Okinawan studies rarely examine Japanese themselves, while most researchers are Japanese colonisers (Nomura 2007a: 10-11). Therefore, 'if Japanese researchers are not aware of colonialism, such research itself ends up becoming a practice of colonialism' (Nomura 2007b: 41). It is suggested that it is therefore imperative to

³⁸ Tomoyoshi Doi describes how discourses are produced to criticise Japanese people who live and work in local newspapers and magazines in Okinawa, and how these discourses end up overlooking and concealing a class issue in both Okinawa and Japan proper (Doi 2009).

analyse Japanese colonisers rather than Okinawans (ibid.: 10).³⁹ In this view, my positionality is clearly one of coloniser as a researcher and as a worker in Okinawa. I intend to neither justify nor be acquitted on my positionality about my working experience in Okinawa and as a researcher of Okinawan studies in terms of colonialism in this thesis. Yet, I hope that this thesis contributes to an understanding of how Japanese and Okinawans are produced and destabilised in the workplace at WOO as ‘contingent and relational formations of meaning and practice’ rather than regarding Japanese and Okinawans as fixed categories (Faier 2008: 653).

6. Outline of the chapters

This thesis consists of eight chapters. Chapter Two provides a sketch of WOO as a field site for the following chapters. It looks at what WOO means from the point of view of eight different dimensions: place, building, history, mission, structure, funding, projects, and staff. Chapters Three to Seven ethnographically explore daily practices concerned with various forms of governance at WOO.

Chapter Three looks at how WOO is embedded in consumerism in the name of NPM, without using the term ‘consumerism’ at WOO. That is, while it is impossible to observe the word ‘consumerism’ being used at WOO, it is easy to find the concept of ‘consumerism’ operating. For instance, a citizen who wanted to complain about public services at WOO used neither the term ‘consumerism’ nor ‘consumer’ in her letter. However, her letter was full of the concept of ‘consumerism’ and it was apparent that she identified herself as a ‘citizen as consumer’ (Sennett 2006: 157) or ‘taxpayer and consumers’ (Clarke 2004: 31). As a citizen, she claimed that WOO used a vast amount of tax, staff were arrogant and WOO should be privatised to improve public services. I show not only how such a critique from a citizen is treated and used, but also how consumerism and NPM unexpectedly produce and reinforce a feminist grassroots network beyond WOO, and paradoxically provide them with information about WOO’s management.

³⁹ This discussion concerned with Japanese colonisers is bound up with a plan to relocate the US Marine Corps Air Station Futenma in a dense residential area in Ginowan City in the middle of the main island of Okinawa. The Japanese government planned to relocate the Air Station to Henoko hamlet, Nago City, in the northern part of the main island. Some, such as the above advocates, say that it is time for Japan proper and Japanese to accept the US military Air Station on behalf of Okinawa (Shimabuku 2007).

Chapter Four is about numbers at WOO. It investigates how and why numbers are produced from a project at WOO. WOO staff as practitioners count up participants, users, clients, books, and so on, and these numbers are exhibited in an annual report. It is important to see how numbers are used in risk management (Bogard 1996; Castel 1991; Parton 1999). However, like Richard Harper (2000), I focus on how numbers are produced and exhibited, and what these processes mean for practitioners themselves and WOO. It is crucial to note that this enumeration and exhibition is a practice of accountability for WOO. A practitioner enumerates not only who has attended a programme but also how much the promotion of ‘a society in which both men and women participate’ has been achieved. At the same time, I draw attention to what this practice means for a practitioner as a contract worker and her boss as a seconded government official. Chapter Four regards the process of enumeration and exhibition as a mode of governance, but shows how ‘[t]he attribute that distinguishes the objects of a numbered set does not pre-exist, but subsists in the very act of numeration’ (Copjec 1993: 174).

Chapter Five examines WOO as a political arena where various subjects are produced and reproduced under neoliberal law and feminist governance. I draw attention to how the social movement became embodied in prefectural politics, replaced by and subsumed into institutionalisation and administration under NPM. At the same time, following Cruikshank (1999), I question how WOO staff try to empower and change women who come to WOO by assessing feminist governance. Here we can see a focal point of contact between neoliberalism and feminism. On the one hand, WOO as a public body wants to empower women as its targets of the mission statement through a programme in the name of gender equality policy, so that they become citizens who can govern themselves, act and have solidarity with others (Rose 1991, 1996a). On the other hand, a feminist practitioner wants to empower these women to promote gender equality. For both, these women are positioned as ‘powerless’ and are granted power through a programme. Simultaneously, I draw attention to how these targeted women think and respond to such anticipation of WOO and frontline practitioners. I show the gap between the reality and the desire to empower in this mode of governance.

Chapter Six sees WOO as the workplace and focuses on workers of WOO,

including contract workers as practitioners and seconded local government officials as management staff. There are several conflicts or difficulties at public women's organisations. First of all, WOO as an employer internalises the gendered labour process and gendered evaluation of WOO jobs (Acker 1990: 145-150). They are employed as 'women' under gendered working conditions despite the fact that they work for gender equality. Secondly, as a public body, WOO constitutes administrative power relationships which might create a dilemma between workers who want to supply more gender-sensitive services and organisational principles (Foner 1994). Thirdly, WOO's organisational goals aimed towards gender equality might be met with men's resistance (Cockburn 1991). Such resistance is 'less institutional than personal and therefore [it is] difficult to pin down or prove' (ibid.: 55). The more a worker is sensitive to gender equality and eager for gender justice, the more she faces such a resistance and is required to overcome it. However, Chapter Six demonstrates how knowledge, gossip, and views concerning gender remake informal working culture and existing power relationships in the gendered workplace, and transform various categories, norms, and codes, which support the existing power relationships, at WOO.

Chapter Seven turns to how a contract worker becomes a feminist subject 'in subordination' (Butler 1997: 3). It should be noted that public women's organisations have produced 'alternative labour values' which are distinct from work intended to make a profit for those who were interested in gender equality (Furuta & Kaizuma 2008: 8). Like Amnesty International, a public women's organisation offers 'human rights' through paid work which demands 'moral altruism' (Hopgood 2006: 16). However, as I have noted above, a public women's organisation is not separated from administration, gendered working conditions, and gendered labour processes. Chapter Seven does not so much focus on 'the simple binary of resistance/subordination' which is centred on feminism (Mahmood 2005: 9) as on the double process of feminist subject formation. I show that while a feminist contract worker is gendered in the labour process, her feminist subject is formed in subordination through critical self-examination among WOO staff (Butler 2005).

Lastly, let me clarify the aims of this thesis. WOO is an arena where the ideal and the real meet together. In its mission statement, it is specified that WOO aims to

realise a gender equal society and improve women's social status. However, WOO staff knew that it was not easy to realise gender equality by establishing various laws and by reciting the mission statement. In reality, law does not perfectly protect all victims (Cockburn 1991: 215). WOO is an arena where it was possible to find what law misses and overlooks, and it is supposed to seal the gap between the law's ideal and reality. Moreover, in reality, WOO staff, mostly fixed-term contract workers, had to tackle existing gendered power relationships in the public sector to work at WOO. No one who was on the top of the hierarchy cared about the mission statement. In practice, it was very hard to directly pursue even the mission statement, though one might want to pursue feminist ideals. Rather, it was sometimes imperative to act as non-feminists in the workplace in order to continue working. Thus WOO is full of contradictions, conflicts, doubts, scepticism, and contests concerning gender equality, while various norms and categories were re/defined and transformed in the labour process. Therefore, again, this thesis does not aim to focus on resistance, subversion, domination, and submission per se. Instead, it demonstrates how the diverse WOO staff face, accommodate, negotiate, and struggle with the gap between the ideal and reality through their lived experience, which is embedded in neoliberal and feminist forms of governance in post-colonial Okinawa.

Chapter Two

Setting the Scene: Women's Organisation Okinawa (WOO)

Introduction

The Women's Organisation Okinawa (hereafter, WOO) is a public women's organisation established by the Okinawa Prefecture and managed by the Women's Organisation Okinawa Foundation (WOOF). WOO and WOOF are both pseudonyms. WOOF is a private foundation of the so-called 'third sector', which is legally positioned between the public sector and the private sector, and pursues the public good. WOO opened in 1997 after twenty-years of women's calls for its establishment. Its aim is to improve women's status and to establish a society in which men and women participate, by conducting comprehensive and practical surveys and research about women's issues, developing consciousness, and promoting social activity. In this chapter I provide a sketch of WOO which covers eight different dimensions: place, building, history, mission, structure, funding, projects, and staff. I elucidate where, how, why, by whom WOO was established, and has been managed and used, as the third sector in the public sector.

1. Place

WOO is situated at the western end of the Waterfront Section (a pseudonym) in Naha City. From the city centre, it takes twenty minutes by bus, and then ten minutes on foot from the bus stop to WOO. It takes half an hour from the city centre to WOO on foot, but it is too hot to walk for half an hour in Okinawa. Many people complain that it is terribly inconvenient to get to WOO from other parts of Okinawa. Waterfront Section has a rather bleak and desolate landscape compared to the city centre. Some parts of Waterfront Section were reclaimed from the sea and there are a scattering of buildings such as factories, storehouses, offices, hotels, a big shopping centre, tax companies, and so on.

It is noteworthy that WOO is located near one of the biggest and oldest sex industry areas in Okinawa. After the US military forces occupied Okinawa in 1945, there were many 'A-sign' (approved for US forces) bars for US military personnel authorised by the Ryukyu Islands Armed Forces Disciplinary Control Board, which

controlled prostitution and venereal diseases (see Yamazaki 2008).⁴⁰ Now there are small shops such as massage parlours (not for sexual intercourse), brothels, and prostitution (with sexual intercourse) here and there. They open from the morning not only for Okinawans but also for Japanese tourists and US military personnel.

When I asked WOO counsellors if they have any connection with sex workers or the sex industry around Waterfront Section, they answered that they have never had clients who have issues regarding the sex industry near Waterfront Section. One of the counsellors pointed out that WOO can neither be seen as useful nor helpful by sex workers, since WOO is neither for them nor for the counsellors, but for those who are rich enough to gracefully walk in the shining entrance hall of WOO, wearing *Ôshima tsumugi*.⁴¹ If a woman has to work, or take care of her children or parents in the daytime, it is difficult for her to go to WOO. For her, WOO is in a sense a place only for special and fortunate people who can freely go there in the daytime. The reality of access is, in this sense, contrary to the original purpose of the establishment of WOO. It is certainly ironic for WOO that there is a sex industry nearby, although it has nothing to do with them.

2. Building

As I noted in the Introduction, I include anonymised workers, numerical figures and historical backgrounds of several women's organisations in Okinawa Prefecture in order to make them less recognisable. However, at the same time, I shall describe the actual setting of WOO.

WOO is housed in a five-storey building established by Okinawa Prefecture. The building has an open space with several concrete benches, and a concrete roof within the building lot. The building is also designed for the handicapped, with Braille signs and blocks, and ramps, toilets, lifts, automatic doors and seats designed for wheelchair access. There is basement parking with ten car spaces for users, but ten spaces is obviously insufficient for WOO, which has a large hall with 500 seats. As many visitors complained about insufficient parking space, all the WOO staff

⁴⁰ Takashi Yamazaki shows how the Ryukyu Islands Armed Forces Disciplinary Control Board, in reality, failed to reduce venereal disease infection among US military personnel in spite of its control in Okinawa (Yamazaki 2008).

⁴¹ A sort of expensive Kimono of mud-dyed silk pongee made in Amami Ôshima Island, approximately 300 km north of the main land of Okinawa.

now park their cars not in the basement parking but nearby, to allow as many citizens as possible to park. The construction of the building cost approximately 3,500 million yen (£18 million). The entrance of the building opens into a spacious and bright entrance hall with gleaming veined marble floors and walls, and a spiral staircase to the first floor in the centre of the hall. There is a ramp to the first floor from the outside for the handicapped. On all of the floors, there are toilets decorated with polished marble walls, floors, ceilings, and doors. There are fifteen different kinds of rooms and facilities available for hire at WOO, as I describe below.

On the ground floor, there are the main office of WOO (including two *tatami* rooms both for male and female staff with TV); the Executive Director's room; a reception room; two counselling rooms; an auditorium (with 500 seats); a communication salon (with a capacity of 30); a printing and photocopying room; a children's room where participants can leave their children free of charge in the care of volunteer nursery workers during programmes of WOO; and a gymnasium (with a capacity of 20) with shower rooms (for Okinawan folk and social dance, aerobics, *karate*, and so on). The two counselling rooms each have a secret buzzer, which is directly linked with the main office, for emergencies. The communication salon is spacious and sunny and has curved tables, bright green chairs and lots of windows with a view of evergreen trees. It is popular for group and network activities since it is free of charge for registered groups.

On the first floor, there is a library with 30,000 books and audio-visual materials concerning gender and sexuality in Okinawa; three meeting rooms (each with 20 seats); and a small café/restaurant. Most meeting rooms have three microphones and audio facilities with a screen. The three meeting rooms can be connected with one another and have 60 seats in total. On the second floor, there are two training rooms (each with 30 seats); a creative room (with a capacity of 20) for flower arrangement, calligraphy, sewing, painting, and handicrafts; a cooking room (with a capacity of 20) with four ovens and four gas ranges; two spacious *tatami* rooms (with a capacity of 20); a tea ceremony room (with 4.5 *tatami* mats); and a waiting room for lecturers.

On the third floor, there is another training room (with 20 seats). Lastly, on the fourth floor, there is a special meeting room (with 10 seats). All of these are

available for hire except staff rooms. Until 2006, all of the rooms and facilities could not be hired for activities whose purpose was profit-making, religious, or political, and against the improvement of women's status and the establishment of 'a society in which both men and women participate'. Yet now anyone can hire any rooms and facilities if they pay an extra charge. I will discuss this consumerist shift under the New Public Management (NPM) in Chapter Three. Between April 2002 and March 2003, more than 60,000 people in total (excluding users of the library and clients of the counselling section) used the rooms and facilities of WOO, but the turnover rate was fairly low; only 32 percent in total of all the rooms and facilities. In particular, the tea ceremony room (4.9%) and the special meeting room (12.6%) were rarely hired, most likely because they are too small (less than ten seats each) for a large group of individuals to get together.⁴²

As a whole, WOO looks quite luxurious. Moreover, it is second to none among other public comprehensive women's organisations in Japan. WOO as a building is, in a sense, perfect as a public women's organisation due to marble floors and ceilings, spacious rooms, hi-tech facilities, deluxe toilets, and so forth. It is no exaggeration to say that WOO indulged in the utmost luxury thanks to the Japanese 'bubble' economy throughout the 1990s. The Prefecture had never spent tax for women like this. But, as I will elucidate in the following section, WOO was the fruit of a social movement against gender discrimination, racism, colonialism, sexual violence, and militarism rather than a top-down godsend. Analysing the numerous voices of users of Dawn Centre, the Osaka Prefectural Women's Comprehensive Centre, Sakura Furukubo (2008) has found that it is very important for women such as survivors from domestic violence, sexual violence or gender discrimination to come to a luxurious, beautiful, lively public women's organisation rather than a seedy old city council building, because the character of the organisation enables the women to feel happy, even if only while they are there.

3. History (or milieu)

⁴² It is ironic that the tea ceremony room of WOO is seldom used, because it is pointed out that a women's organisation should not let out its rooms for the purpose of lessons for tea ceremony or flower arrangement (Kikuchi *et al.* 2002: 25). That is, lessons for tea ceremony and flower arrangement are not considered as a good example to promote gender equality among those who are involved in public women's organisations.

It is said that the establishment of public women's organisations, including WOO, was led by local governments and the Japanese government who were under international pressure to move towards gender equality, rather than by a bottom-up, grass-roots social movement in Japan (Ueno *et al.* 1995; WIN-L 2001). This is illustrated by the fact that most women's organisations were established after 1995 when the Fourth World Women's Conference was held in Beijing (see Ueno *et al.* 1995: 19; WIN-L 2001: 20). As noted in the Introduction, it is true that when the Japanese government ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (hereafter, CEDAW) in 1985, it had to show evidence of the promotion of gender equality to the international community. Therefore, the government issued new laws and amended some existing laws, such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Law and the Nationality Law (from a patrilineal to a bilateral qualification).

However, it is hard to say that only local governments under the Japanese government promoted a public women's organisation in Okinawa. Rather, it is crucial to note that a local feminist social movement in Okinawa influenced not only local governments in Okinawa but also the Japanese government, by appealing to international networks and organisations such as the United Nations (UN) World Conference on Women. Suzuyo Takazato, the Cooperative Representative of Okinawa Women Act Against Military Violence (OWAMV), notes that 'since it was very difficult to solve this issue [military violence against women] which is peculiar to Okinawa, we thought that we could only appeal to women in the world' (Takazato 1996: 20). In Okinawa, there have been various strong grass-roots feminist social movements since the 1980s, and more notably since the 1990s (see Akibayashi 2002, 2004, 2005; Enloe 2001; Fukumura & Matsuoka 2002; Kuwae 1999; Takazato 1996, 2000). Such feminist social movements were based on diverse women's groups concerned with prostitution, sexual violence, militarism, ecology, anti-war, gendered inheritance, gender roles, and so on. In this section, I look at how feminist social movements have been developed and how such movements are linked to the establishment of public women's organisations in the context of Okinawa Prefecture.

The *tôtômei* inheritance issue

In the 1980s there were various social movements, which problematised gender issues in Okinawa. In 1980, the Okinawan media took up the issue of *tôtômei* (ancestral memorial tablet) inheritance and revealed that many women suffered as a result of this issue. Specifically, there is a taboo regarding *inagugwansu*, or women ancestors, which forbids women not only from possessing or inheriting such memorial tablets, but also from adopting a son in order that he might inherit these tablets rather than, for example, younger brothers or other male relatives.⁴³ The taboo continues to be considered as ‘traditional custom’, and those who possess an ancestral tablet are supposed to inherit their ancestral property and money including the rent for land occupied by the US military base, with the tablet. As such, daughters have long been excluded from inheritance. However, the media disclosed that there were many issues surrounding *tôtômei*, especially when parents left their daughters money which they had received as compensation for war dead or as payment from the military for the rent of land paid by the Japanese government for the rent of land occupied by the US military (*gunyôchi ryô*). That is, the *tôtômei* issue is not a traditional but a specifically post-war problem (Miyagi 2002). At the same time, the *tôtômei* problem has mutated from a ‘private’ problem into a ‘public’ one dealt with by public women’s organisations (Ryukyu Shinpo Sha 1980).

Group of Okinawa Women 80

In 1980, several women also organised the Group of Okinawa Women 80 (*80 nen Okinawa onna no kai*) to protest against Naha City Council’s attempt to restore the festival of *juri* (prostitutes) in Tsuji District, Naha City (Aguni 1992: 18-19, 26-29). In Tsuji District, prostitution used to be licensed, originally for Chinese and Japanese bureaucrats in the Ryukyu Kingdom in 1672 (Takazato 1996: 100). *Juri* were sold by poor parents when they were very young and they were brought up as ‘prostitutes’ by their female employers (Uehara 1977). Many *juri* worked for ‘sexual slavery centres’ during the Battle of Okinawa. In 1903, two Okinawan *juri* were exhibited at ‘the House of Peoples’ (*Jinruikan*) at the Fifth Domestic Exposition for the Promotion of

⁴³ There are about ten taboos with regard to *tôtômei*. For example, only the eldest son can inherit ancestral tablets; other younger brothers cannot inherit them. In the case that their father cannot inherit tablets (even if he is the eldest, but he has no sons etc.), his eldest son cannot inherit and the second-born son must inherit in order to avoid a curse on their clan. Thus, taboos are complicated and should be considered in each context. People usually ask shamans (*yuta*) to judge who should inherit.

Industry (Engeki 'Jinruikan' jōen wo jitsugen sasetai kai 2005). They were exhibited with thirty other people such as Ainu, Taiwanese indigenous peoples, and people who came from Korea, China, India, Turkey, Africa, Java and so on. At the time, an Okinawan male intellectual, Chōfu Ota, stated that it was incredible that 'the House of Peoples' had presented 'prostitutes' as 'Okinawan noble ladies' and it was insulting that it had regarded Okinawans as being identical with Taiwanese natives and Ainu (Ryukyu Shimpo, 11 April 1903). Okinawans in Osaka agreed with Ota's critique and demanded to let the *juri* return to Okinawa. I do not intend to talk about Okinawans' discrimination against Taiwanese natives and Ainu people here. Rather, I draw attention to how 'prostitutes' are treated in public discourse. It might not be reasonable to refer to a newspaper article written in 1903 in order to consider the sex work industry in the 1980s. But what Naha City wanted to restore, by using public money, was a ceremony to show these *juri* 'prostitutes', who had been officially and clearly differentiated and discriminated against by an Okinawan male intellectual in 1903. Therefore, the Group of Okinawa Women 80 tried, and succeeded, to prevent the City Council from celebrating this festival in the name of tradition, which was totally based on sex discrimination and which ignored how *juri* people had been treated.

The Nairobi Forum

In July 1985, more than twenty women, including the Group of Okinawa Women 80, participated in the NGO forum at the UN World Conference on Women in Nairobi, and three women organised a workshop about the sex work industry in Okinawa (Takazato 1996: 51). These women were members of the Group of Okinawa Women 80 although their occupations were different from one another: a counsellor, a radio producer, and a local government official.⁴⁴ More women wanted to attend the workshop than could be accommodated in the building, and therefore many tried to listen to the talk from outside the windows. In 1969, there were about 7,400 women engaged in the sex work industry in Okinawa (Takazato 1996: 46). The number of rapes and murders of sex workers conducted by the US military personnel increased

⁴⁴ I asked one of the three organisers of the workshop in Nairobi about the following historical contexts of the feminist social movements in Okinawa between 2003 and 2009.

in the 1960s and 1970s during the Vietnam War (Kichi guntai wo yurusanai onna tachi no kai 1995). Sex work was a system in which it was almost impossible for a worker to stay out of debt (Takazato 1996: 46). This was a serious issue in the 1980s in Okinawa. The participants from Okinawa in the Nairobi Forum appealed to the world and made the sex work issue in Okinawa visible.

The *Unai* Festival

Immediately after coming back from Nairobi, six women started to prepare the *Unai* Festival in Naha City (Unai fesutibaru jikkô iinkai 1985: 118). They consisted of a radio announcer, a radio producer, a counsellor, an editor, a local government official, and a temporary lecturer in law (ibid.). *Unai* means sisters or sisterhood in Okinawan language in general and traditionally denotes a goddess at home as well as in a community (ibid.: 8). The executive committee of the *Unai* Festival sought to identify an alternative meaning of *unai* for women who kept busy with caring for their husbands, children, and elders, who were stuck in a rut in the workplace, worked day and night, and were satisfied with their lives (ibid.). Its slogans were 'From Nairobi to Okinawa' and 'Speak out and Enjoy Yourself, *Unai*!' and the goal was that 'women could freely congregate together and gather their power from their networks to work together to establish a society where women and men could live together and support one another in Okinawa' (ibid.: 119). The committee succeeded in persuading Radio Okinawa (a local radio station) and Naha City Council to co-sponsor the Festival. It was held in Naha Citizens' Hall and Yogi Park in Naha City on 23 November 1985. Radio Okinawa broadcast a special live programme for the Festival which ran for twelve hours; from nine o'clock in the morning to nine o'clock in the evening on that day. 43 organisations and groups, including various trade unions, the Group of Okinawa Women 80, newspapers, a study group of Okinawan women's history, dentists, hairdressers, anti-war groups, several teachers' associations, designers' groups, musicians, private libraries, local government offices, the Girl Guides, dancers (traditional Okinawan dance and contemporary dance), coffee shops, a group for women's enfranchisement, a group of husbands of nurses, and other groups, participated in the Festival (ibid.). They organised more than fifty workshops, including a counselling section in Yogi Park where people protested

against the US military bases in the 1960s and 1970s (ibid.: 88-89).

There were a symposium on sexuality, concerts, a lecture on the Battle of Okinawa and women by Hisae Sawaji, a Japanese novelist; and film festivals at the Naha Citizens' Hall (Unai fesutibaru jikkô iinkai 1985: 88-89). The Hall had 1,500 seats, but there were more people wishing to attend than there were seats available. More than 5,000 people visited the Festival (ibid.: 119). Radio Okinawa broadcast every event, interviewed a hundred women, and broadcast a radio play on the Battle of Okinawa and mass 'suicide' (ibid.). The *Unai* Festival made it possible to connect for the first time various groups and networks which were politically, structurally, and historically distinct from one another (ibid.: 120). Its aim was firmly based on anti-militarist and anti-war principles which could not be found in the majority of feminist movements and discourses in Japan proper. As Chieko Aguni, a participant of the *Unai* Festival, points out, its feminist anti-militarist stance was distinct from not only the male-led peace movement but also the existing women's community groups in Okinawa (Aguni 1992: 17). Moreover, the *Unai* Festival was entirely different from the *juri* [prostitution] festival which Naha City Council attempted to restore in 1980. It was crucial that the participants spoke about and shared their own issues in their own words (Unai fesutibaru jikkô iinkai 1985: 119). In addition, the keyword '*unai*' came to indicate sisterhood rather than goddess, through 25 years of the Festival's ensuing history.

Changes in the Nationality Law

At the same time, there were problems surrounding stateless children resulting from the US military occupation in Okinawa. When the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) proclaimed the International Year of the Child in 1979, the International Welfare Counselling Centre (IWCC) in Okinawa disclosed to the public that there were about seventy children of no nationality in Okinawa Prefecture (Hirata 1995: 29).⁴⁵ The Japanese Nationality Law was clearly

⁴⁵ IWCC, a private organisation, used to be the Okinawa branch office of International Social Service Japan (ISSJ) and dealt with 'mixed-blood children' and international adoption (Hirata 1995: 25). In 1952, after the war in Japan, an organisation started to help 'mixed-blood children' and children who had lost their parents during the war. It belonged to International Social Service (headquarters in Geneva) and became ISSJ in 1957. IWCC was run by Okinawan staff members and volunteers from the military bases (ibid.)

patrilineal in that it did not allow Japanese nationality to be bestowed upon children whose fathers did not have Japanese nationality at that time. Therefore, if their fathers' countries did not give them nationality, the children of non-Japanese men could not have any nationality at all. Needless to say, fathers of stateless children in Okinawa were the US military personnel or former military personnel, but if they were aware of the children's existence, then they either did not admit that they were these children's fathers, or simply left them. Masayo Hirata, a former case worker of IWCC, points out that while Japanese women in Iwakuni and Yokosuka which also held the US military bases did not say anything about stateless children, Okinawan women problematised this issue (Hirata 1995: 29-30). Thus, the issue of stateless children became visible in Okinawa for the first time. Several grass-roots groups in Okinawa had asked the Ministry of Justice to change the law, but were unsuccessful. Accordingly, IWCC appealed to the public in 1979. The Japan Federation of Bar Associations (JFBA) immediately came to Okinawa and investigated this issue with IWCC (*ibid.*: 29). Several grass-roots groups in Okinawa, along with JFBA and women's groups in Japan proper, made united efforts and succeeded in problematising this issue in public (*ibid.*). This was when the Japanese government sought to ratify CEDAW. Several IWCC case workers attended a hearing of the Ministry of Justice as well as the National Diet in Tokyo, to explain about children of no nationality who had been born from US military personnel and Okinawan women, and to emphasise the gender inequality existing under the law (*ibid.*).

In 1985, the Japanese Nationality Law changed from patrilineal to bilateral, as a result of the issue of stateless children in Okinawa and of the ratification of CEDAW. Hirata suggests that the reason why Okinawan women made it visible might be because it was easier to speak about such an issue in Okinawa than in Japan proper (*ibid.*: 30). When she conducted a survey of local areas in Okinawa, Hirata saw that stateless children's grandmothers would look after them in the countryside or on a remote island, while their mothers were working in the city centre (*ibid.*). By contrast, although it was believed that there must have been stateless children in Yokosuka and Iwakuni where US military bases were also stationed, no stateless children were reported in these places. Hirata suggests that it must have been more difficult to problematise the issue of stateless children in Japan proper than Okinawa

(ibid.). In addition, in the light of the fact that at the *Unai* Festival, there was a free counselling service for this issue, I suggest that not only kinship networks but also the feminist movement supported these women and children in Okinawa.

The NGO Forum in Beijing and the feminist anti-bases movements

In 1995, seventy-one people participated in the NGO Forum on Women in Beijing with eleven workshops from Okinawa in September 1995 (Akibayashi 2004: 77; Takazato 1996: 214-229).⁴⁶ They organised a workshop titled 'The Military: Its Structural Violence and Women' with a mime play based on a true story about a six year-old girl raped and killed by American soldiers in 1955. However, when they were in Beijing, they heard that a primary school pupil had been abducted and raped by three American marines in Kin Town, where Camp Hansen was situated in the middle of the main island of Okinawa. They immediately discussed this with the Prefectural Deputy Governor who was also in Beijing, and set up a press conference the day after they returned to Okinawa. They wanted to take the initiative in supporting this pupil before the usual male-led and fixed anti-militarist response to such a case was made (Takazato 1996: 22-25). Unlike the participants in Beijing who were more concerned about the pupil herself, '[m]any Okinawans' initial response to the rape was to call for basic reforms in the Japan-US Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA)' (Enloe 2000: 114). SOFA had not allowed the Japanese police to arrest and interrogate a suspect who belonged to the US military before the US military had itself undertaken an investigation.

After returning from Beijing, several women immediately established Okinawa Women Act Against Military Violence (hereafter, OWAMV) in autumn 1995. It consisted of various people in Okinawa such as counsellors, politicians, civil servants, school teachers, radio producers, and TV announcers. They established the first rape crisis centre, the Rape Emergency Intervention Counselling Centre Okinawa (REICO), in Naha City at the same time. Sayoko Takeshita, an Okinawan feminist psychiatrist, explains how REICO is significant as a rape crisis centre in Japan: REICO has a free feminist counselling service supported by a rigorous mental

⁴⁶ It is said that 5,000 or 6,000 people from Japan participated in the NGO Forum in Beijing (Arima *et al.* 2001: 69-70). Yamashita notes that this surely led to the promotion of women's policy in Japan (ibid.).

support group consisting of psychiatrists, psychologists, obstetricians and feminist counsellors who are all professionally engaged in issues surrounding sexual violence, and gives police officers lectures on responses to sexual violence victims (Takioka *et al.* 1997: 40-41). Moreover, they have conducted various protests against sexual violence by the US military personnel in Okinawa, Japan, and the US. They carried out 'the America Peace Caravan' in Washington D.C., New York, San Francisco, and Honolulu to let American citizens know that 'this rape was not simply the act of three individual American men, but the product of their government's foreign policy design' (Enloe 2000: 120). Moreover, OWAMV made a long list of acts of sexual violence and murder committed by American soldiers since they had invaded Okinawa in 1945 (Kichi guntai wo yurusanai kôdô suru onna tachi no kai 1995).⁴⁷ They also established international networks against militarism.⁴⁸ In doing so, they 'held press conferences, lobbied the Okinawan Governor (himself anti-bases but not necessarily sensitive to the wider issues of violence against women), and sent a delegation to Tokyo to deliver petitions to the prime minister and foreign minister that called for a reduction of US bases on Okinawa' (Enloe 2000: 120).

The reason why OWAMV started the feminist anti-militarist movement is that the existing male-led anti-bases movement tended to perceive 'the sexual exploitation of local women by foreign soldiers as one more reason to reject the idea that military bases were the currency of development and diplomacy' (Enloe 2000: 114). It was hard for these women to place sexual violence in the centre of the male-led anti-bases movement (Enloe 2000: 120; Takazato 1996: 30-38). Suzuyo Takazato, who used to be a counsellor, and then became a member of the Naha City Assembly, and is now the most well-known feminist anti-militarist as co-chair person of OWAMV in Okinawa, recalls:

I remember walking into a large hall where the anti-bases activists were meeting. A man pointed his finger at me as I entered 'You! You always only raise the violence against women issue. That's not political. That's not what the US-Japanese Security Treaty is about!' I just

⁴⁷ This list consists of incidents which has become visible only because a culprit was arrested and admitted what he had done. Even if she had survived, it would be difficult for a woman to prove who committed the crime and what exactly happened. As such, it is apparent that the incidents on the list represent only the tip of the iceberg and it is impossible to count all of the incidents that took place. However, it was meaningful to make such a list to make incidents visible in public in 1995.

⁴⁸ Okinawa Women Act Against Military Violence established the East Asia-US-Puerto Rico Women's Network Against Militarism with other grass-roots feminist anti-militarist groups.

pointed my finger back at him and said, 'You know only one-half of what security means if you don't think military violence against women is part of this issue!' (Enloe 2000: 120).⁴⁹

Thus they had to tackle not only sexual violence but also the existing male-led anti-bases 'myopia' (Enloe 2000: 114). As Cynthia Enloe summarises, the existing movement focused on colonialism, neo-colonialism and militarism, while it internalised 'misogyny' and 'masculinity' and 'did not think about prostitution' and 'sexual violence against women in general' (ibid.). OWAMV has changed the relationship between 'victims' of sexual violence by the US military personnel and social movements in Okinawa.⁵⁰

Lastly, it should be noted that these long-term feminist movements included 'femocrats' (feminist bureaucrats) who worked for local governments all over Okinawa Prefecture. They also played a vital role in developing plans, policies, laws and women's organisations as 'inside agitators' (Eisenstein 1996). They played an indispensable role in connecting local activism with local policy, including the establishment of public women's organisations. The long-term feminist social movements as well as femocrats' official and unofficial efforts as unsung heroes made it possible to promote gender equality policy and public women's organisations in Okinawa. In this sense, it is hard to separate local governments' initiatives from

⁴⁹ Takazato herself describes in her book how she has faced the male-dominated anti-militarist discourses (1996: 30). Another member of OWAMV also told me that she had a similar experience when she gave a talk in Japan proper. This gendered bias can be found in the anti-bases social movement in Korea, too (Jung 2010).

⁵⁰ In addition, it is noteworthy that the existing male-led movement tends to overlook or conceal that a rape victim was and might be a man (Shinjo 2005). In this sense, the male-led movement has reinforced the gendered relationship between the occupier and the occupied. In this view, Okinawa is seen as a woman who is occupied, while the US is regarded as a man who occupied Okinawa as a woman. The male-led movement tends to use a metaphor based on gendered relationships such as a rape. Yet this usage can be found in a feminist anti-militarist discourse as well. For instance, Eiko Asato (2008), a member of OWAMV, wrote a book titled *Raped Lives: Recovering Okinawa Dignity* (Ryôzoku sareru inochi: Okinawa songen no kaifuku he). She notes in the Introduction that 'a junior high school girl was raped by an American soldier in February 2008. Now everyone feels that not only the girl but also all the Okinawans are raped' (Asato 2008: ii). I appreciate that she wanted to criticise sexual violence regarding the Battle of Okinawa and the current US military bases in Okinawa. Yet I cannot agree with her usage of a metaphor. First of all, I do not think that she should have juxtaposed a junior high school student and all the Okinawans even if she wanted to stress that this incident was unforgivable and criticise the second rape by the Japanese media. This juxtaposition loses the sense to contextually imagine why and how she was raped in reality. Moreover, more importantly, her metaphor sees all the Okinawans as rape victims not by problematising the gendered relationship between the occupier as a man and the occupied as a woman but by bringing the existing gendered relationship between men and women into the occupation discourse in Okinawa. Against her original intention, her metaphor ends up taking it for granted, reinforcing and fixing the gendered context in which the junior high school 'girl' was raped, as the Japanese and Okinawan media repeated that it was her fault in accepting an offer of a lift. I will discuss this in Chapter Six.

the social movements in the public sector. Like other public women's organisations in Okinawa, WOO was the fruit of these long-term feminist social movements rather than a gift from local governments and the Japanese government.

Establishment of WOO

I now turn to how WOO was established in relation to the Okinawa Prefecture. The formal call for the establishment of a public women's organisation as a base of women's activity emerged from the Women's Issues Discussion Group (WIDG). Like other prefectures in Japan proper, it was formed in 1977 under the auspices of the Juveniles and Ladies Section of the Social Security Division, after the Juveniles and Ladies Section was established in the Lives and Welfare Division under the Okinawa Prefectural Government Office in 1979. WIDG consisted of 'well-informed people' (*yûshiki sha*) such as university professors, business executives, medical doctors and lawyers. In response to such calls, the Okinawa Prefecture began to consider the matter, and between 1983 and 1984, WIDG was allocated funding to carry out surveys of women's organisations in Shizuoka, Chiba, Yamanashi and Kanagawa Prefectures.

In 1987, the Women's Group Contact Association in Okinawa Prefecture, which was established in 1968 to organise all of the women's groups in Okinawa, called for the rapid establishment of a women's organisation (Okinawa ken josei dantai kyôgi kai 2003). Three years later, in 1990, the reformist, Masahide Ota, (1925~), who had included the construction of such an organisation in his election campaigning, became a Governor of Okinawa Prefecture. He was supported not only by radical feminist anti-base activists, but also by conservative women's groups.⁵¹ In the 1980s and 1990s, there were numerous politically and structurally different women's groups, such as community women's groups, trade unions, primary, junior, and high school teachers' associations, feminist anti-bases groups, and Okinawan women's history study groups. The *Unai* Festival made it possible to connect these different women's groups, but only once a year, and they wanted to secure a place in

⁵¹ Masahide Ota attended the Battle of Okinawa as a student soldier in 1945 and was a professor at Ryukyu University (Ota 1972). He made his anti-war and anti-militarist intentions clear during the election and in 1995 he became famous for his refusal to sign papers allowing the continued US military occupation of certain lands on which the leases had run out (Ota 1996).

the public sector where they could connect at any time. In 1992, a Women's Policy Office was set up within the Governor's Executive Office, and began to work towards the construction of a women's organisation. WOO then opened in 1997.

WOO did not suddenly appear thanks to Okinawa Prefecture after the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. WOO was finally founded after more than twenty years of patient and concerted effort by social movements. Needless to say, 'femocrats' as 'inside agitators' played a leading role in promoting the gender equality policy of the Prefecture and the establishment of WOO. For those who yearned for a public women's organisation, WOO appeared as 'counterpublics' to produce an alternative public sphere where people could get together to change the various existing meanings and conceptions regarding gender and sexuality in the public sphere (Fraser 1992: 123).

4. Mission statement

WOO's mission statement specifies that WOO aims to be a base to solve women's issues, promote women's status, and create a society in which both men and women participate in Okinawa Prefecture. To do so, WOO plans and carries out diverse projects, including (1) a consciousness-raising project on creating a society in which both men and women participate; (2) a support project on women's participation in society and on men's participation in the community and domestic spheres; (3) a research project on women's issues; (4) a network project on women's groups; (5) a project on women leaders; (6) a project on information for women; (7) a counselling project on women's issues; (8) a management project on the facilities of WOO as a base to promote a society in which both men and women participate; and (9) other projects which are required to fulfil the mission statement.⁵² I will show how these projects are carried out in later chapters.

The whole mission statement of WOO is printed on the A4 size opening page of its annual report. It explains the relationship regarding gender equality policy between the UN, the Japanese government, and Okinawa Prefecture. A statement on the relationship between the UN and the Japanese government can be also found in other public women's organisations' mission statements in Japan. Such a statement is

⁵² Between 2002 and 2003 WOO did not have a budget for research.

copied and slightly modified, and used here and there in administrative documents regarding gender equality policy and public women's organisations all over Japan (Riles 2000: 16, 80-81).⁵³ Moreover, it should be noted that the WOO mission statement does not mention any feminist movement in Okinawa. Rather, it focuses on policy and law in relation to the Okinawa Prefecture, the Japanese government, and the UN. It draws attention to the international and national necessity for gender equality. This indicates that WOO is a quasi-third sector, or more precisely, a public body, rather than an independent organisation from the Prefecture. The mission statement has nothing to do with what the feminist anti-militarist social movement has done so far. Instead, WOO is required to show a performance of 'accountability' for citizens or taxpayers (and local government officials who can control funding from tax) by pointing out that a public women's organisation is indispensable not in terms of feminism but in terms of global and national necessity (Strathern 2000: 2). I explore this politics of performing accountability in Chapter Three.

5. Structure

WOO was established by the Okinawa Prefecture and is managed by the Okinawa Women's Organisation Okinawa Foundation (WOOF). WOO is the name of the organisation and WOOF is the name of the management body. WOOF is legally positioned as the private foundation, *zaidan hôjin*, one of the public service corporations which pursues the public good in the public sector, does not aim to make a profit, and is mainly funded by donations from individuals or other organisations under Article 34 of the Civil Code. WOOF was established in 1996, a year before the opening of WOO, to prepare its opening. WOOF consists of an Executive Committee (fifteen members) with auditors, a Steering Committee (fifteen members), an Executive Director, a Secretary-General, and twenty staff, including seconded government officials and contract workers.

The Executive Committee is the final decision-making body for all of the projects of WOO. The Committee members consist of the Director of the Executive

⁵³ This is not only an account of the relationship between the UN and the Japanese government. Various key phrases and expressions are also used without permission all over Japan. A staff member of a public women's organisation says that 'it is breaking a rule! I was astonished when I read a women's organisation's pamphlet because it was almost the same as mine' (Yokohama shi josei kyôkai 1996: 118).

Committee (Deputy Governor of Okinawa Prefecture), the vice Director of the Executive Committee, the Executive Director, two auditors, and fifteen executive members in the Executive Committee. All of the auditors and members of the Executive Committee are chosen by the Director of the Committee, the Deputy Governor of the Prefecture, who is comprehensively in charge of all the gender equal policy in Okinawa Prefecture. The regulations state that the Executive Committee decides important matters concerning the management of WOOF and two auditors audit the execution of all the projects at WOO. The Executive Committee meets twice a year. All budgeting proposals for the coming year must be resolved by the Executive Committee before submission to the Prefectural Governor. To be resolved, two-thirds of the members of the Executive Committee must endorse the proposals. Moreover, annual reports of all of the projects and their statements of accounts must be audited by the two auditors and must be resolved by the Executive Committee. Likewise, to be resolved, two-thirds of the Executive Committee members must agree to all of the results, and the results must then be submitted to the Prefectural Governor. Thus the Committee was supposed to audit whether ‘the activity [of WOO] was carried out efficiently and whether it [WOO] achieved its goals’ (Power 1997: 3). However, most WOO staff thought that the Committee was a puppet rather than an audit body, because most members were considered as not sufficiently sensitive to gender equality to be able to examine the extent to which WOO’s mission statement was achieved. While the Committee was supposed to play the role of ‘auditor’ for ‘the twinned precepts of economic efficiency and good practice’ (Strathern 2000: 2), most staff members agreed that the function of the Committee as an audit body did not work properly. They thought that the Committee was unable to value projects geared towards gender equality and was therefore unable to perform accountability.

Under the Executive Committee, the Steering Committee plays a role of discussing the management of projects and giving advice in a more practical manner. Fifteen members (seven from the public and eight by co-option), such as school teachers, office workers, local government officials and leaders of social movement groups and community groups, comprise the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee and WOO staff plan and manage together the biggest events at WOO,

such as the WOO Festival and the New Year Lecture. However, WOO staff found it tiring and a nuisance to have to prepare all of the documents and refreshments for the Committee members at every meeting, and that all the decisions, including trivial matters, had to be made through the Committee. It was extremely difficult to bring matters to a conclusion at each meeting since the Committee members were too diverse and each had distinct ideas. Yet, at the same time, there were those among the Committee members who worried about whether WOO staff members were good enough to manage all of the projects by themselves. As I shall show in Chapter Six, the Committee members informally tried to obtain more information from WOO staff, and to get involved in the WOO projects and politics, such as conflict between local politics (the ruling political party of the Prefecture) and WOO. In this sense, the Steering Committee does work well. Under the Executive Committee and the Steering Committee, the Executive Director, the Secretary-General, and twenty WOO staff members regularly work for WOO. I look at how they are positioned and work in the following sections.

6. Funding

According to the budget, WOOF, which manages WOO as a private foundation, had approximately 1,500 million yen (£7.5 million) annual revenue in 2002 of which about 95% came from the Prefecture. The rest consisted of donations from the private sector (5 million yen, £25,000), original assets (1.6 million yen, £8,000), and individual and group membership fees (200,000 yen, £1,000). The staff costs amounted to 80 million yen (£400,000), forming 55% of the total amount. Therefore without the funding from the Prefecture, WOO can neither hire employees nor manage projects. Hence WOOF and WOO are financially affiliated with the Okinawa Prefecture in terms not only of location (office space) but also funding, while WOO is officially differentiated from a local government office as the 'independent' third sector, positioned between the public sector, the private sector, and the volunteer sector. Accordingly, as I shall show in Chapter Three, WOO was regarded by citizens as part of the public sector rather than an organisation independent from local government.

Nevertheless, feminist scholars and bureaucrats claim that public

comprehensive women's organisations such as WOO 'must have autonomy and subjectivity' (Sakurai *et al.* 1999: 22), because they 'need to play a role of coordinating both local governments and citizens neither as governments nor as citizens but as a medium between local governments and citizens' (Ueno & Takenaka 2002: 73). Feminists tend to see private foundations such as WOOF, which run public women's organisations, as 'independent', 'autonomous' organisations (Ueno & Sato 2001). One of the reasons why Japanese feminists are concerned about independence relates to the past; women were mobilised to participate in Japanese imperialism and colonialism through various activities, including women's groups, during the war (21 seiki no josei sentâ wo kangaeru kai 2001: 6). For instance, in Hiroshima City, which was one of the cities in Japan where the US dropped atomic bombs in August 1945, several women's community groups which were organised during the war and used for institutionalised mobilisation to support the war, still remain (Shibata & Kimoto 1982).⁵⁴ However, this view focuses on how women as 'objects' were mobilised for the war, and pays little attention to how women are expected to be 'subjects' in visiting public women's organisations and attending their programmes. As I shall show in the following chapters, a demand for independent subjects is addressed not only to public women's organisations but also to citizens by various actors such as feminist scholars, activists, local government officials and the staff themselves. In this sense, it may be crucial also to be aware that praising volunteer activities as subjects-citizens without reserve might overlook how these activities are connected with neoliberal nationalism in Japan (Nakano 2001: 252-253). As I shall show in Chapter Four, this concern is also shared with a critique of neoliberal governance through subject formation (Cruikshank 1999; Rose 1990; Shibuya 2003). In sum, it seems to be contradictory and problematic for public women's organisations, which are financially affiliated with local governments, to be structurally independent.

Indeed, many have already pointed out this contradictory relationship between autonomy, funding and feminist social-movement goals in the context of

⁵⁴ It is noteworthy that these women's community groups in Hiroshima City played a pivotal role in petitioning against nuclear weapons in 1977 and 1978 (Shibata & Kimoto 1982). In this sense, despite their past during the war, these women's groups were able to change their roles and goals in a different context. Shibata and Kimoto point out that whether these groups participated in the petition activity depended on the political stance of individual group members (*ibid.*).

organisational affiliation (e.g. Byington *et al.* 1991; Fried 1994; Martin 1990). For instance, Patricia Martin notes that ‘complete autonomy is accompanied by unreliable funding and excessive demands on members’ time and energy...but dependence also brings problems’ (Martin 1990: 200). She continues that ‘[f]eminist collectives in Western Europe are reluctant to accept state funds from fears of cooptation and do so only if they feel their autonomy is uncompromised... Acceptance of government funds – or charitable contributions or grants – often entails bureaucratic structures or practices’ (ibid.: 201). In this sense, it seems to be extremely problematic that Japanese public women’s organisations, which are affiliated with local governments or the state in terms of ‘personnel, funds, office space, and supplies’ (ibid.: 200), can accomplish their mission of being independent from local governments (Ueno & Sato 2001: 109). I will examine how WOO is embedded within local politics in the following sections, and how it is embedded within consumerist discourses in Chapter Three.

7. Projects

The WOO consists of four sections: (1) the Letting and Accounts Section, (2) the Library, (3) the Counselling Section, and (4) the Projects Section. Each section is in charge of several of the projects I outlined above, which in practice means supplying meeting opportunities, information and counselling for women; and planning and establishing programmes on gender issues. Since I shall give more detailed ethnographic description of their work in the following chapters, I briefly outline here the projects of each section. Firstly, the Letting and Accounts Section manages the use of conference and study facilities, and the auditorium. The cost of hiring these facilities is significantly lower than from the private sector. For instance, a meeting room with 40 seats can be hired at a cost of 1,000 yen (£5) per three hours, and a gymnasium can be hired for 200 yen (£1) per two hours. A communication salon is free of charge to share. As previously noted, in 2002 and 2003 the facilities could not be used for commercial or business purposes, nor for activities which were counter to gender equality and the promotion of women’s social status. However, as I shall show in Chapter Three, the Okinawa Prefecture introduced the Designated Management System in 2006 and WOO privatised the Letting and Accounts Section

and the Library in April 2006. As a result, all of the facilities became available for hire for any purposes.

Secondly, the Library contains approximately 30,000 books, magazines, journals and DVDs about gender and sexuality. It aims to collect these materials from within and outside the Prefecture, to promote women's status and establish a society in which both men and women participate. A prefectural citizen who has a home address in Okinawa Prefecture can borrow ten items from the library for two weeks at a time. A visitor can watch DVDs from the collection whilst in the Library. The Library also helps users to find appropriate information and materials regarding gender issues.

Thirdly, the Counselling Section has free counselling services including legal, psychological, telephone and face-to-face counselling services in the Japanese and English languages for prefectural citizens. It mainly deals with women's and gender issues, such as domestic violence, Amerasian children whose fathers are US military personnel, divorce, sexual violence, sexual harassment, single motherhood, and child abuse. I will examine how the counselling project is conducted and numerated by WOO in Chapter Four. The Counselling Section also plans and holds free training courses for counsellors who deal with gender issues in Okinawa Prefecture.

Fourthly, the Projects Section manages various programmes such as courses for childminders for WOO programmes, assertiveness training courses, courses on men's studies and women's studies, courses for people who are in charge of gender equality policy in local governments, a symposia on domestic violence and lectures to solve current women's and gender issues.⁵⁵ The lectures cover local Okinawan issues such as military slaves during the Battle of Okinawa, the *tôtômei* (ancestral memorial tablet) inheritance issue, cross-cultural marriage and divorce, patriarchy and Okinawa, and Okinawan women's history, as well as more general themes such as domestic violence and gender studies. Annually, WOO plans and establishes approximately fifty programmes, attended by a total of over 2,000 people. Guest speakers and lecturers are invited not only from Okinawa but also from Japan proper.

⁵⁵ A prefectural citizen can make use of the nursery service free of charge, if she attends a programme at WOO.

It should be noted that several lecturers, including professors of gender studies and men's studies from famous universities, tend to give almost identical lectures all over Japan.⁵⁶ This tendency standardises not only 'gender studies' but also some keywords of gender studies including 'gender', 'sex', and 'sexuality'. Furthermore, as I shall show in Chapter Three, all of the projects of WOO were free of charge until March 2003, but two programmes – an advanced assertiveness training course and a self-defence training course – have solicited a fee since April 2003.

All of the projects must follow the appropriate administrative procedures in order to be given formal, official approval (*kessai*), and to be allocated funding. The administrative procedures consist of fourteen formal and informal steps. These steps modified a model derived from a famous, leading book on gender equality policy and projects on women's and gender issues, written by local government officials in Osaka Prefecture (Grûpu Mikoshi 1994). Here I depict these steps in terms of planning and establishing a programme on gender equality. I use brackets to show informal steps:

1. One person sets a theme and focal point for a programme (at the same time, she informally starts to negotiate with her colleagues, bosses, and a lecturer).
2. She makes it clear when WOO will have a programme and what kind of theme it will focus on each time.
3. She then fixes a lecturer, a venue, the prescribed number of participants, and a date and time (she informally starts to negotiate with the administrators such as the Secretary General and the Executive Director).
4. She negotiates with a lecturer about the content of the lecture and other details such as payment, transportation, accommodation, timing, and so on.
5. She drafts a curriculum and leaflet.
6. She produces and circulates among all of the staff members of the Projects Section, the Secretary General and the Executive Director, an official draft document outlining the details of the programme; a letter of request for a lecturer; and a formal request of execution for a seal of approval.
7. She sends a written letter of request to a lecturer.
8. She starts public relations with the Prefecture, TV and radio stations, and with the general public in public places.
9. She prepares a list of participants and volunteer childminders.
10. She prepares handouts and questionnaires.
11. She arranges the room setting (reception, desks, chairs, microphones, sound facilities, screen, drinks, and so on), manages any problems with the lecturer and participants, and oversees each programme.
12. After the programme, she writes a letter of thanks to the lecturer and volunteer childminders, and prepares a formal request of execution of this letter of thanks.

⁵⁶ This is because only a few lecturers are famous for delivering lectures at public women's organisations, and thus the staff of public women's organisations tend to invite these same lecturers to speak.

13. She analyses questionnaires and produces a formal report on the programme project.
14. Finally, she sorts all of the documents and data concerning the project. These documents, including the formal report, are used for auditing and circulated among all of the staff.

For the individual who planned and established a project, the process between step one and step six was the most difficult of all of the fourteen steps. This is because it required a high degree of skill in negotiation, communication, performance, judgement and creative thinking, as well as extensive knowledge of gender studies, women's studies, men's studies, and formal and informal networks. The procedure of making and circulating a document reproduced and reinforced the existing power relationships in the workplace. But, as I shall show in Chapters Six and Seven, simultaneously, it is also possible for an individual to challenge the existing hierarchy based on working status, by making use of her gender knowledge and informal networks. In this sense, this process is more ambiguous and political than oppressive and fixed.

8. Staff

There were twenty-two staff members at WOO: the Executive Director, the Secretary-General, five seconded officials (excluding the Secretary-General), and fifteen contract workers (see Appendix 1).

Executive Director

The Executive Director, *kanchô*, the head of WOO, is appointed from among well-known female citizens such as a head teacher, enterpriser or retired civil servant by the Prefectural Governor. Therefore, the post tends to belong to the ruling political party. When a reformist, Masahide Ota, became the Prefectural Governor, several women recommended a member of Okinawan Women Act Against Military Violence (OWAMV) to the Governor for the Executive Director position and he accepted the recommendation. She was a high school teacher and also a member of OWAMV when she was appointed as the Executive Director of WOO in 1996. She retired from her high school and became the first Executive Director. However, she was dismissed from WOO after waving from the Prefectural Governor election campaign car to show her support for the former Governor, Masahide Ota, in 1998. Thus the position of the Executive Director is vulnerable to political interference and made effective

use of politically by the Prefecture and government officials.⁵⁷

Secretary-General

According to the regulations of WOO, the Secretary-General, *kyokuchô*, is second in the hierarchy of WOO under the Executive Director. Nonetheless, this post is, in practice, the most powerful and privileged among all of the staff of WOO. The Secretary-General is seconded from the Okinawa Prefectural Government Office. All of the Secretary-Generals have been male. The Secretary-General is in charge of controlling all of the budgets, projects and personnel of WOO. In March 2006, the post of Secretary-General was abolished and the Executive Director assumed control of all staff and projects of WOO, because his salary was more than 10 million yen (£50,000) a year and the Prefectural Government Office wanted to cut the funds to WOO. In Chapter Six, I consider how the Secretary-General tried to resist the idea of gender equality encompassed in the mission statement of WOO (see Cockburn 1991) and how the position of Secretary-General became a symbol of masculinity, patriarchy, bureaucracy and male chauvinism for other staff members in the labour process.

Seconded officials

There were six local government officials including the Secretary-General who were seconded from the Okinawa Prefectural Government Office between 2002 and 2003. All of the seconded officials had higher positions than managers. Two of them were chiefs, *shukan*, and four of them were managers, *shuji*. Each of the two chiefs had two of the four managers positioned under them. All of the seconded officials were female, except for the Secretary-General and one of the chiefs. As I shall show in detail in Chapter Six, these individuals were seconded to WOO not because they wanted to come, but rather because the Personnel Section of the Government Office assigned them. Even if an individual requested a secondment from the Personnel Section, this would not necessarily be approved. On the contrary, a male local

⁵⁷ This political relationship between the Executive Director and the ruling party of the local government exists not only in Okinawa but also in Japan proper. For example, in Toyonaka City, Osaka Prefecture, the Executive Director was dismissed as a result of pressure from local government officials and several City Assembly members who belonged to the Liberal Democratic Party and contributed to a 'backlash' against gender equality policy (Mitsui 2006).

government official who was in his twenties was not happy with his task at WOO and asked the Personnel Section to transfer him somewhere else after he had worked for WOO for one year. As Chizuko Ueno points out, especially for some male local government officials, a secondment to a public women's organisation means 'relegation to lower position' (*sasen*) (Ueno *et al.* 1995: 21).

The seconded officials would treat contract workers to sweets when they received a summer and winter bonus at WOO. When the contract workers had to work overtime (and as I show below, they did not receive overtime payment), the seconded officials would also buy skewered chickens (*yakitori*) from a famous street vendor nearby. This is probably considered as the 'custom' of the public sector in Okinawa. Keiko Tamaki, a contract worker of Naha City Council, notes that in the 1990s several local government officials collected 3,000 yen (£15) per person and either gave this money to contract workers in the workplace, or used it to treat them to dinner (Tamaki *et al.* 2009: 34). However, Tamaki disapproved of these acts, as she saw them as instances of 'paternalism' rather than the exercise of workers' rights (*ibid.*).

Contract workers

There were fifteen contract workers at WOO between 2002 and 2003, all female. They were supposed to work for 40 hours a week with 'special skills' on one-year fixed-term contracts based on Article 3-3-3 of the Local Public Service Law. That is, like other public sector contract workers, contract workers worked full-time as non-regular workers at WOO. They could renew their contracts but no more than twice, if the authorities allowed, and hence they could work for three years at most. In order to end a contract worker's employment, WOO did not have to dismiss the contract worker; it only had to state that the contract would not be renewed. The contract workers had neither overtime allowance, nor a salary rise, nor a bonus, nor promotion. They worked from Tuesday to Sunday including national holidays since WOO was closed only on Mondays and between 29th December and 2nd January. They were entitled to twenty days of paid leave annually. They did not have a trade union at the time of my research, though in 2005 several staff members established a trade union for the first time to negotiate with the authority about non-renewal of

their contracts. However, the trade union organiser's contract was not renewed after this, and she left WOO. In addition, there was no *moai* group at WOO. *Moai* is an Okinawan traditional mutual support network. It remains as a contemporary active social network and informal safety net, which can be found in the workplace as well as among friends, kin, and neighbours all over Okinawa. Another public women's organisation in Naha City which has lifetime employment maintains *moai* to enable staff to financially support each other, such as when one staff member needs money to attend a conference on gender studies in Japan proper. The fixed-term contract affects not only individual workers' ways of life but also the relationship between workers at WOO.

Payments for contract workers at WOO are based on their grades and working days. For example, a contract worker of the Projects Section corresponds to 'Grade Three' in the Okinawa Prefectural ranking list. Consequently, she is paid 17,4400 yen (1,090 yen per hour, twenty days a month) with approximately 8,000 yen as transportation expenses per month. Excluding income tax, residence tax, and national insurance, she is paid roughly 140,000 yen (£700) per month. This amount was generally enough to allow one to survive oneself, but not to support others.

A job advertisement for contract workers at WOO states that an applicant must appreciate the mission statement of WOO, that is, the promotion of the idealisation of a society in which both men and women participate. Nevertheless, the contract workers at WOO possessed varying attitudes towards gender equality and participation; some were extremely interested in gender justice, while others were only slightly interested in it; some were not very happy with the idea of gender equality, while others were indifferent to it and still others were against gender equality. Those who were extremely interested in gender justice occasionally proclaimed themselves as feminists.⁵⁸ There was also much diversity among staff in terms of their patterns of residence, age, social status, motivations for involvement with WOO and so on. First, they came from different parts of Okinawa; from Naha City, from the southern part of the main island of Okinawa, from the middle part of the island where the US bases were concentrated, and from another island in

⁵⁸ However, as I shall show in Chapters Six and Seven, those feminists did not often use the word 'feminists' and 'feminism' at WOO. They would use the phrase 'gender perspective' in daily life.

Okinawa. The influence of the US military bases differed according to people's places of residence.⁵⁹ Second, their ages varied from being in their twenties to their sixties. Third, there were both heterosexual and homosexual contracted staff; some were married, some were divorced, others were unmarried with partners and still others were single. Fourth, all were Okinawans, with the exception of two Japanese who had married Okinawans and of myself. Fifth, five of them had master degrees, five of them undergraduate degrees, two of them graduated colleges (two-year courses), one of them quit nursing studies because of her marriage, and one of them (except myself) was doing a PhD. Sixth, there were also various reasons why the contract workers came to work at WOO. Some solely wanted a job, whatever it was; some had connections; some wanted to work for gender equality; and others wanted to get to know what issues women faced in reality. Despite these differences, most contract workers, as well as seconded officials, found themselves talking about and reformulating their own ideas about gender and sexuality, both in the labour process and after work. A feminist contract worker faced a dilemma between the ideal (gender justice) and the reality (her gendered working conditions). A contract worker who was not interested in gender issues at all came to rethink what she had done so far in her life again and again, by talking with other colleagues. A seconded official tried to persuade other colleagues to keep sticking to the 'traditional' gender roles. In the workplace of WOO, gender knowledge and analyses are indispensable. As I shall show in Chapter Six, this practice also leads workers to reconsider themselves in terms of gender, both inside and outside the workplace.

Conclusion

This chapter has delineated how WOO was established, positioned and structured, its objectives and outputs, and the various positions that constitute the organisation. It

⁵⁹ We did not hear fighter planes flying often in Naha City in contrast to the central part of the island where the troops were amassed, because all of the land which had been occupied by the American Forces in Naha City had already been returned to Okinawa Prefecture and land owners. But, since the Naha International Airport is used by both the military and civilians, we heard an ear-splitting noise a couple of times a week or so in the workplace. We would freeze until it subsided, then sigh and complain about the noise and the presence of the US military forces. Those who lived in the middle of the main island would say that they had such a noise every day and that it was possible to pretend to think that there were no military bases in Okinawa if you were in Naha City. They emphasised the fact that Okinawa was not monolithic, and experiences were quite different according to where one resided in Okinawa.

has shown that WOO was established in the name of international and national necessities by Okinawa Prefecture, but that in practice, the efforts of the anti-bases and grass-roots feminist movements in Okinawa played a crucial role in its establishment. Especially for the social movements, WOO appeared as the public sphere in which the existing meanings and conceptions of gender might change. In the remainder of this thesis, I show how such a change was conceptualised and sought at WOO as a praxis site. This is undertaken by examining how workers negotiate, deal with and embody the intangible conception of gender equality in their daily work at WOO as a result of institutionalisation of the social movements throughout the thesis.

Chapter Three

Consuming Gender Equality

Introduction

Sitting on a desk in the entrance hall of the Women's Organisation Okinawa (WOO) was an opinion box and a pile of opinion forms, which were provided for 'prefectural citizens' (*kenmin*) who wanted to comment and complain about WOO and its services. This was not an original idea of WOO's. Rather, it was the prefectural local government's idea, and, accordingly, most public sector organisations in Okinawa Prefecture had an opinion box. The opinion form stated that WOO would issue responses to all of the opinions elicited, and these would be either posted on the wall in front of the opinion box, or sent by mail to the appropriate individuals. In August 2002, an opinion was sent to WOO which stated:

Why don't you entrust all the management and control of WOO to the private sector? I often feel uncomfortable every time I meet arrogant staff at WOO. I cannot believe that you try to improve your services, because you just say, 'Please understand us', every time you receive opinions. I do not think that you have the will to offer prefectural citizens services, although the Prefecture established this building by using a large sum of tax and must have used much tax for personnel expenses. They must not have educated the local government officials that they are in the service industry. Is the Executive Director female? I hope she will educate her employees. Many people say that this WOO is typical stuff that the Prefecture has wasted our tax on. If the Prefecture entrusted it to the private sector, they would do everything good for prefectural citizens like personnel reduction, complete services, soft skills, etc. We do not need arrogant government officials. Executive Director, do not think only of your self-protection, but please also consider how you could offer services for prefectural citizens. Or is there a main office to instruct management of WOO somewhere in the Prefectural Headquarters Office? A general prefectural citizen thinks that it is your responsibility as the head of your institution to let government officials, especially the ones who engage in this kind of institution, know that they work in the service industry.

It appears that this user is sure that WOO is operating within 'a consumer society' where a consumer judges, criticises, and chooses services (Bauman 1998: 26). The user seems to be sure also that WOO is supposed to show audit accountability for 'economic efficiency and good practice' to citizens or taxpayers (Strathern 2000: 1). In this sense, s/he expects WOO to respond and react to her in terms of 'consumerist accountability' which combines consumerism with audit accountability. It may be said that her/his opinion is constituted within consumer culture, which had an intimate connection with neoliberal reforms in the public sector all over Japan in the

2000s. Yet this chapter does not claim that neoliberal reforms are globally ‘unitary’ or ‘immutable’ (Kingfisher 2002: 165). Rather, it suggests that they occur ‘always in interaction with other cultural formations and discourses’ (ibid.). This chapter is about consumer culture within WOO.⁶⁰ I draw attention to how consumer culture is fostered within WOO not only to perform accountability for citizens but also to respond to neoliberal governance in the public sector or New Public Management (NPM). In doing so, I suggest that consumer culture is not monolithic, but rather complex and equivocal. Even if something looks like a consumerist discourse or consumerist accountability, it might connote a different meaning and goal or lead to an unexpected result and effect as responses to and negotiations with modes of governance, including neoliberal governance and consumerist accountability. First, I consider how NPM was implemented in Japan in the 2000s. Second, I delineate neoliberal reforms within WOO and WOO’s responses to consumerism. By doing so, I reveal the gap between citizens’ consumerist demands and WOO’s responses to citizens. Third, I examine how accountability is linked with a gender perspective that all of the staff struggle with, negotiate, constitute and transform in the labour process at WOO. Lastly, I contend that a consumerist discourse penetrates even into a critique of consumerism and that accountability from a gender perspective offers an alternative way to examine consumer culture.

1. Consumer culture in the public sector

Although New Public Management (NPM) started in the 1980s in Japan, especially in the past ten years, NPM has become more visible, on a grander scale. That is, ‘public-sector budgets have become critical sites of neoliberal reform’ since then (Collier 2005: 377). In this discussion, I view this NPM as a mode of neoliberal governance. The user’s opinion that opened the chapter clearly resonates ‘public sector bashing’, which began on a full scale under the Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi’s Structural Reform (*kôzô kaikaku*) and continued with the successor Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, between 2001 and 2007 (Kumazawa 2007: 197). The Structural

⁶⁰ I do not intend to insist that this consumer culture of WOO is ubiquitous all over Okinawa and Japan. As Sharon Kinsella criticises ‘McVeigh (1996)’s analysis of Japanese cute’ (1997: 383), it is crucial to examine how ‘consumer culture’ is historically, geopolitically and socio-culturally produced and analysed by various actors.

Reform was famous and infamous for Japanese neoliberalism including NPM (ibid.: 196). Both the Structural Reform and those who participate in 'public sector bashing' claim that there are too many civil servants; that they do not work harder than private sector workers; that they earn too much; and that therefore it is important to reduce their numbers (ibid.: 189). However, public sector workers are proportionally fewer in Japan than in other countries. There are only 35 government officials per thousand population in Japan, while there are 58.4 in Germany; 73 in the UK; 80.6 in the US; and 96.3 in France (ibid.: 190). Moreover, as I have shown in the Introduction, nearly one third, 27.8%, of public sector workers are non-regular workers in Japan and 80% of them earn less than 2 million yen (£10,000) annually (JICHIRO 2008). In Okinawa Prefecture, 33% of public sector workers are non-regular and likewise 80% of them earn less than 2 million yen a year (Okinawa ken rôdô kumiai sôrengô kai 2009). However, since 2001, the Structural Reform has promoted privatisation of the public sector and the reduction of the cost of local public enterprises in order to improve efficiency (Kumazawa 2007: 42). The Japanese government privatised the Japan Highway Public Corporation in 2005 and the Japan Post in 2007, and introduced the Designated Management System (DMS), based on competitive market-based privatisation, into the public sector in 2003 under NPM. NPM 'characterize[s] observable changes in the style of public administration' (Power 1997: 42).

It is probably insufficient to focus on NPM as a national (and global) reform led by the Japanese government in order to examine consumer culture in the public sector. It is also important to look at how local governments and officials perform consumerist accountability towards citizens by themselves, rather than merely in terms of a national top-down control system. To do so, I view consumerist accountability as a form of technology of governance, while I regard NPM as a mode of neoliberal governance. In this section, I consider DMS in the public sector and public women's organisations as a result of NPM, and International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) as an instance of consumerist accountability of local governments.

Designated Management System

DMS is a new system to embody NPM in Japan (Tomooka 2006: 35). In 2003, the government revised the Local Autonomy Law to introduce DMS. The revised Local Autonomy Law states:

When the ordinary local public body finds it necessary for the effective attainment of the objective of establishment of public facilities, it may entrust the administration thereof to a corporation specified in a cabinet order in which said local public body has invested, or to a public body or public organization (Article 244-2-3).

This new system aims to reduce the number of civil servants and operating and labour costs in the name of NPM or under neoliberalism. DMS was newly legitimised by the Act to Reform Public Services by Introduction of Competitive Tendering in 2006. The Act clearly states that it aims to maintain and improve the quality of public services and reduce running costs by introducing competitive tendering in the public sector (Article 1). The Act presupposes that as long as the public sector introduces competitive tendering, the improvement to quality of public services and the reduction of running costs are accomplished (JICHIRO 2008). It is noteworthy that on establishing the Act, the Japanese government stressed successful examples of the introduction of competition and privatisation in the public sector in Western countries such as the US, the UK, Australia and Sweden. In this sense, this legitimisation of privatisation of the public sector is better understood as a form of global neoliberal reforms for the Japanese government. DMS came into force in April 2006. However, the national average of the introduction of DMS was not very high at 59.2% in 2007 (Sômu Shô 2007: 2). There is a huge difference in the rate of its introduction among 47 prefectures. While Aichi Prefecture is the highest with 97.1% of public sector institutions privatised, Niigata Prefecture is the lowest with only 14%. Okinawa Prefecture is the second highest at 96.8% (ibid.). Like other public institutions, WOO partly launched DMS in 2006 for the first time (the Library Section and the Letting and Accounts Section). Thus WOO came to embrace NPM as a mode of governance.

At the same time, public sector institutions respectively attempted to be valued by the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO), to show how much they had improved public services for citizens, in Japan in the late 1990s and

the early 2000s.⁶¹ Here ISO works as an audit for consumerist accountability, which is bound up with technologies of governance. In Okinawa Prefecture, Naha City Council, the capital of the Prefecture, announced that the City Council would apply for ISO 9001 in December 2001 (Ryukyu Shimpo, 3 December 2001). According to ISO, ISO 9001 'is firmly established as the globally implemented standard for providing assurance about the ability to satisfy quality requirements and to enhance customer satisfaction in supplier-customer relationships'.⁶² Naha City Council explained that it would improve public services, which were synonymous in public opinion with bad and impolite services, for citizens by introducing ISO 9001, a private management strategy (Ryukyu Shimpo, 3 December 2001). In addition, this was one of the election pledges of the Mayor of Naha City, Takeshi Onaga, who was supported by a conservative two-party coalition of the Liberal Democratic Party and New Komeito Party and was elected in 2001 for the first time.⁶³ In July 2002, Naha City Council obtained ISO 9001. This was the first ISO accomplishment among all the prefectural capitals in Japan and all the municipal cities, towns and villages in Okinawa Prefecture (Ryukyu Shimpo, 25 July 2002).⁶⁴ The City Council stressed the 'good quality' of public services, whereby every citizen's request was treated more quickly and smoothly, so that citizens could be satisfied with public services. It is crucial to be aware that this change embodied not only consumerist culture but also technologies of governance. To do so, the Council claimed that they would enact measurable goals for quality, let all of the government officials know about them, educate and train officials in terms of measurable goals, and aim to precipitate a

⁶¹ The first municipal city in Japan, which obtained ISO 9001, was Saku City, Nagano Prefecture, in 1999 in Japan.

⁶² International Organisation for Standardisation (available on-line: http://74.125.77.132/search?q=cache:298TgTfSovEJ:www.iso.org/iso/management_standards.htm+iso+9001#at, accessed 25 October 2009).

⁶³ Takeshi Onaga was elected three times and has served as the Naha Mayor for eight years. He was famous for being a conservative member who supported the US-Japan military alliance. However, he attended a rally against the construction of a new US military airport in the sea off Henoko District of Nago City on 8 November 2009, claiming that it was time to overcome political opposition between conservative and radical parties to resist the presence of the US military bases (Asahi Shimbun, 8 November 2009).

⁶⁴ In contrast to this achievement, the then chief, 51 years old, who was in charge of ISO 9001 project committed suicide after Naha City Council obtained ISO 9001 in April 2003. Since Naha City Council expanded opening hours for better public services, he had to work longer and on weekends, too. The Labour Standards Bureau in Naha City did not admit that his death had been caused by excessive working hours and loads for ISO 9001 at first, but it was approved as a work-related accident in 2006 (Ryukyu Shimpo, 16 November 2006). I heard that many people in the public sector signed a petition for compensation of a work-related accident for his death.

‘consciousness revolution’ of officials (ibid.). For Naha City Council, ISO 9001 was visible, tangible, standardised consumerist accountability for citizens. It was a month after Naha City Council obtained ISO 9001 that WOO received the opinion presented in the opening of this chapter. The possessor of the opinion wrote it within the context of this consumer culture within the public sector.

Yoko Sakurai, Executive Director of the National Council of Women’s Organisations, suggests that public women’s organisations are now under NPM, consisting of competitive free market, better services, efficiency, and accountability, all over Japan (Sakurai 2008: 2). She suggests that it is time for public women’s organisations to set out to make a ‘self-assessment’ as accountability for governments and citizens (ibid.: 10). By doing so, public women’s organisations must prove to citizens how they do ‘a good thing’ (ibid.). That is to say, in order to not only respond to but also to forestall the cited user’s opinion, public women’s organisations need to perform accountability, which comprises both ‘economic efficiency and good practice’ (Strathern 2000: 1). Thus public women’s organisations, including WOO, came to embrace consumerist accountability as technologies of governance.

2. Consumer culture within WOO

DMS was not implemented in WOO when I worked there between 2002 and 2003, since, like other public institutions in Okinawa Prefecture and Japan proper, WOO launched DMS in April 2006. Yet, like the opinion cited, consumerist discourses were found here and there within WOO even before the introduction of DMS. I suggest that neoliberal reforms came to appear as consumerism on a gradual basis at WOO rather than as a sudden formal change, as with DMS. This section centres on how consumerism arose, was interrupted, accepted, and transformed by users, staff, and WOO on a daily basis. I show how consumerist accountability ended up consuming ‘gender equality’ rather than achieving the official aims of WOO.

Let me begin with terms of address at WOO. Staff used four different terms based on respective contexts at WOO: (1) ‘general prefectural citizens’ (*ippan kenmin*), (2) ‘users’ (*riyô sha*), (3) ‘participants’ (*sanka sha*), and (4) ‘clients’ (*kuraianto*). First, the most formal expression was the term ‘general prefectural

citizens'. It was the written word and rarely used as the spoken one at WOO. In an official document such as a proposal for a new programme, the term 'general prefectural citizens' was used for referring to the subject/object (*taishô*) of a programme. It was an administratively indispensable term for public sector budgeting and project proposals.⁶⁵ Second, the term 'users' was often used at WOO in general, as in 'WOO users', to include those who hired (used) a meeting room and who used the library. The term 'users' was used also in official documents and referred in informal conversations of staff. Thus the term 'users' was formally and informally used at WOO. Third, the word 'participants' was used for those who participated in various programmes which were held at WOO, such as a lecture about military slave women in Okinawa, a workshop for domestic violence survivors, a seminar on cross-cultural marriage and divorce, and so on. Fourth, the counsellors called those who had the counselling services 'clients', though this usage was restricted to staff meetings and in internal documents, and was not practiced in front of clients. Thus, as far as I am aware, the staff at WOO did not refer to others as 'consumers' or 'customers'. It is also noteworthy that the person whose opinion was cited at the beginning of the chapter did not use the word 'consumers' in her opinion form, even while she made consumerist demands for public services. She called herself a 'prefectural citizen' and demanded better public services as a prefectural citizen. Here, I am not suggesting that WOO had nothing to do with consumerism; rather, I contend that the spirit and idea of consumer culture entered into WOO by avoiding the word 'consumer' and favouring the word 'citizen'. As Lisa Yoneyama notes (1999: 44-45), the category 'citizens' (*shimin*) which 'in the 1960s had constituted an oppositional subjectivity of autonomous and critically engaged urban and suburban dwellers, has become grossly corporatized, at least within prevailing representations of the city and its history' in Japan. In this context, the above-mentioned user was thus a 'citizen as consumer' (Sennett 2006: 157) or 'citizen-consumer' (Needham 2003; Webb 2006).

⁶⁵ The term 'prefectural citizens' is used not only as an administrative or bureaucratic term by WOO, but by the anti-bases movement, such as for demonstrations against sexual violence conducted by US military personnel ('prefectural citizens' demonstration' [*kenmin shûkai*]) in Okinawa. This is because the term can stress that *all* the prefectural citizens have participated in a protest as the collective wish of Okinawa Prefecture. In this sense, it seems that this term also uses an administrative category and term to redress an injustice.

WOO's response to a citizen's opinion

The opinion stated in the opening of the chapter was circulated among all of the staff of WOO, along with a bundle of other documents. It seemed that the administrators, including seconded local government officials, thought that the opinion was directed at staff concerned with reception. There were usually a couple of staff who were in charge of reception at WOO, whose desks were situated nearest to the reception desk. If they were busy, other staff members voluntarily helped them. Contrary to the perception of the author of the opinion, these staff were not local government officials but fixed-term contract workers in the Letting and Accounts Section. After the opinion was received, the administrators started a regular staff meeting of the Letting Accounts Section. The contract workers thought that the administrators were attempting to figure out who in reception had been described in the opinion sheet as an 'arrogant government official'. After the circulation of the opinion sheet, the administrators asked the contract workers how they carried out their duties including reception, telephone services and making cups of tea for guests. But for the contract workers it seemed that the administrators were trying to utilise consumerist accountability to justify the discontinuation of employment of the specific contract workers who were against the administrators or the ruling party of the Prefecture (which supported the presence of the US military bases).

For the contract workers who were in charge of reception, the evening shift was sometimes very hard work, since there were only two staff members: the contract worker and the administrator, on the evening shift. There were more visitors for seminars, workshops and conferences organised by citizens and groups and held by WOO in the evening than in the morning and afternoon at WOO so that people who had finished work could attend them. If WOO held a seminar, such as a women's studies seminar, in the evening, the administrators usually arranged for more staff members to deal with participants. But it was almost impossible to predict how many people would attend all the events, which were organised by citizens and groups that did not include WOO. Moreover, there were more visitors who wanted to make inquiries, to apply for new seminars and to rent a meeting room at WOO. As the contract worker had to deal with all of the reception duties, including phone calls,

she was too busy to handle multiple users at the same time. Yet those contract workers thought that the administrators did not care or did not try to assist even when the contract worker was extremely busy carrying out routine office tasks, including reception. For instance, several contract workers bitterly complained to other staff members that one of the administrators kept watching a baseball match for hours on the TV, which was situated in front of his desk (and was usually intended for checking the weather forecast and news), and did not try to help her when she was obviously busy dealing with multiple visitors and phone calls at the same time in the evening. They said that the administrator could see everything including the reception desk from his desk since his desk was in the corner of the main office. They then added that visitors could not see what the administrator was doing, since the TV screen had its back to them. The several contract workers also pointed out that the administrators asked them how to use the Internet and emails even when they were occupied with their reception work. Accordingly, it was sometimes difficult for the contract workers in reception to treat users kindly and properly. Thus the reason why they could not manage to handle reception well was that the administrators did not supply a sufficient number of staff to do so, hindering the contract workers in their work, rather than helping them. Yet it was also hard for them to explain this to the administrators. One of the contract workers in reception came to suffer from a stress ulcer after a while and decided not to renew her contract before an annual interview for renewal at the end of the year. She said that she thought that the administrators described her as an 'arrogant official' on an opinion sheet. Several contract workers tried to persuade her to renew her contract, but she did not change her mind. She said that she would not like to explain and justify to the administrators, who thought that she was an 'arrogant official', how much she dedicated herself to her reception work to protect her one-year contract. It was extremely difficult for her to justify her work without pointing out that the administrators were also responsible for reception work. If she pointed this out to the administrators, her positionality as a contract worker might become more vulnerable. Instead, she wanted to show how she was disappointed and discouraged by this misunderstanding by deciding against renewing her contract. Other contract workers came to support her intention and choice of leaving WOO in the end. Despite investigations, no one knew who had

been called an 'arrogant official' on the opinion sheet, even after this contract worker left WOO. However, some contract workers said that the administrators concluded that she must have been an 'arrogant official', because they stopped investigating this matter after she left.

The author of the opinion cited above might have thought that all of the staff were local government officials on the lifetime employment system. S/he probably did not imagine that her/his opinion would work to let a one-year fixed-term contract worker, who was not a government official, quit under the consumerist demand from a citizen. Through this situation, the administrators who were local government officials succeeded in showing how they could easily use the consumerist discourse or consumerist accountability to control the staff and WOO. In this sense, this consumerist demand from the prefectural citizen ended up reinforcing the gendered precarious labour of the public sector, rather than questioning or changing the public sector and public services. It also helped to underpin the power relationship between the administrators as employers who were government officials and the contract workers. The consumerist demand was utilised as consumerist accountability, which could be employed to control WOO not only as service supplier but also as the workplace, in terms of gendered flexible and cheap labour. In this sense, consumerist accountability paradoxically reveals that even if they complain about public services, citizens as consumers are still 'out of control of what they consume' (Rose & Black 1985: 37).

From services offered free to charges

WOO planned and held more than fifty programmes, such as a lecture about women's history, a workshop on domestic violence, and a seminar about cross-cultural marriage and divorce, in the fiscal year of 2002 (between April 2002 and March 2003). All of the programmes except 'an independent project' were funded by Okinawa Prefecture and offered free of charge. When WOO was established by the Prefecture, several local government officials who were engaged in the establishment thought that it was crucial for WOO to be financially and politically independent of the local government and local politics in the future. This idea overlaps with what femocrats, staff of public women's organisations and

scholars anticipate: 'a public women's organisation must be a subject that is independent, even if it is financially dependent on local government' (Sakurai *et al.* 1999: 22). The Governor of the Okinawa prefecture also supported this idea, since the prefecture would not be able to financially support WOO entirely. Two means of obtaining future independence were proposed by the government officials. First, the independent project, which is not funded by the Prefecture, and from which WOO can make a profit, was established to increase WOO's own independent funding. However, until March 2003, the independent project had only an annual special lecture, which was delivered by a well-known guest speaker from Japan proper in the largest hall of WOO with 480 seats. The special lecture aimed to collect entrance fees from 480 participants and to increase independent funding. Yet it was not easy to hold such a big lecture without financial support from the Prefecture. The staff had to buy several tickets using funds from their own pockets when they could not sell 480 tickets. Accordingly, the balance of the independent project has never been in surplus. The second means by which WOO intended to secure future independence was a plan to raise 100 million yen (£500,000) in subscriptions from municipalities, the private sector, and individuals all over Okinawa Prefecture. This would enable WOO to eventually become self-supporting by earning savings interest. However, the 'bubble' economy burst in the 1990s in Japan and therefore it was not realistic to ask the aforementioned groups to donate to WOO. Thus it was almost impossible to increase independent funding by collecting fees for the special lecture and receiving interest on subscriptions. In this section, I look at a new programme of the independent project, which, with the exception of the annual special lecture, established charges for programmes for the first time.

In 2002, the administrators would mention the 'principle of pay on use' (*shiyô sha futan*) when they talked about new budgeting for the fiscal year of 2003 (between April 2003 and March 2004). The 'principle of pay on use' means that citizens should pay if they use certain public services, and is a notion that became widespread in Japan at that time. There were different reasons that the administrators wanted to introduce the 'principle of pay on use' into WOO. On the one hand, one of the administrators said that the 'principle of pay on use' would be fairer for all the citizens, as not all prefectural citizens would necessarily want to use public services

at WOO, and therefore, the Prefecture would not have to waste tax. His view was seen as 'not-sensitive-to-gender' or a 'backlash' against gender equality policy by several contract workers, since it was presumed that most users of WOO were women. They thought that WOO was supposed to offer services mainly for women who were socially weaker and financially poorer than men, and therefore his view was incompatible with WOO's official aims as set out in its mission statement.

On the other hand, the chief of the Projects Section, a government official on secondment, said that the 'principle of pay on use' would be useful to raise the independent funding of WOO. Her view resonated with the original idea of the independent funding of WOO. She explained that WOO needed the notion of the 'principle of pay on use' to increase its self-funding capacity by expanding the independent project so that it would be financially and politically independent from the Prefecture in the future. She then decided to establish a new programme for the following fiscal year, an advanced assertiveness training class for participants who had attended an assertiveness training class for beginners. As I shall show in Chapter Five, assertiveness training, which was 'designed to help women overcome early indoctrination in passive behaviour through techniques to change their attitude and behaviour' (Tuttle 1986: 25), was introduced to Japan from the US in the late 1970s.

The assertiveness training class for beginners was the most popular among all of the projects at WOO in terms of the proportion of actual participants to applicants. Specifically, usually, only half the applicants were able to participate in each class. The responses to questionnaires that participants had completed indicated that they would like to undergo more advanced assertiveness training to develop their skills in assertiveness, but there was neither a free nor a charged class on offer in Okinawa. Moreover, several participants answered that they would be willing to pay a rough estimate of 20,000 yen (£100) for advanced training at WOO. The chief of the Projects Section clapped her hands in delight when she heard this and immediately ordered a contract worker to make a budget plan for a new advanced assertiveness training class as the independent project in the next year. For her, the advanced assertiveness training class was perfect as audit accountability, to show both citizens and the Prefecture how much WOO and a programme of WOO was required by citizens. It was not the case that citizens would simply like to visit WOO; they would

like to attend a programme for which they were willing to pay. In this sense, citizens are “purchasers” who can choose to “buy” services from the range of options available’ (Rose 1996a: 54). WOO and the advanced assertiveness training class were chosen by citizens not ‘through compulsion but through acts of choice’ (ibid.). After several meetings with the local government headquarters, the Prefecture approved the entire budget plans, including this first time programme of the advanced assertiveness training class. Thus 2002 was the turning point of WOO’s movement from free services to charged services.

Several contract workers, especially those who thought of WOO services in terms of a ‘gender perspective’ (*jendâ no shiten*), were not very happy with the idea of the ‘principle of pay on use’, or its implementation. They thought that public services aiming towards gender equality should be offered free of charge because if charged, attendance would be limited to only those who could afford to attend. They were also concerned that WOO might come to charge for all of the projects in the future in the name of NPM, the reduction of running costs, and the improvement of public services. If so, it would not make sense to hold programmes for gender equality as public services. For them, the ‘principle of pay on use’ was not compatible with the mission statement, which formally specified to aim to promote a gender-equal society. They also thought that the notion of the ‘principle of pay on use’ was in conflict with why and how WOO had been established in the public sector, and their own reasons for coming to work for WOO. For them, the ‘principle of pay on use’ might have excluded women who were poor and therefore this new principle was gendered. It was crucial for them to secure the public sphere as a place where women could get together within the public sector to let prefectural citizens know that gender issues were a public, social matter, which local government had the responsibility of addressing. In this sense, the introduction of charged programmes at WOO meant nothing but the ‘declining publicness of public services’ (Baldock 2003: 68) and the ‘abandonment and derogation of anything public’ (Collins 1998: 34). That is to say, for these contract workers, consumerist accountability ended up consuming gender equality, as officially stated in the mission statement and the Basic Law, rather than fulfilling it (see Foner 1994). As I shall show in the following section, such consumerist accountability was sometimes at odds with accountability

from a gender perspective.

3. Accountability from a gender perspective

Several contract workers at WOO regarded it as crucial to supply good public services geared towards promoting gender equality in accordance with the official aims set out in the mission statement and the Basic Law. I call this ‘accountability from a gender perspective’, which should be seen as a form of response to and negotiation with various modes of governance, such as neoliberal governance and consumerist accountability. As I shall show in Chapters Six and Seven, the terms ‘feminists’ and ‘feminism(s)’ were rarely used at WOO, but a ‘gender perspective’ (*jendâ no shiten*) was frequently used to analyse almost everything faced on a daily basis at WOO. A gender perspective was developed, constituted and transformed collectively and individually in the labour process. For several contract workers it was important to give priority to fragile users (mainly ‘women’ including transgender) who might have suffered from so-called ‘gender issues’, including domestic violence, sexual violence, sex work, gender roles, various issues arising from intimate relationships with US military personnel, and so on. Such an approach was deemed a gender perspective and was perceived to contrast consumerist accountability to citizens or taxpayers. In this sense, the gender perspective might be understood as connoting ‘accountability to the women’s movement’ (Eisenstein 1996: 86). However, this accountability is not an official mission. Rather, it is more private or informal. This accountability attempts to seal the gap between what social movements have dreamed of and tried to accomplish, and what they have achieved as institutionalisation. For several contract workers, the notion of gender equality which social movements dreamed of and anticipated was consumed within WOO, which itself became embedded in consumer culture. In this consumer culture, a contract worker, whose contract was gendered, had to leave WOO in response to a citizen’s opinion. Furthermore, in this consumer culture, the advanced assertiveness training class was established as a paid programme to respond to citizens’ needs. Accountability from a gender perspective is distinct from such consumerist accountability, which requires a mode of governance. It is rather close to being a ‘vanishing mediator’, indispensable for the establishment of WOO, but now missing



and invisible (Luk 1991). Quoting Frederick James (1988), Luk calls Protestantism a ‘vanishing mediator’ and claims that ‘Protestantism becomes superfluous, it can vanish as a mediator, the moment the very social reality is structured as a “Protestant universe”’ (ibid.: 184). He retrospectively wrote about ‘a unique utopian moment’ of ‘the electoral victory of the nationalist-populist coalition’ in Yugoslavia in 1989-90 as ‘not only over but even more and more *invisible*, erased from the memory like a “vanishing mediator”’ (ibid.: 3, emphasis in original). WOO must have had the same unique utopian moment of the victory at its establishment, but likewise such a moment of passion is now a ‘vanishing mediator’ at WOO. In this section, I turn to three different types of accountability from a gender perspective, which might look like consumerist accountability at first glance, but are at odds with it in terms of gender perspective as the vanishing mediator.

Lunchtime services

At the first monthly staff meeting at WOO that I attended in April 2002, the administrators suggested that staff should close the main office during lunchtime so that all of the staff could properly have a rest for lunch together. At that time, WOO opened from 9 o’clock in the morning to 9 o’clock in the evening without an official break. All of the staff took a lunch break in turn to keep the office open. As soon as the administrators raised the subject of the lunch break, one of the contract workers objected that WOO should remain open all day, including lunchtime, because a user who wanted to speak with a counsellor might only be able to visit WOO during a lunch break and she might be forced to give up if it was not open. Another contract worker also said, ‘If she has a small child at nursery, it is very likely that she would come to WOO before nursery school finishes at 2 o’clock. So I think WOO should be open, too’. After most contract workers and some seconded officials supported their objection, the administrators withdrew the idea of closing the office for lunch. Consequently, if the first group of staff members had lunch between 12:00 p.m. and 12:45 p.m., the second group would take a lunch break between 12:45 p.m. and 1:30 p.m., after the first group came back.

Providing services at lunchtime might be seen as consumerist accountability like ISO 9001, which Naha City obtained in the same year and which we can regard

as a technology of governance. But I do not intend to argue that the contract workers possessed a more consumer-centred view than the administrators. While it may have looked like consumerist accountability, it was actually based on quite a different principle altogether. I wish to underline the fact that several staff members tried to keep the office open especially for visitors who were perceived to be socially vulnerable in terms of a gender perspective and who might suffer from gender issues, which WOO dealt with and was embedded within. Thus I suggest that their view was bound up with accountability from a gender perspective rather than consumerist accountability. More precisely, the several staff members attempted to respond to and negotiate with consumerist accountability as a technology of governance.

Reuse used paper

Since, as I shall show in Chapter Six, the administrators tried to exclude contract workers from the decision-making process of WOO, it was crucial for the contract workers to gather information not only for themselves but also for better services in terms of accountability from a gender perspective. The contract workers would subtly ask seconded government officials who attended a decision-making meeting to explain what they had talked about and decided during staff meetings that the contract workers were excluded from. But such information was not sufficient sometimes.

At the same time, the administrators attempted to cut costs as much as possible at WOO. The administrators would emphasise that the staff should not waste a single piece of paper and should reuse paper that had only been used on one side. Therefore, we were all required to collect as much one-sided used paper as possible and deposit it in four boxes sorted into each size (B5, A4, B4 and A3) which were placed, available to all, beside the photocopier. This paper would then be used for internal documents such as staff meeting handouts, proofs, early drafts, monthly shift schedule, and official and informal notices. As a result, a considerable quantity of paper was constantly available for use by staff. If one wanted to photocopy something for an internal meeting, one removed new photocopying paper from the photocopier and put a piece of one-sided used paper stored in the boxes instead. The administrators thought that this recycling paper system could reduce the management

costs.

The recycling paper system brought the contract workers unexpected information. The administrators focussed more on the reduction in public expenditure than on information management, while they excluded the contract workers from the decision-making process. That is, they did not seem to care that they disclosed information that they did not tell the contract workers officially through the reuse of used paper. On one occasion, a piece of paper was circulated to all of the staff members to inform them of a new notice for users of WOO facilities such as meeting rooms and a hall, but a part of the new terms and conditions of employment of contract workers was originally printed on the other side. The new terms and conditions showed that contract workers could renew their contract no more than twice; that their salaries were divided into several ranks based on official duties; and that they could be dismissed without reasonable explanation. This was the first time WOO established the terms and conditions of employment in written form, but the contract workers were not informed about this. Consequently, this information was new to all of the contract workers and they were surprised that WOO had established such new regulations on contract workers already. Afterwards, several contract workers succeeded in obtaining the terms and conditions from a seconded government official who actively engaged in the trade union and sympathised with the contract workers. The contract workers also started to make a network with other women's organisations not only in Okinawa but also in Japan proper, and made contact with several trade unions and lawyers in the main Island of Okinawa. Thus, some contract workers tried to collect, utilise and distribute among others pertinent information from reused paper. It was a nice surprise for the contract workers to find something interesting and useful for themselves and for accountability from a gender perspective in these daily materials. Even if they did not attend a decision-making meeting, it was possible to obtain information through reused paper and the seconded officials. It was difficult to gather accurate and full information by checking paper designated for reuse, but it was possible enough to find a vital clue from this paper to negotiate with the vertical power relationship at WOO and to influence the direction taken by WOO on a daily basis. Several contract workers undoubtedly regarded their low-waged, unstable contract as a gender issue.

It was vital for them to tackle this issue not only for themselves, but also as a gender issue. In this sense, gathering information from used paper was also a step towards gender equality to bridge the gap between the ideal and reality, law and practice, as well as to perform accountability from a gender perspective. It should be noted that this accountability should be seen as a form of reaction to various modes of neoliberal governance, which was accompanied by gender equality policy and the establishment of WOO to promote gender equality in the public sector.

Deploying the same guest speakers

The amount of the budget of WOO has fallen since the year of its opening. This annual cut hit the Projects Section, which planned and managed more than fifty programmes in the fiscal year of 2002. For instance, a programme on gender studies for school teachers was abolished since it was the most unpopular among all of the programmes at WOO in March 2002. If participants were insufficient in number, a programme might lose its funding and be abolished. In this sense, a gender perspective was not important in judging which programme should be cut. This was not only a problem for WOO, but also for other public women's organisations in Okinawa Prefecture at that time. Reducing running costs in the public sector was deemed as consumerist accountability, and gender equality policy and public women's organisations were not exempt from this.

Therefore, it was crucial for the staff who were in charge of these projects to make an effort to keep costs down and to invite good guest speakers. It was common to invite a guest speaker from Japan proper and to ask her/him to give a talk at several different institutions in Okinawa Prefecture. By inviting the guest speaker to give a talk at more than one organisation, the cost of the speaker's return airfare (about 80,000 yen, £400) and formal lecture fee (100,000 yen, £500) could be distributed among organisations. The staff of different public institutions established a network to exchange information with one another for a programme. When WOO invited Yasushi Murai (a pseudonym), who had published numerous books on fathering and child care, from Japan proper, a staff member of a municipal women's organisation asked me about his schedule and arranged another lecture at her women's organisation. She suggested that he change the title and content of his

lecture for the benefit of participants who might come to both lectures. He gave a lecture at WOO on a Sunday afternoon, and another on the Monday evening at the municipal women's organisation. I heard that this municipal women's organisation paid him 'a little bit' for his lecture. Through exchanging information, contract workers or non-regular workers who worked or had worked for public women's organisations and local governments reinforced and developed their informal network. This network was an indispensable strategy for establishing a programme for these workers. As I noted in the Introduction, this network was also crucial in enabling people to search for employment opportunities with other public women's organisations, and in allowing staff of other women's organisations to search for new staff.

Likewise, when Sachiko Shimono (a pseudonym), one of the most famous and critical feminist scholars in Japan, gave a five-day intensive lecture course on gender studies and postcolonial studies at a university in the mainland of Okinawa, WOO staff directly asked her to give another talk on 'The Future of Women's Organisations' at WOO during her stay. WOO did not have to pay for any of the lecturer's transportation fees. This talk was carefully planned and prepared by several staff members of WOO and other public women's organisations in Okinawa, through several informal meetings after work. It was intended as part of a plan to establish a symposium to rethink public women's organisations in Okinawa. However, the administrators did not approve this plan. They suggested that it would be better if the talk was delivered only to staff of public women's organisations and local government officials who were engaged in gender equality policy in local government offices in Okinawa Prefecture. Several contract workers thought that this was because the administrators were scared of what Professor Shimono would say about WOO and the Prefecture, and of what the Prefecture would think of her and her talk, since an election of the Prefectural Governor was planned to be held a month after her talk. The staff tried to use the ensuing talk to emphasise the importance of WOO to the administrators and seconded local government officials.

The lecturer, Professor Shimono, asked all of the prospective participants to read two interview essays about public women's organisations in advance of her talk. The WOO staff also asked the participants to write down a couple of points that they

would like to discuss in advance. These were then passed to Professor Shimono.

Diverse discussion points were raised, including:

1. A women's organisation is supposed to solve women's issues, but now it ends up letting meeting rooms. How can we tackle this status quo?;
2. There are WOO and other prefectural and municipal women's organisations in Okinawa. How can we differentiate WOO from them? We want WOO to do what only WOO can do;
3. How can we develop the specialism of WOO and WOO staff?;
4. There are 500 supporters at WOO, but only fifty of them pay membership fees, since there is no merit for supporters. We have to think about how we can embrace them and those who were engaged in the establishment of WOO but are leaving WOO;⁶⁶
5. A public women's organisation is supposed to be for all the women, but in the case of Okinawa it seems that it is a place to get together only for those who are ahead of the times. I heard that it was hard for many people to visit WOO. Should we take those people into consideration?;
6. We have volunteer nursery workers to look after participants' children during programmes of WOO. Can we establish a not-for-profit organisation for them so that we could offer better services and nursery workers would be able to get paid?;⁶⁷
7. We contract workers can work only for three years. This must be because local government thinks that a public women's organisation deals with 'issues of women and children' after all. How can we make local governments understand that a public women's organisation requires permanent staff who have expertise in gender issues?;
8. While a public women's organisation keeps female staff who have expertise, they end up working on fixed-term, cheap, flexible contracts. Aren't these working conditions discrimination against women and exploitation of women's labour?;⁶⁸
9. How can we reassess the Basic Law now?;
10. The administrators tend to obey the decisions of the local government office. How can we insist that a public women's organisation should be independent from local governments and local politics in Okinawa?

What is important here is that the staff who planned this talk and the participants who raised the above discussion points attempted not only to problematise their working conditions and the politics of WOO, which were controlled by several administrators, but also to question the relation between frontline practitioners and users, and between practitioners and society as a whole. This attempt overlaps with 'the production of value' in the labour process of female workers in hospitals and other health institutions in France, that Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt draw attention to (1994: 12). Quoting Kergoat (1991), they claim that 'the nurses have not only posed the problem of their work conditions but at the same time brought into debate the quality of their labor, both in relation to the patient

⁶⁶ This issue was raised by one of the participants of the assertiveness training class. I will discuss this in Chapter Five.

⁶⁷ Although WOO aims to promote women's financial independence in order to create a gender equal society, it has re/produced not only gendered low-waged and casual employment but also unpaid work, which WOO is supposed to be problematising.

⁶⁸ I will discuss this issue in Chapter Six.

(addressing the needs of a human being confronted with sickness and death) and in relation to society (performing the technological practices of modern medicine)’ (ibid.: 13). In the context of WOO, the participants of this talk brought into debate the quality of their labour, both in relation to citizens as users and in relation to a society that WOO was officially supposed to question. Those who had planned and prepared the talk attempted accountability from a gender perspective.

Lastly, and more importantly in the context of this section, it should be noted that this talk was actualised because it was planned not as a fiscal programme, which was supposed to make a proper budget plan and be approved by the Prefecture the previous fiscal year, but as a sudden, unexpected and inexpensive programme. It would not have been so easy to have the talk approved by the administrators if it had been planned in the previous year. Professor Shimono had given a lecture on nursing and gender at WOO in 2001, and more participants attended than seats were available in the lecture theatre. As a result, it was not difficult to persuade the administrators to approve a draft for the talk. Moreover, in terms of the tight budget, it was possible to carry out an unscheduled programme and relatively inexpensive to invite a well-known lecturer from Tokyo. In this sense, the talk was arranged in such a way as to maximise efficiency, and was thus in keeping with the goals of NPM. Furthermore, the contract workers, who planned the talk, told me that the administrators paid little attention to the content of the talk entitled ‘The Future of Women’s Organisations’ when they approved the draft. However, after the talk’s presenter was chosen, the contract workers discussed how the administrators must have become worried. The contract workers talked about how the administrators had learned that Professor Shimono was critical of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) (the ruling party in Okinawa Prefecture that was engaged in a conservative backlash against gender equality policy), and they feared what she would say about WOO. They might have regretted approving the draft. But since it was too late to cancel her talk, they made this talk a smaller, closed event. Although this change was not what the contract workers had originally expected, the talk itself was still an achievement against the politics of NPM and LDP in terms of accountability from a gender perspective. Thus this talk was realised under consumerist accountability because it was an unscheduled and efficient programme, while it was planned and prepared

under accountability from a gender perspective. Moreover, the realisation of this talk made it possible to reconsider, destabilise and subvert the meaning and implications of consumerist accountability, which were deeply bound up with a technology of governance, by paying attention to accountability from a gender perspective.

Conclusion: Beyond a consumerist critique

In the autumn of 2008, like other public institutions, WOO carried out the second competitive tendering of its projects, as competitive tendering was supposed to be undertaken every three years. A private company, which, since 2006, was already entrusted with running the Library Section and the Letting and Accounts Section and WOOF (the management body of WOO), established a new management body and took over all of the projects of WOO, including the Projects Section and the Counselling Section. This new organisation claimed that it would dismiss nine contract workers from the Counselling Section and the Projects Section, which would be newly entrusted, at the end of March 2009, to employ new staff members in April 2009. In response, the contract workers immediately joined a trade union and undertook collective bargaining with the administrators. As a result, the administrators decided to rehire the contract workers who were marked for dismissal, as new staff members. Their monthly working days were, however, reduced as the new management body was required to minimise the running costs.

A struggle such as this on the part of contract workers may often be observed in the public sector in Japan in response to moves by new management bodies to reduce running costs by 20 or 30% under DMS (Naikakufu danjo kyôdô sankaku kyoku 2008a). Competitive tendering in the public sector has made it possible for an employer to reduce wages, or fire existing workers and hire new workers without wage negotiations (Takenobu 2009: 133). This has led to the growth of an unstable, gendered 'working poor produced by governments' (*kansei wâkingu pua*) in the public sector all over Japan (Asahi Shimbun, 19 September 2007; Kansei wâkingu pua kenkyûkai 2010; Mainich Shimbun, 9 September 2008). At the same time, there is a strong concern about lack of security and quality of public services among mass media, scholars, citizens, and staff themselves. Accordingly, JICHIRO, the All-Japan Prefectural and Municipal Workers Union, has noted that DMS led to

unstable employment and the degradation of public services, since the reduction of running costs is directly linked to the reduction of labour costs (JICHIRO 2008). In addition to JICHIRO, other authors highlight this link between precarious labour and the degradation of public services (e.g. Kashida 2008; Takenobu 2009). For instance, a librarian explains that the local government hires new contract workers and fires the predecessors every three years, and therefore public services worsen in Chiba Prefecture (Takenobu 2009: 124).

I do not intend to either deny or overlook criticisms of DMS. Rather, I want to suggest that arguments for and against DMS sometimes appear congruent. Both are inseparable from consumerist accountability for citizens by referring to better or worse public services rather than problematising consumerist discourses themselves. Such a tendency can be found in labour movements, newspapers, academia, and so on. These arguments neglect a fundamental principle, that ‘the public sector is supposed to offer public services, even if they cannot make a profit from services’ (Tamaki *et al.* 2009: 41). Likewise, ‘public women’s organisations take charge of projects with the public good, which cannot make a profit from their projects’ (Ueno & Takenaka 2002: 96). In the light of this, I have shown that criticism of DMS might have overlooked how the contract workers struggled and negotiated with consumerist accountability, and sought to perform alternative accountability, which was not appropriated by consumerism on a daily basis. To examine DMS or neoliberal reforms, it is crucial that we ‘explore the changing sites and forms of refusal, resistance and accommodation: to see why neo-liberalism still fails to rule the world’ ‘rather than celebrate or bemoan the “global roll out” of neo-liberalism’ (Clarke 2004: 30, 44).

What several contract workers tried to do through accountability from a gender perspective was to recast the gendered and consumed public sphere. They wanted to keep the WOO office open during lunchtime especially for women who might be busy looking after their children. They did not want to impose a charge for any programmes at WOO, because it was absolutely vital for them to ensure that the programmes were accessible to all, especially those who might not be able to afford to pay for attendance. They tried to gather as much information as possible, even from used paper, so as to develop the knowledge to tackle any gender issues they

faced within WOO. They attempted to re-conceptualise WOO within the public domain, in an effort to make WOO better for citizens; not as consumers but as those who also tackled gender issues. They strove to secure WOO as a practical arena, where gender issues would be treated as social matters which were officially tackled by local governments in terms of gender perspective as the vanishing mediator. In this chapter, it has not been my argument that accountability from a gender perspective is capable of overcoming consumerist accountability. Rather, I want to suggest that accountability from a gender perspective might offer an opportunity to rethink NPM and consumerist accountability as different modes of governance at WOO where various modes of governance were internalised as a result of the realisation of the social movement. Moreover, in this chapter, I have tried to show how accountability from a gender perspective as responses to and negotiations with modes of governance made it possible to examine and problematise the process of consuming gender equality in a consumer society where ‘one needs to be consumer first, before one can think of becoming anything in particular’ (Bauman 1998: 26).

Chapter Four

Enumerating Gender Equality

Introduction

The Women's Organisation Okinawa (WOO) was filled with numbers of people and things, including visitors, participants of programmes, clients of counselling, users of the library and meeting rooms, books for lending, and so on. Every project was represented in numbers. Numbers had several meanings. For WOO as part of the public sector, numbers meant 'accountability' for the expenditure of every public cent (Power 1997; Strathern 2005). For seconded government officials, numbers were the most fundamental, essential, and tangible data for budgeting for the coming financial year. For frontline practitioners who worked on one-year contracts, numbers represented one's working ability, which played an important role in whether or not one would be offered a new contract. This chapter explores the politics of numbers: what they enumerated, by whom they were needed, to what uses they were put, how they counted, the meaning of quantification, and what happened as a result.

Nowadays, we live in 'the avalanche of numbers' (Hacking 1986: 222). Ian Hacking has critically discussed the relation between numbers and the nation state, saying that '[n]o public decision, no risk analysis, no environmental impact, no military strategy can be conducted without decision theory couched in terms of probability' (Hacking 1990: 4). In the context of gender equality policy, numbers concerning domestic violence, divorce, marriage, children, non-regular workers, single mothers, etc. are also produced, quoted, used, cross-referenced, and reprinted again and again. Nikolas Rose, for example, notes that '[t]he divorce rate becomes a sign of the state of private morality and family life' (Rose 1991: 674). Thus numbers are significant not only for 'flatten[ing] idiosyncrasies and creat[ing] boundaries around these homogeneous bodies' in colonisation and bureaucracy (Appadurai 1993: 333) but also for '[d]emocratic power' which 'requires citizens who *calculate about power*, and numeracy and a numerized space of public discourse are essential for making up self-controlling democratic citizens' (Rose: 1991: 675, emphasis in original).

It is also common for politicians, researchers, practitioners, and government officials to use, refer to, or quote numbers as reference and rhetoric (Appadurai 1993: 320; Hacking 1990; Rose 1991). However, numbers matter in various contexts. For instance, Uma Narayan criticises the stress that Western feminists have put on numbers in the third world through ‘culture as explanations’ (Narayan 1997). She claims that Western feminists focus on the number of *sati* and dowry-murders and explain these deaths in terms of ‘culture’ as ‘the death of culture’, while they do not try to look at the number of domestic violence murders in the United States in terms of ‘culture’ (Narayan 1997: 83-117). Yasushi Uchiyamada also points out that researchers have idealised Kerala as ‘the Kerala miracle’ by referring the literacy rate in Kerala without question (Uchiyamada 2003: 453). The high literacy rate in Kerala ends up being linked with the number of participants of the literacy programmes rather than with the ‘reality’ (ibid.: 470). Moreover, Barbara Cruikshank demonstrates that ‘[t]he uniformity of numbers does not represent the realities of poor women’s lives or their solidarity’, by problematising ‘black welfare queens’ in the United States (Cruikshank 1999: 108). That is, ‘[n]umbers do not merely inscribe a pre-existing reality. They constitute it’ (Rose 1991: 676). Numbers have made up people (Hacking 1986). This ‘avalanche of numbers’ should be seen as a mode of neoliberal governance (ibid.: 222).

This chapter looks at practices of enumerating and categorising the results of public services, which were geared towards ‘gender equality’ at WOO under neoliberal governance. In other words, I draw attention to how WOO enumerated its work of accomplishing gender equality, which was set out in its mission statement and the national policy in Japan. In doing so, following Rose, I ask “not ‘why?’ but ‘how?’” to ‘free ourselves from a certain principle of causality, a certain search for determinants and explanations in history’ (1991: 682). First, I explore how numbers were produced performatively and required both in the context of bureaucracy and in the name of audit accountability (Strathern 2000). Second, I scrutinise how categorisation was performed as a series of enumeration exercises in counselling services. Lastly, I show how frontline practitioners negotiated enumeration and categorisation in this process, and how they found alternative meanings in their practices of enumeration and categorisation as responses to and negotiations with a

mode of neoliberal governance, a technology of enumeration.

1. Passion for counting and increasing numbers

The annual report for all of the projects of WOO between April 2002 and March 2003 indicated various numbers as indicators of the projects' achievement. Such indicators included the number of participants of approximately 50 programmes established by WOO, the number of lending books, the number of people who registered and borrowed books at the library, the number of visitors at WOO who participated in an event conducted at WOO, the number of counselling cases, and so on. The annual report was intended to report on all of the projects held by and at WOO. Therefore, various kinds of numbers were recorded by each member of staff as a frontline practitioner – including project staff, counselling staff, and the librarian – and kept by each Section within WOO. However, there was no detailed explanation for these numbers in the annual report. There was only a long list of numbers with minimal descriptions such as dates, places, names of lecturers, and names of categories. In the following section, I look at how and by whom numbers were generated, dealt with, described, and reported, by focussing on the Projects Section which was required to collect the most numbers of any section at WOO.

The chief of the Letting and Accounts Section, one of the seconded government officials, took responsibility for preparing the annual report. Each section submitted numerical data to him for the annual report. He did not decide which numbers would be included in the annual report; he followed a practice that had been in operation since the establishment of WOO. Every year the same items were updated by the chief of the Letting and Accounts Section. Since he had to stay in the office all the day to carry out his desk job, he usually could not attend any projects at WOO. As a result, he obtained all of the information about WOO projects through monthly staff meetings, final reports, and numerical data. To prepare a new annual report, he simply updated each item by placing the appropriate numbers for the year in each pre-existing table. The annual report showed numbers corresponding to projects in the previous years and the present year. Hence readers could compare the latest numbers with the previous ones. There were no explanatory comments, notes or feedback from participants for each number, merely names, places, titles,

and dates of programmes and names of lecturers. Various numbers were tabulated and reported.

Where are numbers generated?

All of the four sections of WOO – the Letting and Accounts Section, the Library Section, the Counselling Section, and the Projects Section – counted up their projects. The Letting and Accounts Section counted how many people participated in events which were held at eighteen facilities available for rent at WOO, such as meeting rooms, a large hall, Japanese rooms, a studio, and so forth. People who rented these facilities were also counted and classified by where they came from in Okinawa Prefecture. The Section also counted how often these facilities were let. For instance, the operating ratio of the large hall was more than a hundred percent in 1997 and about fifty percent in 2002. Moreover, the Section counted how many days these facilities were let annually. For instance, a large hall was let for 134 days of the 307 days which it could be let.

The Library Section counted how many people visited the library monthly, how many people used the library, how many people registered (made a library card), how many books, magazines, journals, archives and visual materials the library had, how many books people borrowed, and how many days the library opened each month. The Counselling Section counted how many counselling cases they had and classified them into various categories such as the kind of counselling services offered (telephone, legal, mental and face-to-face); the subject of clients' conversations during counselling, how counsellors dealt with these clients' problems, and so on. I will look at counselling services in more detail in a later section of the chapter.

The Projects Section counted all of the participants of programmes which WOO planned and managed, such as seminars and lectures on women's studies, men's studies, gender studies, gender equality, and cross-cultural marriage and divorce; assertiveness training courses; a festival; and symposia on domestic violence. There were six staff members including both contract workers and seconded government officials in the Projects Section. Each of them was in charge of some of those projects. Each staff member planned, held, and reported each project.

Almost every week, the Projects Section held a meeting to discuss matters pertaining to its projects, such as what kind of topics they should cover, who would be suitable as a lecturer for a specific topic and who would be the intended participants. Each programme had to be approved by the administrators such as the Secretary-General and the Executive Director. After the approval, each staff member publicly announced a project and then began to count expected participants. As such, all of the staff members practically generated numbers through each programme.

For WOO and the Prefecture, seminars, lectures, courses or symposia were the most visible and tangible among all of the projects. For instance, if a lecture was filled to capacity, WOO and the Prefecture could show citizens how WOO was popular and meaningful for them. In this sense, the Projects Section was expected to shoulder the audit accountability of WOO to citizens by showing as many participants as possible. In the following section, I focus on how numbers were produced and propagated through the daily work of the Projects Section.

Before a project: How are people counted?

As I have shown in Chapter Two, all of the projects followed the appropriate administrative procedures in order to be given formal, official approval, and to be allocated funding. After completing all of the procedures for establishing a programme and obtaining official approval, each member of staff began public relations exercises by announcing each project to citizens through newspapers, radio stations, television channels, local government's publicity, and handmade leaflets that were circulated to local banks, supermarkets, libraries, community centres, municipal local governments, and so on. Future participants were usually supposed to book a place in advance by telephone, fax, post, or in person. After publicity, a list for future participants was made up to record one's name, home address, telephone no., age, sex, (occasionally reason to attend), and particular matters, such as necessity of child care.

Almost every day the Secretary-General and the chief of the Projects Section asked each staff member how many participants were supposed to participate in each programme. Both the Secretary-General and the chief of the Projects Section were seconded from the Prefectural Government Office and in charge of budgeting, which

required negotiation with the Prefectural Government Office. For instance, when asked how many participants were supposed to participate in a women's studies seminar to be held in a couple of weeks' time, a staff member answered, 'We have now twenty-three participants'. The chief then asked her, 'How many does it have a seating capacity for?' 'Forty-five in total', she replied. The chief's response was: 'That's not enough. We need more. I think we can announce it at another seminar next week'. The chief encouraged the staff member to increase the number of participants for the seminar. The chief then reported the number of participants to the Secretary-General. This was a daily routine for each project. What the chief and Secretary-General ordered was quite simple: 'Count and increase the number of participants!' The more numbers counted, the happier they were.

There were several kinds of meaning ascribed to counting and increasing numbers. First, for seconded government officials who were in charge of budgeting, numbers were visible and tangible evaluation data for the next budgeting. They used numbers for budgeting to show the Prefectural Government Office how each project was important and necessary for citizens. The Prefectural Government Office controlled and managed WOO structurally and financially. WOO submitted all of the plans for the following year to the Prefectural Government Office and WOO could carry out a plan only if the Prefectural Government Office approved. Seconded government officials needed numbers as clear and visible proof to persuade the officials of the Prefectural Government Office to keep holding all the projects at WOO. It was essential for them to maintain as many projects as possible for the coming fiscal year. For the process of budgeting, numbers were more intelligible and tangible than analysing and evaluating how much gender equality, which WOO aimed to promote, was accomplished as a result of a specific seminar. Therefore, seconded government officials required as many numbers as possible and encouraged practitioners to attract as many participants as possible.

Second, seconded officials demanded numbers not only for budgeting but also for audit accountability to show citizens or taxpayers how WOO managed its projects properly for its mission statement. In this sense, numbers were 'performance indicators' in the name of accountability (Strathern 2005: 465). Additionally, as described in Chapter Three, public women's organisations in Japan are now required

to carry out self-assessment or audit by numbers for accountability towards citizens under New Public Management (NPM) (Sakurai 2008: 1-12).⁶⁹ Therefore, the more numbers WOO had, the more accountability WOO could show citizens or taxpayers. That is, numbers designated the reason for being of WOO as the public sector where the Prefecture invested public tax income and demonstrated how much WOO pursued the goals of its mission statement. In this sense, if many people attend a programme at WOO, it is supposed that 'a gender equal society' can be realised through it (conversely, if there are only few participants in a programme, this means that 'a gender equal society' cannot be realised, regardless of its content.)

Third, for contract workers as practitioners, numbers indicated their ability to work. Since both the Prefecture and WOO needed more numbers for audit accountability, each practitioner was expected to count participants and to make it possible to have as many participants as possible. In other words, the administrators who were in charge of the renewal of contract workers' contracts saw the number of participants as a means of evaluating each staff member's performance. Therefore, their direct boss, the chief of the Projects Section, secretly encouraged the contract workers to secure as many participants as possible so that the administrators could not refuse to renew the contracts of the contract workers in the Projects Sections. In order to protect her contract workers, she did not want to give the administrators a plausible and legitimate reason not to renew contracts. She tried to make use of numbers as a brake on unfair dismissal of the contract workers, especially feminist contract workers who were sometimes against the administrators or the Prefecture that tended to support the presence of the US military bases in Okinawa. The chief of the Projects Section needed as high numbers as possible for both budgeting and protecting the frontline practitioners of the Projects Section from dismissal.

As a result, for the practitioners themselves, numbers were crucial to show their working ability to have their one-year contract renewed. However, in fact, they

⁶⁹ Yoko Sakurai proposes that public women's organisations need to establish a new system of both self-assessment and assessment conducted by a third party (Sakurai 2008). She asserts that it is time for public women's organisations to show how much they have achieved their mission statements by comparing each numerated assessment with quantitative goals annually such as the number of participants and cooperative projects (ibid.: 13-23). At the same time, she notes that it is crucial to enumerate participants' satisfaction rather than counting participants. But it is noteworthy that she is still stuck on numbers as 'accountability' in spite of her critique of the idea that the more participants there are, the better.

did not think that they should collect as many participants as possible, because it might not be necessarily good for certain programmes, such as assertiveness training and a self-help workshop for domestic violence survivors, where it was important to maintain strict confidentiality. They also thought that a good programme, which could contribute to the promotion of gender equality, might not necessarily attract many participants. Despite their thinking on such matters, they had to pay attention to increasing numbers. Furthermore, the relationships between the practitioners (contract workers) and participants were occasionally face-to-face and several participants told the practitioners what kind of programmes they would like to participate in. The administrators (as employers of the practitioners), desired the practitioners to increase the number of participants, while the participants required them to plan and hold programmes based on their own needs. Consequently, the contract workers had to struggle between numbers of participants for budgeting and contents of projects for participants. This kind of struggle between practitioners and administrators can be seen in other literatures. For instance, Nancy Foner points out that care-giving workers face a dilemma between ‘high expectations that aides provide compassionate, supportive care’ and ‘significant structural forces that often work against this kind of care’ at a nursing home in New York (Foner 1994: 1). Robert Castel also argues that such ‘conflict between administrators and practitioners is itself an old tradition of the mental health and social work professions’ (Castel 1991: 291). No matter what staff members of WOO thought about numeration, they ended up counting and making efforts to increase the number of participants. Furthermore, what was lacking in enumeration was a gender perspective, which feminist contract workers tried to introduce into WOO projects, as I have shown in Chapter Three and will show in Chapters Six and Seven. However, a gender perspective was not tangible for the administrators and the Prefectural Government Office, since it was not be amenable to being enumerated and evaluated by numbers. The administrators preferred numbers to an abstract and intangible gender perspective. As a result, the passion for counting numbers coexisted with the passion for increasing numbers. Numbers were desired for the sake of a legitimate reason of the next year’s budgeting, administrative accountability of WOO and putting the brakes on dismissal of contract workers, and every staff member counted the

numbers practically in their daily work.

During and after a project: How are numbers propagated?

If WOO held a project such as a programme on women's studies, all of the staff of the Projects Section were brought out to help with it on that day. The staff member who was in charge of it deployed every staff member in every position such as reception, child care, chauffeuring a lecturer, setting up a room, etc. Usually two staff members were in charge of reception and were required to check each arriving participant's name, address and telephone no. against a list of expected participants compiled prior to the day. If a participant attended without booking, s/he was supposed to fill in a form so that her personal information could be recorded. Information leaflets and questionnaires were handed out to each participant before a project and the latter was collected afterwards. The questionnaire asked for information including sex ('circle either male or female'); residential place ('circle or write a name of city, town, or village'); how they came to know about this project ('circle newspapers, radio, TV, friends, leaflets or others'); impression (free writing style); any requests of WOO (free writing style); and any requests for future projects at WOO (free writing style).

After each project, each staff member produced a full list of participants, which included participants who attended and those who signed up to attend but did not turn up to the project. Each staff member also had to prepare a final report of each project. This report consisted of all of the official documents used for each project including official drafts (*kiansho*) and administrative documents for final approval (*sikkô ukagai*); the result of all questionnaires; a summary of the project, including the final number of participants (based on a full list of participants) and the prescribed number; and an assessment of the pros and cons of the project by each staff member who was in charge of it. The final report was circulated to all of the staff members and was filed into each section after being stamped with the seals of approval of all of the staff members.

As the number of participants was reported in an annual report and to the Prefectural Government Office, the staff were required to make the final number of participants as large as possible. Under this pressure, the contract workers made a

new list of participants by combining the list of participants who had booked to attend prior to the project with the list of participants who attended on the day without having booked in advance. Therefore the list subsumed both participants who in reality had attended a project and those who had booked but had not come on the day. As such, each staff member continued counting ‘participants’ even after every project had taken place so that they could add more participants. The more participants they had, the better. As Joan Copjec writes, ‘[t]o any number appearing at the end of the series it is always possible to add one more’, because ‘first, the performative operation of subsumption which appears to close the set is made visible as an *effect* of this closure and, second, numbers or signifiers can no longer be thought to subsume the entire universe of objects’ (Copjec 1993: 175). As a result, there was no ‘real’ programme which subsumed all of the participants on all of the lists that consisted of people who had participated with booking, had booked but could not attend, and had participated without booking. Thus we can see how the ‘attribute that distinguishes the objects of a numbered set does not pre-exist, but subsists in the very act of numeration’ (ibid.: 174). This politics of enumeration can be found more clearly and seriously in the context of the categorisation exercises of clients who were enumerated by counsellors. In the following section I turn to the intertwined exercises of classification and enumeration in the Counselling Section.

2. Enumeration and categorisation

Among the four sections of WOO, the Counselling Section had the most categories into which clients and counselling cases could be classified. After a brief look at a routine work of the Counselling Section, I elucidate how the counselling services were enumerated through categorisation.

Counselling Section

The leaflet of the Counselling Section which was circulated within the Prefecture stated: ‘Please talk about your various worries and hesitations that women come across so that you can sort out your feelings and take steps forward. We also have special counselling by a lawyer and a medical doctor. Please do not worry by yourself and feel free to visit us. Counselling is free of charge. We keep your secrets

in strict confidence'. The Counselling Section aimed to resolve women's issues for women through feminist counselling.

At the orientation of WOO, the counsellor explained to the new staff members what counselling was, what feminist counselling meant, what kind of counselling counsellors offered, and how counsellors dealt with these cases. According to her explanation, feminist counselling has five core objectives: (1) counsellors deal with women's worries by understanding that women's worries are constructed within our culture and social institutions, and women are taken care of and treated 'as women'; (2) counsellors should accept women's feelings and worries as they are rather than understanding women and judging their way of living through women's particular psychology or a women's development model; (3) counsellors should not assist women to conform to the socially designated role and models of femininity but instead make an effort to lead women towards self-realisation based on their own hopes and abilities which they have not noticed; (4) counsellors should assist women to free themselves from fixed roles consciousness in family and society, make decisions on their own, and build life plans by themselves; (5) counsellors explore how women can play an active role in family, community, and society without feeling isolated.

The counselling services comprised (1) general counselling (the ways of life of women, characters of women, relations between couples, children and parents, human relations, and so on); (2) international counselling for women (various problems caused by marriages with US military personnel, former US military personnel, and civilian employees in the US military forces, having children with them, and divorces from them); (3) legal counselling (a female lawyer deals with legal issues); and (4) mental health counselling (a female psychiatrist deals with mental distress). Both general and international counselling was offered through telephone and face-to-face interviewing at WOO. Legal counselling and mental health counselling were only offered through a face-to-face meeting. Clients were required to book a place in advance for the face-to-face legal and mental health counselling. General and international counselling through telephone could be provided by four WOO counsellors between 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. except on Sundays and Mondays and New Year holidays (between the 29th of December and

the 3rd of January). Legal counselling was offered between 2:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. every Friday and mental health counselling between 2:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. every third Thursday. The Counselling Section had a direct phone number for their clients so that they did not have to ring other sections of WOO.

The Counselling Section had four female counsellors who worked on one-year fixed-term contracts. One of them was responsible for the Counselling Section as the primary and special counsellor, and has been involved in counselling especially for issues caused by marriages with US military personnel and divorces from them for a couple of decades. Another counsellor was in charge of international counselling both in Japanese and English. Two of them dealt with matters relating to cross-cultural marriages and divorces between Okinawan men and Asian women too. One of the remainder of counsellors was a specialist in psychology and in charge of mental health counselling. The last counsellor was in charge of general counselling.

The four counsellors referred to people who came to the Counselling Section as 'clients', and dealt with each client's case by following the counselling flow chart made and modified by counsellors who had worked there since the establishment of WOO. According to the flow chart, clients came to the Counselling Section through three different approaches: (1) being introduced by other organisations, (2) visiting WOO directly, or (3) telephoning themselves. These clients were divided into the above-mentioned four counselling methods.

Both general and international counsellors gave clients advice, listened to them, or gave them information at the first step. If a client required more counselling services, the counsellor offered her legal or mental health counselling at WOO, negotiated with other institutions such as the Consulate General of the United States, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the US military, etc, or introduced her to other official or non-governmental organisations which dealt with gender issues and counselling in Okinawa.⁷⁰ It was difficult to foresee how long it would take to resolve one's issues. This sometimes took a very long time (such as acquiring

⁷⁰ Some of the organisations that clients were introduced to were the Okinawa Prefectural Women's Counselling Centre, the Prefectural Police Station, the Okinawa Prefectural Central Health Centre, the Okinawa Prefectural Children Counselling Centre, the Prefectural Consumer Service Centre, the Office of Justice in Okinawa Prefecture, the Okinawa Labour Conditions Counselling Centre, the Counselling Office of the Okinawa Lawyers' Association, the Women's Job Supporting Centre, the Counselling Office of the US military personnel, and the Rape Emergency Intervention Counselling Centre (REICO).

Japanese nationality for a child of no nationality whose father used to be US military personnel).

Categories and classification

Once the counsellors accepted each case, they started to categorise and count it. They were required to submit all of the numerical data to the Prefectural Government Office and the administrators of WOO. There were various categories to classify and enumerate counselling cases or clients at the Counselling Section. Counselling exercises were enumerated through categorisation. All of the cases were roughly divided into four main categories: (1) new or continuing; (2) how the counsellor accepted each case (telephone, direct visiting, special counselling such as legal or mental health, or others); (3) how the counsellor dealt with and solved each case (listening and giving advice, giving information, introducing other organisations, investigating and negotiating with other organisations and others, making an official document for a client, or special counselling services) and (4) what issue a client wanted to talk about or solve the most. This fourth category was divided into eleven categories, and these were subdivided into 81 categories in total. The eleven categories consisted of (1) way of life; (2) mind; (3) body; (4) issues in the workplace; (5) relations of married couples; (6) parents, children and household; (7) human relations; (8) sexuality and sexual abuse; (9) life; (10) international problems; and (11) others.⁷¹

Each case was sorted through these categories and tabulated monthly for an annual report by each counsellor. Between April 2002 and March 2003, there were 2,027 counselling cases in total. There were 1,462 new cases and 565 continuing cases of 2,027 cases. 1,570 of all the cases were accepted by telephone; 344 by face-to-face interviews; 38 were categorised as others; and 75 were special counselling such as legal and mental health counselling.⁷² 2,027 cases were also

⁷¹ Full details are given in Appendix 2. This categorisation was modified for Okinawa Prefecture from the classification of counselling in Osaka Prefecture. Obviously, the tenth category of 'international problems' was added for various issues with US military personnel in Okinawa. I tried to find out how Osaka Prefecture made this classification, but no one knew when and how this categorisation was established in Osaka Prefecture.

⁷² The number of clients for special counselling in this category is different from the total number of clients who in reality had special counselling, because some clients were introduced to special

divided into 1,324 'listening and giving advices' cases; 124 'giving information' cases; 366 'being introduced into other organisations' cases; 56 'investigating and negotiating with other organisations and others' cases; and 157 'special counselling' cases, based on how counsellors have dealt with each case. They were also enumerated monthly and annually based on the eleven categories and 85 categories. 813 of 2,027 cases were classified as 'relations of married couples' and they were unquestionably the highest among all of the cases. 340 cases were 'separation and divorce' and 'violence' was 240 out of 813 cases. The third highest category of 'international problems' was 'marriage and divorce' with 196 cases.

It was not difficult for a counsellor to classify all of the cases based on (1) whether it was new or continuing; (2) how the counsellor accepted each case; and (3) how the counsellor dealt with and solved each case. Moreover, as I will show below, it was more favourable for the counsellors to classify and enumerate their clients and cases for confidentiality rather than to report all the concrete details of the cases to the administrators and the Prefecture. But it was sometimes extremely hard for a counsellor to classify all of the cases into one of 85 categories, which were categorised based on what a client wanted to talk about and solve. Several categories clearly or slightly overlapped one another. However, even if a counsellor thought that a certain case might be difficult to categorise as one category, she could not put it into more than one category. She could not help enumerating it by selecting only *one* of 85 categories to fit each case into every time. I will demonstrate the way in which the counsellors problematised their practice of classification and enumeration below. It was also impossible for clients to know which category they were sorted into by their counsellors. In this respect, and as I discuss further below, it is crucial to examine how '[p]eople spontaneously come to fit their categories' (Hacking 1986: 223). Considering how WOO was established in the public sector, it is also crucial to remember that '[s]ocial change creates new categories of people, but the counting is no mere report of developments. It elaborately, often philanthropically, creates new ways for people to be' (ibid.). WOO has thus made up categories by which users, clients, and participants of services at WOO are classified and enumerated in the

counselling after general counselling. 75 cases refers to the number of clients who wanted to have special counselling from the beginning.

name of accountability for citizens.

3. Missing in the process of enumeration and categorisation

I have described how the number of participants enumerated for each programme subsumed even people who applied for but did not attend a project. I have also delineated the way in which it was impossible for the counsellors to classify all of the clients and cases, and yet they could not help categorising and enumerating all of them in the end. This process of categorisation and enumeration of counselling cases paradoxically suggests that one category might not represent what a client wanted to talk about or solve in practice. Both examples of the Projects Section and the Counselling Section indicate that people might not fit into a category in reality, while ‘[p]eople spontaneously come to fit their categories’ on paper (Hacking 1986: 223).

However, it is also important to be aware of serious concerns about the relation between enumeration of people and risk management. For instance, Nigel Parton sees numerical data as ‘auditable’ for ‘making a defensible decision’ (e.g. in child welfare policy) and as ‘abstract and statistical factors’ in terms of risk management (Parton 1999: 124). William Bogard is also concerned with ‘the simulation of surveillance’, in which various information is reconstructed, re-calculated, and programmed for risk management (Bogard 1996). Following Bogard and referring to the Resident Registration Number System (*jûmin kihon daichô bangô sisutemu*), which was controversially introduced by the Japanese government in 2002, Nozomu Shibuya points out that people never know how their personal information is repeatedly used as part of database or risk management (Shibuya 2003: 180). Moreover, Robert Castel focuses on the role of practitioners in risk management. He notes that ‘[t]he specialists find themselves now cast in a subordinate role, while management policy formation is allowed to develop into a completely autonomous force, totally beyond the surveillance of the operative on the ground who is now reduced to a mere executant’ (1991: 281). Hence ‘[p]ractitioners...no longer control the usage of the data they produce’ (ibid.: 293). Castel alerts us to the fact that ‘[t]hese items of information are then stockpiled, processed and distributed along channels completely disconnected from those of professional practice, using in particular the medium of computerised data handling’

(ibid.). Likewise, all of the counselling cases were separated from the counsellors as numerical data at WOO. But the administrators neither processed nor distributed such numerical data for risk management at WOO. They just stockpiled the data for annual reports and budgeting. I do not mean that enumeration and categorisation were not political and harmful at WOO. Rather, it is crucial to see what enumeration and categorisation meant and the consequences of such practices at WOO. Hence, I draw attention to how the counsellors were not satisfied with their practice of enumeration and categorisation and tried to negotiate with these practices, while at the same time being unable to control numerical data produced from their counselling services. In the following section, I ethnographically elucidate how the counsellors tried to 'make use of their powers to redirect their mandate', 'working on the basis of advances achieved in their own practice' (Castel 1991: 293). In other words, I draw attention to the challenges the frontline practitioners posed to modes of neoliberal governance, such as technologies of enumeration and categorisation, on the ground and in practice.

A joint meeting

The Counselling Section had a joint meeting with the Projects Section and the administrators every two weeks. This joint meeting was initially planned by the staff members of both the Projects Section and the Counselling Section to help the staff members of the Projects Section to plan a more necessary and appropriate project by showing them various issues of clients of the Counselling Section. Without such collaboration, it was difficult or almost impossible for other staff members to come to know what kinds of issues had been dealt with in the Counselling Section because the contents and information of counselling were strictly confidential and only accessible from the numerical data in the annual report which I described above. Even the administrators could not know what kind of concrete cases the counsellors accepted every day. Therefore, the administrators also became interested in the joint meeting and came to attend in order to try to grasp what and how the counselling services offered clients.

As a result, the counsellors started to make use of the joint meeting for themselves, too. First, they tried to let the administrators understand what feminist

counselling was and to show the administrators their counselling professionalism, including gender knowledge and perspective, rather than being evaluated only in terms of numbers. In other words, they liberally displayed a mass of information or knowledge, including their knack, knowledge of loopholes and wisdom used to solve the various issues which were brought to them. They often pointed out how local government officials and the Japanese government officials misunderstood laws and therefore gave citizens wrong information. For example, a woman who runs away from her violent husband can receive welfare and her children can go to a new school even if she does not register her residence card in a new residential town. Nevertheless, there are many cases in which local government officials force women to register their residence and as a result they and their children end up being found by their husbands. The counsellors tried to make use of the joint meeting as a good opportunity to tell the administrators (who were mainly seconded from the local government) that the local government should be aware of their insufficient understanding of law and a gender perspective.

The counsellors would highlight the gap between formal and informal recognition of Japanese nationality by the Foreign Ministry of Japan. Since Japanese people cannot formally possess more than one nationality at the same time, one is supposed to choose Japanese nationality or another nationality such as American nationality when one becomes twenty years old. If one was born of a Japanese mother and a US military personnel father, one must choose either of their nationalities. But it is extremely difficult and inconvenient for a person who is only twenty years old to choose one nationality, especially if her/his parents divorce and live in different countries. Surprisingly, according to the counsellors, it is totally possible to informally possess two nationalities at the same time. If s/he keeps a nationality in addition to the Japanese nationality, s/he does not have to report this to the Foreign Ministry of the Japanese government. The Foreign Ministry neither intends to punish people who have more than one nationality nor looks for these people in reality, as such action would infringe international human rights. In short, a person can silently keep American and Japanese nationalities simultaneously if s/he has only to show a Japanese passport when entering and leaving Japan. The administrators could not compete with such professional and practical information

and knowledge. Thus the counsellors reversed the meaning of the joint meeting from surveillance to the exhibition of counselling skills.

Second, the counsellors showed the administrators the variety of counselling cases rather than specifying what is supposed to be a typical women's issue. They introduced the administrators to diverse, complicated and/or exceptional cases, which were not easily categorised as one specific issue or into a single category. They would say to other staff members after a joint meeting, 'What did you think of that? Wasn't it an interesting case?' In a sense, they tried paradoxically to de-categorise their counselling cases in the process of categorising them by showing the impossibility of categorisation at the joint meeting.

An example which illustrates the discussion thus far is a case of a cross-cultural marriage and divorce between an Okinawan woman and a US military serviceman. An Okinawan woman had married a member of US military personnel and had given birth in the United States. The couple broke up in the United States and she came back to Okinawa. She did not know whether her husband had divorced her in the United States. When she came to WOO, she wanted to divorce him. She tried repeatedly to divorce him in Japan, but his whereabouts were unknown and she was at a loss as to what to do next. Since they did not marry in Japan, she could not divorce him under the Japanese legal system. Her first child had American nationality and the second had Japanese nationality. She only knew her husband's relatives in the United States. The counsellor suggested that she should make contact with these relatives and ask them to send a certified copy of their divorce if they had divorced. If not, she should send them a divorce notice and ask them to forward it to her husband and ask him to sign it. After registering their marriage in Japan, her first-born child could have its father's name in the census (family) register (*koseki*).

This case does not consist of only the single issue of cross-cultural divorce. Rather it discloses diverse and intertwined problems. It can be classified as an 'international problem', one of the eleven categories, but at the same time it may fall into all the subcategories of 'international problems' such as 'divorce', 'children', 'family register', 'information of whereabouts', as well as other categories such as 'relations of couples' including the subcategories of 'disappearance from home', 'alimony for a child', 'parental authority', etc. The counsellor showed how it was

impossible and pointless to categorise and enumerate the case in this way at the joint meeting. From the way data is presented in the annual report, one could hardly imagine such a complicated counselling case. It is also hard to see from an annual report how a counsellor deals with and resolves each case. The joint meeting indicated that the counsellor's suggestion solved not only the main issue of this client's divorce but also other obscure issues around her marriage and divorce. In this sense, people do not 'spontaneously come to fit their categories' in the process of counselling services (Hacking 1986: 223). Rather, as Copjec argues, 'on the contrary,...they are real objects that are not reducible to any category' (Copjec 1993: 173). In contrast to the administrators' intention to control counselling cases, the joint meeting identified the impossibility of subsumption of counselling cases through the professionalism of the counsellors who tackled and solved an uncategorisable, irreducible, and convoluted case.

The joint meeting was not intended for reporting but for negotiation on the part of the counsellors. Moreover, the counsellors reversed both the meaning and the function of the joint meeting. On the one hand, for the administrators, as Castel (1991), Parton (1996) and Shibuya (2003) have indicated, clients might end up being seen as objects of risk through categorisation and enumeration. On the other hand, what the counsellors tried to show, through daily work of categorisation and re-categorisation and joint meetings, is that '[t]he category is that of the "not-identical-to-itself"; the number of objects subsumed by it is zero' (Copjec 1993: 173). Thus the counsellors challenged the technologies of enumeration and categorisation by making use of their duties to 'redirect their mandate' (Castel 1991: 293). This challenge indicates that an alternative conception of accountability towards the mission of the social movement to promote gender equality existed among the frontline practitioners, such as the counsellors, at WOO. The counsellors tried to pursue this alternative accountability to protect their clients from the neoliberal administration of the public sector, which might utilise numerical data of clients as risk management. This kind of challenge on the front-line against neoliberal governance was not clearly visible from the outside, but it is crucial to be aware that the counsellors attempted to negotiate their accountability to the benefit of their clients through their daily work at WOO.

Alternative categorisation and enumeration

In this last section, I explore how the counsellors produced alternative meanings of the practices of categorisation and enumeration of counselling cases, and employed these practices towards different ends, from those of the administrators. I provide two ethnographic examples of this. First, the counsellors utilised the number of specific clients to criticise the implicit postcolonial relationship between Okinawa Prefecture, the Japanese government, and the United States. In April 2002, the Foreign Ministry of Japan and the US military on Okinawa established a new system consisting of 'service windows' for Amerasian children both in the Counselling Section at WOO and inside the US military base in Okinawa (Ryukyu Shimpo, 17 March 2002). This new cooperative system aimed to help Amerasian children who were born of the US servicemen and Okinawan women to find their fathers who served with the US military and who were missing or had abandoned their children and wives. As in the above case, it was hard for an Okinawan woman to find her former husband and to obtain Japanese nationality for her child. This was the first time that the US military formally promised the Japanese government that it would assist Amerasian children in finding their fathers. On the 16th of March 2002, the Minister of Foreign Affairs met the Governor of Okinawa Prefecture and the Governor welcomed this new system and agreed that the Prefecture would set up a service window in the Counselling Section at WOO. However, three months later, the local newspaper disclosed that no clients had asked the Counselling Section of WOO to look for their fathers or husbands through this new system since its establishment, because the system did not cover people who had retired or left the US military (Ryukyu Shimpo, 13 July 2002). The administrators were furious when they read the news article because a newspaper journalist had obviously made contact with and interviewed the counsellors directly, but the counsellors did not report to the administrators what they had discussed with the journalist. The administrators who were seconded from the Prefectural Government Office were afraid that Okinawa Prefecture might lose face.

On the contrary, the counsellors told other contract workers that they did not want such a system, since it was extremely easy to find someone who still served with the military. The US military already had a system for tracing someone in the

military through their salary payment. If the serviceman is obliged to pay child care payments to their former wives by a decree absolute, a certain amount of money is deducted from the salary beforehand. However, needless to say, this system does not work if they leave the military. The problem for Amerasian people is that they cannot find their fathers who have retired or left the military. The counsellors had to look for them by asking their relatives. The counsellors wanted to problematise this hypocritical relationship between Okinawa Prefecture, the Japanese government, and the US military, a relationship in which there was a pretence of establishing a helpful system for Amerasian children who were born as a result of the presence of the US military. They therefore emphasised that the number of clients who had tried to look for their husbands or fathers through this new system was zero, in order to publicly demonstrate that the system was entirely useless in reality. They pointed out in this way that there were clients who needed an alternative system, which could trace former US military personnel. The meaning of the number of clients is fundamentally distinct from what Okinawa Prefecture, the Japanese government, and the US military expected for the maintenance of the US military bases in Okinawa. The counsellors challenged their postcolonial policy of appeasement through the number zero.

Second, the counsellors did not end up enumerating and categorising through the list consisting of 85 categories. They simultaneously made different and original lists of their clients and cases through their own classification and explanations. They focussed more on grasping clients' issues than on enumeration. One of them kept her own counselling list for a couple of decades so that she could respond to her clients and deal with their issues at any time. For example, she counselled a woman who married a US serviceman when she gave birth about twenty years ago whilst working as a social worker in the US military bases in Okinawa. After twenty years, this same counsellor counselled the woman's daughter to look for her father (the former client's divorced husband) who had served with the US military on Okinawa. Needless to say, all of the information about her parents that the counsellor had kept played a vital role in finding her father in the United States. The counsellor was proud to have a long-lasting and responsible relationship with her clients. This relationship was cultivated throughout her career as a social worker and a counsellor

despite the fact that she changed her workplace several times. She has kept counselling her clients to solve their issues beyond local, national, and international politics including the new system, which the Japanese government and the US military established in 2002, for many years. It was crucial for her to deal with all of her clients' cases smoothly and at any time. The counsellors thus enumerated and counted their clients and counselling cases for their clients, rather than for annual reports or the implicitly post-colonial Japan-US relationship. By doing so, they pursued their accountability on behalf of their clients to promote gender equality. As a result, they changed the meaning of the practices of enumeration and categorisation, which tended to be considered as part of neoliberal governance. The counsellors challenged technologies of enumeration and categorisation through the very practices of enumeration and categorisation by which they were themselves accountable in relation to their clients.

Conclusion

Nikolas Rose notes that 'numbers are intrinsic to the forms of justification that give legitimacy to political power in democracies' (Rose 1991: 675). He continues that 'there is a constitutive interrelationship between quantification and democratic government' (ibid.). As a public end organisation which officially aimed to promote a gender equal society, WOO was expected to enumerate and categorise people who were engaged with it to show how far it achieved its mission statement. As a result, as I have shown above, the more numbers were reported in the annual report of WOO, the better for WOO. The more participants WOO had, the better. The more clients WOO had, the better. The more users of the library WOO had, the better. The more users of meeting rooms WOO had, the better. This is because the number represents how many citizens have made use of WOO, which was established by the Prefecture thanks to taxpayers. In this sense, the numbers featured in the annual report play the role of a '[p]ublic-sector audit' which 'checks the delivery of services' 'to show that organizations are managing their affairs properly, and this elision of propriety and efficiency requires proof that they are acting as proper organization' (Strathern 2005: 465). As I have shown above, what WOO needed to show was not details of its projects but skeletonised and perfunctory numbers without much

explanation under neoliberal governance. More precisely, WOO did not require accurate numbers. The principle operating was rather: the more, the better. But, as I have also delineated in this chapter, the number of the participants of the programmes and the number of counselling cases could not represent the real objects. Ironically, the practice of enumeration and categorisation always ended up missing what the practitioners enumerated and categorised in the very process. That is to say, numbers no longer signified and subsumed their objects (Copjec 1993: 175). I have also described how the counsellors displaced the meaning and function of enumeration and categorisation, which the administrators, the Prefecture, the Japanese government, and the US military required to maintain the status quo in post-colonial Okinawa. They strategically utilised the number of clients against the legitimacy of post-colonialism and the joint meeting against surveillance. What I have tried to show in this chapter was how the practitioners attempted to respond to, negotiate and struggle with the pre-established meaning and function of the practice of enumeration and categorisation in the very process. It is crucial to be aware that numbers are used for risk management. However, it is also important to discern *how* numbers constitute ‘a pre-existing reality’ through the daily work of the frontline practitioners, and how such a practice might be able to change or subvert the means of numbers for risk management or for post-colonial hypocritical international relations (Rose 1991: 676). The frontline practitioners challenged neoliberal governance, in which WOO was embedded in the process of promoting gender equality in the public sector. They did not try to directly resist modes of neoliberal governance, such as technologies of enumeration and categorisation. Rather, they tried to make use of the practices of enumeration and categorisation, and subverted the existing meaning of the technologies of enumeration and categorisation by pursuing their accountability in relation to their clients.

Chapter Five

Governing Gender Equality

Introduction

The chief of the Projects Section called the first meeting of the assertiveness training class for beginners in April, at the beginning of the new fiscal year of 2002. As I showed in Chapter Three, the assertiveness training class was the most popular programme among all the projects at Women's Organisation Okinawa (WOO). While it was very common for other programmes to have vacant places for participants even on the day, the assertiveness training class usually had more than twice as many applicants as it had capacity for, and no more than twenty applicants could attend the class, even if they applied for it. Therefore, the question as to who would be ideal participants in the assertiveness training class was at the top of the agenda at the meeting. After discussing it for a while, one of the counsellors said that the Counselling Section had several clients who might find assertiveness training useful and it might be good to keep special places for them. We all agreed that these clients should be given priority for the class. After the meeting, the counsellors picked up two clients who might find assertiveness training useful and told them that the assertiveness training class for beginners would be good for them and worth attending. Yet it turned out that neither of those two clients attended the class. Although one of them applied for the class and a place was reserved for her, she did not come to the class on that day. The other client neither applied for nor came to the class.

As I showed in Chapter Two, in the last twenty five years the feminist social movement in Okinawa has made it possible to tackle and change the diverse gendered status quo: organising the *Unai* Festival (1985); changing the Nationality Law (1985); abolishing the festival of *juri* (prostitutes) (1988); producing the first female prefectural vice-governor in Okinawa Prefecture (1991); and establishing the Okinawa Women Act Against Military Violence (OWAMV) and the Rape Emergency Intervention Counselling Centre Okinawa (REICO) (1995). This significant social movement made history not only in Okinawa but also in Japan and feminist politics (e.g. Akibayashi 2002, 2004, 2005; Enloe 2000; Fukumura & Matsuoka 2002;

Kuwae 1999; Takazato 1996, 2000). Those who were engaged in these events also wanted to establish a public women's organisation in Okinawa not only as a basis for women's activities but also as a focal point between the social movement, women's studies and administration to tackle 'various issues' in Okinawa (Aguni 1992: 7, 11, 20). These issues included 'persistent male-dominated traditional customs such as patriarchal *tôtômei* inheritance as well as the patrilineal *munchû* system' and 'various contemporary issues such as sex work, military bases and indiscriminate development for tourism' (ibid.: 12).⁷³ As noted in Chapter Two, during the process of this social movement, these women supported Masahide Ota who had included the construction of a public women's organisation in his election campaign for Prefectural Governor in 1990. As a result, WOO was established by the Okinawa Prefecture.

WOO was constructed as a public body and as a result the social movement was institutionalised in the public sector. However, as described in terms of consumer culture in Chapter Three, it is crucial to note that there is a 'gap' between the social movement which made history and the social movement which bore fruit as the institution (Tomiyama 2008; 2010). In other words, we should not identify the institution, including the establishment of a public women's organisation, law and policy, with the social movement, which has aimed at the institutionalisation. In this way, dreams and possibilities described and generated in the process of the social movement as 'vanishing mediators' that 'must disappear, become invisible, if the system is to maintain its consistency and coherence' are at odds with the institutionalised outcome (Cockburn 1991: 215).

In this chapter I explore how these dreams and possibilities as 'vanishing mediators' have been 'institutionalised' as policy and programmes such as the assertiveness training class at WOO (Cockburn 1991: 2). In doing so, I examine how

⁷³ Roughly speaking, *munchû* is a patrilineal Okinawan kinship group, which usually shares the same tomb, carries out ancestral ceremonies together and basically excludes women from inheritance, but allows women to carry the burden of preparing all the food and instruments for ceremonies. While there is extensive research on *munchû* in anthropology and folklore studies (e.g. Higa 1987; Nagahama 2003; Oda 1987; Ogo *et al.* 1970), there is little critical work in terms of gender studies and women's studies (Takeshita 1998). Both *munchû* and *tôtômei* are called 'Okinawan traditional customs', but the discourse, which supports and justifies their male-dominated inheritance, is considered to have been constructed and reinforced after the Second World War, since Okinawa lost its agricultural land and instead gained compensation monies while under military occupation and for development (e.g. Horiba 1990; Ryukyu Shimposha 1980).

WOO ends up attempting to govern citizens through their subjectivities (Cruikshank 1999; Leve 2001; Sharma 2008). It is crucial to note that a social project for a 'good society' seeks to govern people through their participation (Nakagawa 2008: 287) and 'forge[s] a new terrain of politics and a new mode of governing the self' (Cruikshank 1999: 88-89). In this way, the chapter points to the way in which WOO seeks to govern gender equality as a result of the institutionalisation. The chapter then questions 'the general characteristic of technologies of governing' (Ong 2006: 3) and 'the taken-for-granted homogeneity of their effects' of governance (Sharma 2008: xvii), by exploring the practical implications of the reactions and feedback from the participants. Did participants change between the start and finish of the class? Did they find assertiveness training useful? Did they end up falling into the trap of participating in the assertiveness training class and then becoming autonomous, self-governing subjects (e.g. Burchell 1996; Cruikshank 1999; Ferguson & Gupta 2002; Rose 1996a; Paley 2001)? The assertiveness training class and its extended case, the Assertiveness Club, will be used as an example to ethnographically explore these questions of politics of governance by delineating how these programmes of assertiveness training became a focal point of contact between neoliberal and feminist governance. In conclusion, I shall suggest that the participants supply an alternative meaning and way of 'self-governing' and 'autonomy', which are not necessarily connected with the mobilisation that 'we have already known' as a form of governance (Kato 2008: 117, see also Nakagawa 2008; Tomiyama 2008).

1. Gender equality policy in Okinawa Prefecture

This section looks at how Okinawa Prefecture implemented women's policy and gender equality policy.⁷⁴ In other words, this section demonstrates how the dreams and possibilities described and generated in the process of the social movement in the the 1980s and 1990s have been replaced, translated and subsumed into administration and institutionalisation. In doing so, I show how such policy has been

⁷⁴ See Yokoyama (2002) for a gender analysis of post-war women's policy as family policy in Japan, and Osawa (2002) for a gender analysis of gender equality policy after the late 1990s in Japan. See Goodman (2000; 2002) for discussion in English of family, children and social policy in Japan. See Hook and Dobson (2007) for the relation between global governance, Japan and the United Nations.

linked with the Japanese government and the United Nations (UN).⁷⁵ By doing so, I look at how administrative terms in relation to women's policy and gender equality policy have been transformed over twenty years.

Action Plan for the Solution of Women's Issues in 1984

In 1984, the Okinawa Prefecture for the first time established a policy for women, The Action Plan of Okinawa Prefecture for the Solution of Women's Issues (hereafter, the Action Plan). The Action Plan was in response to The National Plan of Action (1977) and The Priority Targets for the Second Half of the Period Covered by the National Plan of Action (1981), which were both established by the Japanese government. The National Plan of Action (1977) was formulated in reaction to The World Plan of Action adopted at the UN First World Conference on Women held in Mexico City in 1975. The Priority Targets for the Second Half of the Period Covered by the National Plan of Action (1981) was enacted to respond to The Program of Action for the Second Half of the UN Decade for Women (1980). Like other prefectures, Okinawa adopted the administrative term 'the solution of women's issues' which the Japanese government often used in the 1970s and the 1980s. By doing so, the Action Plan positioned women as passive objects who have women's issues and aimed to solve these issues.

DEIGO Plan 21 in 1993

In March 1993, The Action Plan of Okinawa Prefecture for the Realisation of a Society in which Both Men and Women Participate – DEIGO Plan 21 – (hereafter, DEIGO Plan 21) was enacted under the then Governor of Okinawa Prefecture, Masahide Ota, who had contributed to the establishment of WOO.⁷⁶ DIEGO stands

⁷⁵ See appendix 3 for the chronological linkage of the establishment of policies between Okinawa Prefecture, the Japanese government and the UN. I drew up appendix 3 based on the list which is accessible from the government's website (http://www.gender.go.jp/english_contents/women2003/milestones.html, accessed 30 June 2010). I use the government's translation for all the policies issued by the Japanese government from the above website. However, as I showed in the Introduction, the government translates 'a society in which both men and women participate' into 'a gender-equal society' and therefore as I showed in the Introduction, policy titles are lost in translation. The policies of Okinawa Prefecture are all my translation.

⁷⁶ Following the Japanese government, Okinawa Prefecture has used neither 'gender' nor 'equality' for policy titles, though it uses 'gender equality' in some policy texts. As I showed in the Introduction, like the Japanese government, the Prefecture uses the administrative term 'a society in which both

for development, equality, innovation, global, and Okinawa, in English. Deigo is the name of a red flower which features in the prefectural symbol. DEIGO Plan 21, which was issued for the twenty-first century, states that ‘following the United Nations Charter, The Universal Declaration on Human Rights, CEDAW, and so on as basic ideals, this plan aims to construct a society in which both men and women participate, based on the World Plan of Action and the revised New National Plan of Action’ (Okinawa ken 1996: 5). The Universal Declaration on Human Rights was adopted by the United Nation in 1948 and formulated the concept of ‘universal human rights’ (Bell *et al.* 2001: 3). The Japanese government ratified The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1985. To do so, as I showed in the Introduction and Chapter Two, the Japanese government amended the Nationality Law and promulgated the Equal Employment Opportunity Law at that time. The Japanese government established The National Plan of Action in 1977 in response to The World Plan of Action adopted by the UN First World Conference on Women in Mexico City in 1975. Likewise, following The Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women adopted by the UN World Conference on Women in Nairobi in 1985, the Japanese government established The New National Plan of Action towards the Year 2000 in 1987. In 1991, this new national plan was revised in accordance with The First Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women by the UN Economic Social Council (ECOSOC) in 1990. Based on these international and domestic policies, the DEIGO Plan 21 was implemented in Okinawa Prefecture in 1993.

DEIGO Plan 21 included the construction of WOO and its management body, Women’s Organisation Okinawa Foundation (WOOF), as its project design. DEIGO Plan 21 set up five actors to promote policy. They included (1) the Women’s Policy Office (within the Prefectural Government Office), (2) WOOF and WOO, (3) the Women’s Issues Discussion Group (WIDG) and (4) municipalities (Okinawa Ken 1996: 4). The Women’s Policy Office was in charge of policy management. WOOF

men and women participate’ instead of ‘a gender equal society’. To avoid using a long complicated phrase, I replace ‘a society in which both men and women participate’ with ‘a gender equal society’ in this chapter except policy titles and quotations. I use inverted commas to make this clear. In case practitioners and policy used ‘gender equality’ instead of ‘a society in which both men and women participate’, I do not use inverted commas.

and WOO were in charge of conducting comprehensive research on women's issues, planning and establishing projects for women's participation in society, men's participation in community and the domestic sphere, networking for women's groups, promoting women's leadership and raising consciousness geared towards 'a gender equal society'. WIDG consisted of twenty members including university professors, local government officials, business executives, medical doctors and lawyers, and was supposed to propose women's policy to the Prefectural Governor. Municipalities were positioned to take charge of promoting plans for DEIGO Plan 21, supplying information to citizens. DEIGO Plan 21 itself was designed to closely resemble The New National Plan of Action (1991) issued by the Japanese government (ibid. 54-55). Suffice it to say, like The New National Plan of Action, DEIGO Plan 21 uses both terms 'gender equality' (*danjo byôdô*) and 'a society in which both men and women participate' (*danjo kyôdô sankaku shakai*).

Revised DEIGO Plan 21 in 1998

In 1998, DEIGO Plan 21 was revised 'to reflect international and national trends such as the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing (hereafter, the Beijing Conference) and the Japanese government's Plan for Gender Equality 2000' (Okinawa ken 1998: 10). The Plan for Gender Equality 2000, subtitled The National Plan of Action for Promoting a Gender-equal Society by the Year 2000, was issued in 1996 in response to The Beijing Declaration (1995) which was adopted by the Beijing Conference. The revised DEIGO Plan 21 states that considering the aim of The Beijing Declaration, Okinawa Prefecture will tackle new themes such as 'the elimination of violence against women', 'the participation of women in decision-making processes', 'reproductive health and rights' which were also referred to in Plan for Gender Equality 2000. In The Beijing Declaration, there are various keywords and phrases which can be also found in DEIGO Plan 21 and other documents of central and local governments in Japan, including; 'gender equality (*danjo byôdô*)', 'gender-sensitive policies (*jendâ ni binkanna seisaku*)', 'gender perspectives (*jendâ no shiten*)', 'empowerment of women (*josei no empawâmento*)',

‘reproductive health (*ripurodakutibu herusu*)’.⁷⁷ Thus these new terms were imported from the Beijing Conference via Japanese government’s Plan for Gender Equality 2000 and introduced in the revised DEIGO Plan 21. Terms such as ‘gender’, ‘empowerment’ and ‘reproduction health’ by using Japanese syllabaries, which are used for transcription of words from foreign languages such as English, were not translated into Japanese but introduced just as they were. As Annelise Riles describes the way in which a certain word such as ‘women’ is circulated as a sign without meaning in the formulation process of the UN documents (2001: 80), these new administrative terms came to appear in thousands of official and unofficial documents such as budgeting proposals, official drafts, administrative documents for official final approval, pamphlets, flyers and reports at WOO.⁷⁸

Adopting these new terms, the revised DEIGO Plan 21 shows four new basic viewpoints, which were also referred in The Plan for Gender Equality 2000: gender perspective; women’s human rights; responses to the declining birth rate and aging population; women’s empowerment (Okinawa ken 1998: 10-11). The revised DEIGO Plan 21 no longer sees women as objects of policy but rather as subjects. Women are expected to change from those who have insufficient power (or who are regarded as powerless) to those who have enough power to participate in all spheres of society (see Cruikshank 1999:69). This view of women as subjects will overlap with what Nicolas Rose has termed ‘advanced liberalism’, which governs ‘through the regulated and accountable choices of autonomous agents – citizens, consumers, parents, employees, managers, investors – and ... through intensifying and acting upon their allegiance to particular “communities”’ (Rose 1996a: 61).

⁷⁷ It is not surprising to find similar statements in policy all over Japan. Like other prefectures and municipalities in Japan, in Okinawa Prefecture a draft for gender equality policy is usually made by local government officials who are members of the Women’s Policy Office (which changed its name to the Gender Equality Office in 1999) within the Prefectural Government Office. A draft is examined by members of WIDG, but usually they make no major changes. One of the local government officials in charge of producing a draft between 2002 and 2003 said to me:

First of all, read all the policies and plans that the Japanese government has issued so far. Secondly, collect as many examples of local policies and plans as possible from other prefectures and municipalities. Lastly, cut various key words and phrases, which seem to be crucial, from this collection and paste them onto our policy plan. What is most important but difficult is that we cannot copy all the policy or plan from any particular prefecture or city, though the rough outline of a policy plan should not be different.

⁷⁸ However, as I will show below, it was not hard to find the existing administrative terms such as ‘women’s issues’ and ‘solving women’s issues’ here and there in pamphlets, budget proposals, newsletters, daily conversations etc. These administrative terms coexisted at WOO.

DEIGO Plan 2002 and Ordinance in 2003

As described in the Introduction to this thesis, in 1999, the Japanese government issued The Basic Law for a Society in which Both Men and Women Participate (hereafter, the Basic Law).⁷⁹ The Basic Law ensures that local governments take responsibility for a ‘gender equal society’ and establish basic plans and ordinances geared towards a ‘gender-equal society’ (Article 9 and 14).⁸⁰ Hence, in 2002, like other prefectures, as its obligation under the Basic Law, Okinawa Prefecture issued a new gender equality plan, The Okinawa Prefectural Plan for Participation of Both Men and Women – DEIGO Plan – (hereafter, DEIGO Plan 2002). Successively, in 2003, the Prefecture enacted the first gender equality ordinance, The Okinawa Prefectural Ordinance for the Promotion of Participation of Men and Women (hereafter, OOPP) as its obligation under the Basic Law. Both DEIGO Plan 2002 and OOPP were based on and strikingly similar to the Basic Law. For instance, the DEIGO Plan 2002 consists of five basic goals: (1) respect for men’s and women’s human rights, (2) reviewing institutions and customs in our society, (3) women’s participation in policy-making and decision-making processes, (4) keeping a balance between domestic and other activities and (5) contributing to peace and international cooperation (Okinawa ken 2002: 8-9). These are all stated in the Basic Law. Although, unlike the Basic Law, OOPP refers to the term ‘gender equality’ in the Preamble,⁸¹ its content and logical construction as a whole is remarkably similar to

⁷⁹ All the statements of the Basic Law in English are accessible from http://www.gender.go.jp/english_contents/basic_law/index.html, accessed on 20 May 2010.

⁸⁰ The Basic Law also states that ‘in consideration of the close relationship between internal promotion of formation of a Gender-Equal Society and efforts by the international community, formation of a Gender-Equal Society shall be promoted based on international cooperation’ (Article 7 of Chapter 7).

⁸¹ OOPP states in the preamble (translation is mine):

Respect for individuals and equality under the law is a sublime idea of the Constitution of Japan. Therefore, both men and women are equal as humans and must be respected as individuals. In considering international and national trends, Okinawa Prefecture has promoted various measures to realise gender equality. However, we still have human rights violations such as violence against women and sexual harassment, fixed gender roles in all spheres of society, and widespread social views and traditional customs based on such gender roles in reality. Therefore, there are many problems preventing true gender equality. To construct a vital Okinawa Prefecture that can cope with fewer children and an aging population, and considering our prefecture’s features, regardless of gender, we need to realise a society in which we can fully exercise our originality and ability, respect each other, choose various ways of life, sharing happiness and responsibilities. We Okinawa

the Basic Law.

While those who were engaged in the social movement in the 1990s wanted to tackle ‘various issues’ in Okinawa, neither DEIGO Plan 2002 nor OOPP referred to any particular Okinawan issues raised at the beginning of this chapter. After several local government officials produced a draft for OOPP, it was released to the public and the Prefecture announced that they would welcome public opinions from prefectural citizens (*kenmin*). Eighty-one opinions were collected from individuals and groups all over Okinawa Prefecture including remote islands such as Miyako Islands and Yaeyama Islands.⁸² For instance, a group pointed out that the draft did not refer to US military bases, and OOPP should clarify that Okinawa Prefecture will eradicate crime perpetrated by US military personnel and civilian employees in US military bases and immediately take all necessary measures to offer an apology to and provide full compensation for victims. Moreover, several groups and individuals suggested that OOPP should refer to the ‘Okinawan locality’ which has various specific issues such as ‘traditional customs’, the highest unemployment rate in Japan, the big wage gap between women and men, and many female part-time workers. Another person pointed out that while following the Japanese government, OOPP designate June as ‘participation month for men and women’, in Okinawa there is the memorial day of the Battle of Okinawa in June and it would be better to change to another month.⁸³

prefectural citizens hereby establish this ordinance in order to aim to realise a society in which both men and women participate and promote efforts by the prefecture and municipal local governments and citizens and the private sector with regard to comprehensive participation of both men and women.

⁸² Okinawa Prefecture used to openly show all the opinions with writers’ ages, resident places (names of islands or part of islands), gender and whether either groups or individuals on the website. I printed out all the opinions several years ago, but the Prefecture has since deleted these past documents from the website. There were some rather fundamental opinions. For instance, two women in their twenties and fifties asked to change the title of OOPP from the conventional administrative term ‘a society in which both men and women participate’ (*danjo kyôdô sankaku shakai*) to ‘gender equality’ (*danjo byôdô*).

⁸³ It is a highly controversial topic to fix the date that the Battle of Okinawa ended in 1945, but the 23rd of June is a prefectural mourning day for those who were killed in the Battle of Okinawa. This is because General Mitsuru Ushijima who controlled the Japanese Army in Okinawa committed suicide on the 23rd of June 1945. Every 23rd of June, people including the relatives of war dead make a long procession from residential areas to the southern part of the main island of Okinawa where the battle intensified, many were killed by the Allied Forces, and Japanese military personnel and where Okinawan civilians could not help but to choose to commit ‘mass suicide’ (*shûdan jiketsu*) and the Cornerstone of Peace was constructed for war dead people, regardless of their nationalities, by Okinawa Prefecture in 1995. See Miyagi (2000; 2008) for the relationship between ‘mass suicide’ and Japanese imperialism and militarism.

Now let me turn to the relationship between citizens, policy and WOO in gender equality policy. The Basic Law states that it is enacted ‘to promote efforts by the State and local governments and citizens with regard to the formation of a Gender-equal Society comprehensively and systematically’ (the Preamble). Thus the Basic Law declares that three actors of the Japanese government, a local government, and its citizens should respectively take responsibilities for the realisation of ‘a gender-equal society’. More importantly, it states that that ‘[c]itizens shall make efforts to contribute to the formation of a Gender-equal Society in all areas of society, including workplaces, schools, the local community and the home, pursuant to the basic principles’ (Article 10). Accordingly, citizens are positioned as responsible legal subjects to make efforts to form ‘a gender equal society’ in all areas in the name of policy. Following the Basic Law, DIEGO Plan 2002 states that ‘individual prefectural citizens shall understand the significance of a society in which both men and women participate and make efforts to contribute to form a society in which both men and women participate’ (Okinawa ken 2002: 43). To comprehensively and effectively achieve the five goals of DEIGO Plan 2002, it places WOO between citizens, groups, other organisations and the Prefecture (Okinawa ken 2002: 42). Thus WOO became a praxis site, which put policy into practice, in the name of policy.

Administrative feminism

I have traced how the gender equality policy of Okinawa Prefecture has been delocalised in the process of institutionalisation. The dreams and hopes of those who were engaged in the 1990s social movement became embroiled in prefectural politics, replaced by and subsumed into institutionalisation and administration. However, the efforts of the social movement members should not be seen as a failure. Rather, it is pivotal to see how feminist politics cannot but help being connected with national machinery (and local governments and local politics) for gender equality, and to note what happens in the process of the connection between them (Takemura *et al.* 2003: 142-143). As I noted in the Introduction, unlike in other countries such as the United States (Ferree & Martin 1995; Fried 1994; Martin 1990, 2005), 90% of women’s organisations in Japan, including ‘privatised’ organisations of the third sector, are

established in the public sector (Sakurai 2008: 9). Probably for this reason, feminists have sought to introduce feminist politics into these public women's organisations in Japan (Hori 2007; Takemura 2003; Takemura *et al.* 2003; Ueno & Kawano 1998; Yaguchi 2005) rather than 'conceive of administration as the antithesis of a genuine feminist politics' (Cruikshank 1999: 60).

Let me give an example from Okinawa. In November 1990, Masahide Ota became the Okinawa Prefectural Governor, supported by united radical political parties (*kakushin tōitsu*) after a conservative (*hoshu*) Prefectural Governor, Junji Nishime, had held the post for twelve years. Several women who were engaged in the *Unai* Festival and a political grassroots group, which had supported his election, suggested that he nominate Kazumi Uezato, a dentist, as the first female prefectural vice-governor not only in Okinawa but also in Japan and he accepted their plan in November 1990 (Aguni 1992: 32). At the same time, these women organised a group on a supra-partisan basis, the Group to Realise a Female Prefectural Vice-Governor, in January 1991 and carried out diverse activities to realise their plan. However, in March 1991 the Okinawa Prefectural Assembly rejected the plan to appoint Uezato. Therefore, the Group to Realise a Female Prefectural Vice-Governor called upon all the women's groups in Okinawa to recommend someone else for the Prefectural Vice-Governor. As a result, six women were recommended by five women's groups and Hiroko Sho was nominated as the first female Prefectural Vice-Governor by the Okinawa Prefectural Assembly by unanimous consent in July 1991 (*ibid.*). She became the second female prefectural vice-governor in Japan.⁸⁴ Under these circumstances, as I mentioned in Chapter Two, a Women's Policy Office was set up within the Governor's Executive Office, and began to work for DEIGO Plan 21 and WOO in 1992. There were several feminist local government officials (including men) who made efforts to set up this Women's Policy Office and open WOO from inside the Prefectural Government Office and were engaged in the feminist anti-militarist movement outside the Government Office. Thus the feminist social movement actively and decisively intervened in the administration in Okinawa Prefecture. Likewise, administration and feminist politics became intertwined with

⁸⁴ In May 1991, only two months before Hiroko Sho was nominated, Teruko Kanehira became the first female prefectural vice-governor in Tokyo (Aguni 1992: 32).

each other and coexisted at WOO. More precisely, as I showed in Chapter Two, feminist politics tried to make use of administration and institutionalisation in the process of the establishment of WOO from the very beginning.⁸⁵

Kazuko Takemura, a critical theorist, calls feminism which is engaged in administration ‘administrative feminism’ (*gyôsei feminizumu*) (Takemura 2003: 140; Takemura *et al.* 2003: 143). Yet such an attempt might be deemed as a feminist claim to the state (or local governments), which might produce ‘state subjects, as bureaucratised, dependent, disciplined, and gendered’ (Brown 1995: 195). However, as Barbara Cruikshank points out, such scepticism about feminist claims to the state also internalises and takes for granted the dichotomy between ‘genuine feminist politics’ and ‘administration’ (1999: 60-61). In this sense, it is crucial to examine the way in which both feminist politics and administration seek to govern people through their subjectivities (e.g. Cruikshank 1999; Rose 1996a). Moreover, as I show in the next section of this chapter, it is vital to scrutinise how a public women’s organisation seeks to govern gender equality as a praxis site of feminist politics and policy by reproducing and reinforcing the category of ‘women’ as a monolithic entity and ‘unitary female subjects’ that the UN conferences take for granted (Volpp 2001: 1199). WOO is a political, controversial arena where feminist politics has deliberately penetrated into administration. It is necessary to consider such a relationship between administration and social movements in Okinawa where above all social movements have gathered strength in Japan, and we cannot simply separate administration from social movements.⁸⁶

2. Assertiveness training class

Shirota-san’s expectation

⁸⁵ However, as I shall show in Chapter Six, this does not mean that the feminist social movement was monolithic and coherent. Rather, it should be noted that those who were engaged in the feminist anti-militarist movement found various conflicts and differences among them (see Jung forthcoming).

⁸⁶ Presumably, the connection between administration and feminist politics in Okinawa is more intimate than in any other prefecture in Japan. This is because people could not help intervening in administration for the anti-military base movement in Okinawa and there are various well-known anti-militarist activists who work for local governments. In this way, Okinawa anticipated Japan proper in terms of the peace movement, though the movement was male-dominated (Aguni 1992: 17). Yet it is almost certain that the distance between social movements and local politics and administration in Okinawa is much closer than other prefectures. For these reasons, feminists might not have hesitated to interfere in administration in Okinawa.

In 1998 when the assertiveness training started at WOO, a staff member, Shirota-san (a pseudonym), wrote a proposal claiming that new kinds of projects would be indispensable at WOO.

How many women are left living in a situation that they can understand in their mind but cannot act upon? Therefore, I think that we need to change the ways of learning about women's issues. We ought to change the way of learning from a passive method to one that leads women themselves to think what women's issues are, to discuss, to act, to reconsider what they have considered natural, and to get the power to change their own ideas and lives. Moreover, local governments should evaluate not how many participants can be mobilised in a huge hall, but whether participants can achieve the perspective of seeing women's issues as their own problems. Women should be empowered and realise self-innovation (*jiko kakushin*) through learning as subjects.

Like the counsellors and the practitioners described in Chapter Four, Shirota-san problematised the way in which local governments and public women's organisations tend to evaluate their projects in terms of the number of participants who attend programmes designed to achieve a 'gender equal society'. Instead, she drew attention to how much women can change their ideas and way of lives as subjects who can solve their issues through WOO projects. This active method is distinct from the way in which local governments focus on the number of users and project participants in public women's organisations. Shirota-san, as a feminist staff member, sought to plan and establish a project which would lead women themselves to reconsider what 'women's issues' are, relate them to their own lives and problems and obtain the power to change their own ideas and lives. By doing so, she attempted to empower and change women at WOO.

It appeared that Shirota-san's will to empower and change women was shared with most of the staff members who worked at WOO between 2002 and 2003, no matter how much they showed interest in feminism and whether they were seconded government officials or contract workers. There seemed to be a presupposition or expectation that participants were supposed to be empowered and change themselves through projects at WOO, and therefore it was worthwhile for citizens to visit WOO.⁸⁷ For instance, at a staff meeting, a non-feminist staff member, who planned a

⁸⁷ This expectation is also shared with other literatures, which discuss the relations between citizens, public women's organisations and gender equality and see public women's organisations as 'the basis of the empowerment of women' (e.g. Aoki 1997; Ikai 1997; Inoue 2007; Kanai 1999; Kawahashi 1998; Nonomura & Uemura 2004; Nonomura & Kawato 1997; Sakurai 2009; Tateishi 2009). Like

programme about Okinawan women and history, explained that the reason why she wanted to establish this programme was that she would like to empower female citizens through the history of Okinawan women so that they could understand and tackle their current gender issues more skilfully. Her explanation sounded convincing, and hence her programme was willingly approved not only by the anti-feminist administrators but also by the non-feminist and feminist staff members. However, of course, this does not mean that all the participants were empowered and changed after they attended the projects at WOO. What is crucial here is that most of the staff members aimed and desired to empower and change participants (users and clients) through the projects at WOO. In other words, almost everyone had ‘the will to empower’ and change other women at WOO (Cruikshank 1999).

It is also noteworthy that her report included several administrative terms such as ‘women’s issues’, ‘a view point of seeing women’s issues’, ‘subjects’ and ‘empower’. In other words, her texts were filled with institutionalised words although she attempts to distance her planned project from the existing and pervasive passive learning methods which have been widely adopted by administration. In this sense, we can see her texts as the dreams and possibilities, described and produced before the social movement was institutionalised, translated and replaced into administration and institutionalisation. However, her texts should not be seen as a legacy of the social movement. She still attempts to talk about possibilities and dreams by using the administrative terms, though these possibilities and dreams are appropriated in policy discourses.

Assertiveness training

Assertiveness training is defined by Lisa Tuttle as a ‘[p]rogramme designed to help women to overcome early indoctrination in passive behaviour through techniques to change their attitude and behaviour’ (Tuttle 1986: 25). By doing so, assertiveness training aims to promote or recover women’s self-esteem (Dickson 1982: 6-8). It is significant that ‘[m]any women have found it a useful way of refusing victimization and changing their lives and expectations’ (Tuttle 1986: 25). However, Anne Dickson,

Shirota-san, they insist that public women’s organisations should empower and change women, by presupposing that gender equality would be achieved through good projects, which are not valued in terms of the number of its participants.

who introduced assertiveness training to the UK from the US in 1982 and whose book was translated into Japanese in 1998, clearly notes that '[g]iven our prevailing culture, women are, with obvious exceptions, in less powerful positions than men. This can be made into an overtly political issue – but that is not the purpose of this book' (Dickson 1982: xii). For Dickson, assertiveness training can change women and promote or recover their self-esteem, but does not attempt to tackle political issues. For this reason, Lisa Tuttle critically problematises assertiveness training:

However, although it is used by feminists, it is a very limited and reformist process which does not question or try to change the system, but only teaches individual women how to make use of male strategies for their own benefit (Tuttle 1986: 25).

Although she admits that many women have found assertiveness training useful as a strategy to change themselves, Tuttle is dissatisfied with its political stance which 'does not question or try to change the system' (ibid.). For her, assertiveness training is not political enough, because it attempts to change only individual women. While Dickson focuses on individual women, Tuttle tries to attract attention to the system.⁸⁸

However, what seems of great significance here is that neither Dickson nor Tuttle see assertiveness training as political. By reconsidering a mode of governing the self, Barbara Cruikshank problematises the way in which women were empowered in the self-esteem movement (Cruikshank 1999). She asserts that '[t]he self-esteem movement is not merely a misbegotten strategy for women's liberation...but 'seeks to constitute a "state of esteem," a new political order and a new set of social relations' (Cruikshank 1999: 88). For Cruikshank, the self-esteem movement should be recognised as 'a new mode of governing the self' rather than as non-political (ibid.: 89). She insists that it is crucial to access the techniques that feminists have used to allow those, such as battered women, 'to act in their own self-interest' (ibid.: 59). In this sense, assertiveness training is political enough to seek to empower and transform women into self-governing, autonomous, active, participatory citizens who solve their issues themselves.

⁸⁸ Likewise, criticising Gloria Steinem's *Revolution from Within: A Book of Self-Esteem* (1992), Diedre English states that '[t]he strategic vision of social revolution here has all but been replaced with a model of personal recovery' (English 1992: 13, quoted in Cruikshank 1999: 87). Like Tuttle, for English, self-esteem aims not at 'social revolution' but at 'personal recovery' and therefore cannot politically subvert existing power relationships.

However, for this reason, assertiveness training looks like an ideal means for both policy and Shirota-san who sees women as subjects who can change themselves. In Japan, assertiveness training was introduced through *The New Assertive Women* (Bloom *et al* 1975) after it was translated into Japanese in 1976 (Kawano 2002: 9-10). Assertiveness training programmes have become popular among public women's organisations particularly since the late 1990s when local governments started to establish local public women's organisations throughout the country. There are now several assertiveness training organisations, including private and not-for-profit organisations, which send trainers to public women's organisations in Japan. These training organisations also run their own programmes for beginners, intermediates, advanced participants, and trainer candidates. Although Dickson did not attempt to deal with 'an overtly political issue' through assertiveness training, assertiveness training came to be deemed as an important means to change individual women and society at public women's organisations including WOO in Japan.⁸⁹ I now turn to how assertiveness training was positioned as a programme of WOO, a public body.

Budgeting proposal for the assertiveness training class

The budget proposal for the assertiveness training class for beginners for the fiscal year of 2003 stated:

Considering the empowerment of women and a society in which both men and women participate, it is essential that we are able to communicate and to say what we want. Assertiveness training makes it possible for women to gain speech and communication abilities and then to make decisions both personally in the private sphere and publically in policy-making processes. For this reason, this class has many applicants and is held on a first come, first served basis.

As I showed in Chapter Two, all the projects planned and established at WOO were required to submit budgeting proposals to the administrators, Okinawa Prefectural

⁸⁹ For instance, Assertive Japan, which was founded in 1998 and became one of the biggest organisations offering assertiveness training, stated that they would contribute to make a better society through assertiveness training when it became an official not-for-profit organisation in 2004. Barbara Cruikshank, for instance, notes that "empowerment" and "self-esteem" are almost mandatory in mission statements and grant applications for nonprofit agencies' 'as a basis for the democratic development of the individual *and* society' (Cruikshank 1999: 92-94). It is a popular strategy for not-for-profit organisations to stress how much they contribute to communities as social missions (Shibuya 2003). Assertive Japan aims at a society which is based on communication without violence, which respects human rights regardless of nationality, race, and gender, which promotes mental health, and in which both men and women participate, by promoting 'communication ability' in every individual. (http://www.assertive.org/e/e_1_2.html, accessed 30 April 2010)

Government Office and the Executive Committee as part of administrative fiscal procedures. A dossier of each budgeting proposal was made by a staff member who was in charge of each project and had to explain succinctly why WOO needed to have a particular project. To obtain official approval, the staff members strategically would use less political and radical words and phrases for budgeting proposals. For instance, they would avoid the supposedly political terms such as ‘feminism’, ‘imperialism’, ‘colonialism’, ‘emperor system’ and ‘anti-US military bases’ and camouflage political content such as ‘military slavery for the Imperial Japanese Army during the Second World War’ and ‘sexual violence conducted by US military personnel’. Instead, like Shiota-san, they would utilise several administrative terms such as ‘women’s issues’, ‘gender issues’, ‘women’s empowerment’ and ‘a society in which both men and women participate’, which the Japanese government and Okinawa Prefecture had used already in policy and which had been circulated already in the public sector, to make their work easier. This indicates that while administrative terms were transformed and changed every time local and national policy changed in accordance with the UN declarations and action plans, the existing terms have remained and been developed in local governments and public women’s organisations as well as by various actors including practitioners, users and citizens involved with WOO. In this sense, these administrative terms are neither static nor dominant but fluid and subversive. Although the words and expressions described in the process of the institutionalisation of the social movement might be replaced, translated and subsumed into institutionalisation and administration as policy and programmes, these administrative terms are also transformed and appropriated by various actors in different contexts every day. Hence this usage of the administrative terms should be seen not as a form of compromise or governance but as a form of ‘administrative feminism’ (Takemura 2003).

It is crucial to note that the assertiveness training class was one of the easiest projects for which to obtain official approval. There seem to be at least two reasons for this. Firstly, as I showed at the beginning of this chapter, the assertiveness training class was the most popular programme in terms of its competitiveness at WOO. It was a distinct advantage for WOO to be able to demonstrate the needs of citizens to the Prefecture. Secondly, most of the staff members, including the

administrators, the seconded government officials and contract workers, were all curious about assertiveness training, no matter how much they were interested in feminism.⁹⁰ This was also an advantage which appealed to the administrators within WOO. For non-feminist and anti-feminist staff members, this was probably because assertiveness training did not look so feminist, political and radical as other programmes at WOO and was more approachable, but there was an expectation that the class might change what they wanted to change. For feminist staff members, the assertiveness training class looked practical and different from other programmes which tended to use passive learning methods. The assertiveness training class was what Shirota-san expected WOO to plan and establish. Although the assertiveness training class did not look feminist for the non-feminist and anti-feminist staff members including the administrators, the feminist staff members, including Shirota-san, thought that it might be useful to solve 'women's issues'. Thus most staff members found the assertiveness training class appealing and the class was always willingly approved by the administrators and the Prefecture and the Executive Committee.

It should be also noted that this budgeting proposal does not mean that the staff member who wrote the budgeting proposal firmly believed that assertiveness training could empower and transform women and realise gender equality. More precisely, the budgeting proposal indicates how a staff member makes use of policy and the administrative terms used in policy to enable her programme to obtain approval more easily. As I have shown above, the Basic Law for a Gender-Equal Society (hereafter, the Basic Law), which was issued by the Japanese government in 1999, ensures that local governments establish basic plans and ordinances geared towards a gender-equal society. In this sense, the DEIGO Plan 2002, which Okinawa Prefecture enacted in 2002, following the Basic Law, looks like one of the top-down national legal procedures under law. However, it is also crucial to see how various actors, such as local government officials and frontline practitioners at WOO, tried to make use of the Basic Law and DEIGO Plan 2002 as law and policy. As I have briefly mentioned above, I found that both local government officials and contract

⁹⁰ Although the staff knew about its popularity and competitiveness, none of them had experienced assertiveness training before.

workers were fully aware that they were expected to use the existing administrative terms, such as ‘a gender-equal society’, ‘women’s issues’, ‘gender issues’, ‘empowerment of women’, in order to obtain official approval for budgeting proposals from the administrators, the Prefectural Government Office and the Executive Committee. This usage of certain keywords in the process of promoting gender equality in the public sector overlaps with the way in which various policies geared towards a gender-equal society used the same keywords, as I have discussed in the section of Gender Equality Policy in Okinawa. Staff members all worked with certain ‘patterns at the levels of word and sentence’ in the process of making budgeting proposals (Riles 2001: 80). This process is what Riles calls the ‘work of producing properly patterned language’ (ibid.). Patterned language was cut, pasted, arranged, or inserted in budgeting proposals, though ‘in practice it was hardly clear what [such] word [s] “meant”’ (ibid.). However, paradoxically, through this very ambiguity of ‘patterned language’ as well as policy and law, it was possible for the staff members to establish a project, which might have been difficult to gain approval for from the administrators.

For example, a staff member planned a seminar about divorce in Okinawa as a series of women’s studies seminars in 2002. She wanted a feminist lawyer to talk about how to practically and safely divorce in Okinawa. She and other staff members discussed the title of this seminar through several meetings of the Projects Section, and the seminar was eventually entitled ‘Law and Women’ instead of ‘Women and Divorce in Okinawa’. The budgeting proposal highlighted how women needed appropriate legal knowledge to realise a gender-equal society by following the DEIGO Plan 2002. By doing so, the staff member who wanted to establish this seminar, and other staff members of the Projects Section tried to generalise the title and its contents in alliance with policy and law so that the administrators, the Prefectural Government Office and the Executive Committee members would approve it without question. However, the staff member asked the lawyer to give a talk about various concrete and difficult divorce cases and their solutions in Okinawa. As a result, the lawyer talked about divorce for women in Okinawa by criticising the Emperor system and family system in Japan as well as the presence of the US military forces in Okinawa. This seminar would not have been realised, if its title and

contents had mapped more precisely onto each other. Before the seminar was planned, the administrators prohibited all the staff members from criticising the Emperor system, which has long considered as a most obvious example of patriarchy in feminist studies in Japan (see Kano 1979). Therefore, all the staff members avoided using the terms ‘the Emperor’ and ‘the Emperor system’ in their budgeting proposals. However, in this case, the staff members and lawyer made use of policy and law to make it possible to establish a risky project in the public sector.

In this context, policy works as an official guarantee for WOO and the staff members to plan and establish a certain programme as a public service by using prefectural tax. In practice, Okinawa Prefecture never evaluated the extent to which policy goals were achieved. Hence, for the staff members, policy existed to give WOO an official guarantee and therefore they seldom showed interest in policy itself.⁹¹ For the staff members, policy did not play a role of working as expected and planned (see Poiner & Wills 1991).⁹² In this sense, it is more important to consider how WOO seeks to position citizens through programmes rather than policy.

In the above budgeting proposal, assertiveness training is described as an important means for women to obtain the speech and communication abilities to empower themselves and then to achieve ‘a society in which both men and women participate’. In this view, assertiveness training makes it possible to change women from being individuals who have insufficient power (or who are regarded as powerless) to those who have enough power to participate in the private and public sphere (see Cruikshank 1999: 69-73; Sharma 2008: 26-28). This view overlaps with Shiota-san’s proposal. As she anticipated, assertiveness training is no longer a passive learning method. Instead, it confers speech and communication abilities on women so that they become able to act as self-innovative, self-governing and autonomous subjects. It is a way of learning that leads women themselves to think what women’s issues are, and get the power to change their own ideas and lives. On the one hand, assertiveness training classes are relatively easily approved as public services by local governments, because assertiveness training is seen as less political,

⁹¹ However, their view of seeing policy should be differentiated from ‘legal instrumentalism’ that sees law and policy as tools (Mosse 2005; Riles 2006).

⁹² Moreover, like international law, policy could not impose a sanction against any actors such as the private sector, local governments, the Japanese government, WOO and individual citizens.

but is in accord with policy plans. On the other hand, feminist staff members find assertiveness training a more practical learning method than those, which use passive learning. Thus assertiveness training is regarded as an ideal, practical, and useful means to change women and in doing so to make it possible to achieve gender equality or 'a society in which both men and women participate' in the contexts of both the administrative budgeting proposal and feminist politics. In this sense, assertiveness training is a focal point of contact between neoliberal and feminist governance. In the following section, I turn to how the assertiveness class was carried out.

Assertiveness training class

In May 2002, WOO started to recruit twenty participants for the assertiveness training class for beginners. The class was free of charge. Applicants were preferably to be without previous experience of assertiveness training and to be aged over eighteen and resident in Okinawa Prefecture.⁹³ WOO, as usual, required applicants to book in advance by post, telephone, fax, or in person on a first come, first served basis. Childcare was free of charge, but had to be booked in advance on the first come, first served basis as usual. As with other classes, WOO printed five hundred flyers and sent them to other public sector organisations such as other women's organisations, community centres, libraries, and post offices, and to the private sector including banks and supermarkets. WOO also advertised the class through various media, such as local radio and TV stations, newspapers and magazines all over Okinawa. The assertiveness training class for beginners was held at WOO every second Saturday morning between nine and twelve in June. The A4 flyer stated:

WOO are pleased to announce that we will have a class to learn the verbal method of assertiveness (self-expression), whereby you can listen to your own feelings and experience positive thinking, self-reliance and your independent way of living. Have you thought that you would like to say what you are really feeling, but find it hard to do? How can you express your feelings to others in various relationships? When you want to ask something of someone, you do not want to do it, you want to decline, or you want to get angry, but you cannot, so what do you do? This class will offer you the opportunity to learn how you can tell

⁹³ At the first meeting for the assertiveness training class, the staff members discussed whether WOO should give priority to women. Yet the lecturer said, 'I don't think WOO should restrict participants' gender. Rather, it would be better if they are over eighteen, since I will have different classes for adolescents at school in the Prefecture.' Hence, unlike its usual practice, WOO restricted only participants' ages for the assertiveness training class.

others what you are feeling.

As a result of the advertising, forty women applied for the class. WOO selected twenty-two applicants among them, in case several applicants might not be able to come on the day. As I described at the beginning of this chapter, apart from them, WOO secured two places for clients of the Counselling Section who the counsellor thought might find assertiveness training useful. Although only one of them applied for the class, WOO still kept a place for another client. Thus WOO kept twenty-four places in total. These applicants were between teenage and sixty years old and one third of them were in their thirties. About half of them came to know about the class through local newspapers and a quarter learned about it through the flyers and friends. Two thirds came from Naha City, the capital city where WOO was located. I now turn to how the class was carried out.

First lesson

The spacious communication salon for the assertiveness training class was on the ground floor with sunny windows looking out onto the street and the courtyard of WOO with its subtropical evergreen trees. This room was the brightest and most relaxing of all the rooms at WOO. The chairs and tables were all soft coloured and all the tables were round. Twenty-two applicants who had booked in advance all came on the first Saturday in June. However, it turned out that none of the clients whose places had been specially reserved came to the class. This unexpected response surprised the counsellors and other staff members including myself. I will discuss this in the last section of this chapter. In addition, a woman came without booking just before the class started on that day and the lecturer willingly welcomed her. Therefore, twenty-three women attended the class in total on the first day.

To begin with, the lecturer thanked all the participants for coming to her class and introduced herself with good humour.⁹⁴ She also asked them to call her by her nickname, Mie-san,⁹⁵ during the class, rather than *sensei* (teacher), the term which participants or students would usually use to address their teacher, lecturer, or trainer.

⁹⁴ The lecturer was in her early forties. She was an official assertiveness trainer recognised by one of the organisations offering assertiveness training in Japan and a resident in Naha City, Okinawa.

⁹⁵ I have changed her nickname.

She continued, 'I would like each of you to introduce yourself to us in turn now. I have three favours to ask. Firstly, could you give us the nickname which you would like to be called during the class? Secondly, could you tell us a little bit about your recent happiest experience, event, thing, or whatever? Lastly, could you tell us what you expect of the class? Please feel free and comfortable about speaking'. Most participants looked nervous when the class started, but they gradually relaxed and laughed often while they introduced themselves. They chose intimate and humorous nicknames and talked about children, family, the workplace, relatives, neighbourhoods, jobs and what they expected of the class, mainly based on the advertisement, which I have quoted above. Then the lecturer said that they would have a break for ten minutes. The participants talked with one another during the break.

After the break, the lecturer showed four ways of expressing one's feelings, to explain what assertiveness and assertiveness training are, by following the textbook. As she introduced the participants to Dickson's book, *A Woman in Your Own Right* (1982), and the textbook is very similar to it, I quote some parts from it to describe what the lecturer said and how she explained it in the class. There are four types of self-expression embodied by Agnes, Dulcie, Ivy and Selma:

First comes Agnes, the aggressive type... She resorts frequently to verbal or even physical violence and abuse... Next comes Dulcie... who represents the passive type. Faced with any kind of confrontation, Dulcie cries and gives in, or runs away to avoid it... Third in line comes Ivy... With a marksman's precision she knows how to aim at that little guilt button in those around her... And so to Selma, the assertive woman... Her self-esteem is anchored deeply within herself (Dickson 1982: 6-8).

The lecturer differentiated the four characters illustrated in the textbook one after another, by showing how each of them would react to others when late for a private meeting. The participants looked busy nodding, taking notes, laughing, and whispering something in a nearby participant's ear. Eventually, the participants seemed to have understood what 'assertive' meant. Lastly, the lecturer showed 'the eleven rights' in the textbook. She read out every sentence with a brief comment to the participants.

1. *I have the right to state my own needs and set my own priorities as a person independent of any roles that I may assume in my life.*

2. *I have the right to be treated with respect as an intelligent, capable and equal human being.*
 3. *I have the right to express my feelings.*
 4. *I have the right to express my opinions and values.*
 5. *I have the right to say 'yes' or 'no' for myself.*
 6. *I have the right to make mistakes.*
 7. *I have the right to change my mind.*
 8. *I have the right to say I don't understand.*
 9. *I have the right to ask for what I want.*
 10. *I have the right to decline responsibility for other people's problems.*
 11. *I have the right to deal with others without being dependent on them for approval.*
- (Dickson 1982: 29-35, emphasis in original)

The lecturer asked all the participants, working in pairs, to recite the eleven rights and listen to each other. They looked to hesitate to do it at the beginning, but eventually they seemed to become accustomed to reciting it in turn. This was the last task in the first lesson of the assertiveness training class.

Second lesson

A week after the first lesson, WOO held the second lesson of the assertiveness training class. Three participants who had participated in the first lesson did not come. It slightly surprised us to discover that one of them was the woman who had come and asked to be substituted for absentees. More shockingly, neither of the two clients whose places had been especially reserved for them came again. All of the staff members of the Projects Section and Counselling Section were surprised by their absence. Yet, above all, the three counsellors, who had picked up two clients as ideal participants in assertiveness training, showed their disappointment with this result, since they expected two of them to come to the class and change themselves. To protect confidentiality, I do not provide ethnographic date, which could show exactly how and why these counsellors wanted to change their two clients. However, it should be noted that the counsellors said that they wanted these clients to change themselves so that they could solve their gender problems. They also said that they thought that the assertiveness training class might be able to change their clients who could not solve their issues through multiple counselling sessions. They added that the assertiveness training class would be different from usual counselling sessions, which the two clients have had previously had at WOO. The three counsellors in particular were therefore disappointed with the fact that these clients did not attend the assertiveness training class at all in the end. I will discuss this absence of the two

clients in the context of the politics of governance in the following section.

The participants chatted away to each other until the class started. This time the lecturer divided the twenty participants into six small groups consisting of three or four people rather than into pairs. The lecturer asked the participants to raise a particular example of a case in which they would like to be more assertive or something that they would like to ask someone more nicely. After they had discussed these in each group, the lecturer asked them to share the specific example with everyone else. She picked up a couple of examples for role playing and asked them to describe more specifically what happened to them and what they wanted to do. For instance, one of the participants said that she would like to tell her husband to stop saying, 'Quickly clean every nook and cranny of our house'. The lecturer asked her whether she would like him to thank her or to help her. After thinking for a while, the participant replied that she would like to say to him that she had done her best all the time so far and this would be all she could do. The lecturer then guided her to reconstruct a couple of scenes as a model of role-playing for small group work.

Dickson borrows role-play 'from the traditional techniques of behaviour therapy' that 'helps the person to rehearse what she wants to say or do in a given situation' (Dickson 1982: 17). In role-play, '[a]nother person takes the complementary role – for example, someone else might sit in for the shopkeeper, the queue jumper, the restaurant manager, the child, husband, friend, parent, boss, and so on – so that the first person can practise handling the situation assertively' (Dickson 1982: 17). Although it was true that 'many participants initially [expressed] great reluctance to try it [role-play] out,' after taking part in role-play, they looked surprised and convinced of its value (Dickson 1982: 17). Once the role-play began, the assertiveness class participants looked quite busy playing each role and commenting to one another. The lecturer walked around the room and observed their role-plays, while the participants asked the lecturer whether their role-play was all right. Some participants said that they were impressed that she or her partner in the role-play group had changed through role-playing between the first role-play and the third role-play. By the end of the second lesson, all the participants had played all the roles.

3. Afterwards

The responses in questionnaires that participants completed indicated that they would like to undergo more advanced assertiveness training in order to develop their skills in assertiveness. However there were no classes offering this, either free or charged, in Okinawa. Several staff members and the lecturer discussed the responses from the participants and the chief of the Projects Section readily agreed to establish a self-help group for assertiveness training, called Assertiveness Club, for those who wanted to continue assertiveness training at WOO.⁹⁶ Six participants became the founder members of the club. The chief of the Projects Section, who was seconded from the Prefectural Government Office, was very pleased with the establishment of the Assertiveness Club and was impressed with the participants' reports that they had found a positive change in their verbal skills through assertiveness training. For her, the assertiveness training class for beginners and the Assertiveness Club represented a great success in public service provision, since WOO could show how much assertiveness training was required by citizens, not only to citizens themselves but also to the funders, the Okinawa Prefectural Government Office. Thus the assertiveness training class became an appealing project not only for WOO but also for the Prefectural Government Office.

Even apart from the request for more assertiveness training, there were favourable comments in the questionnaires that participants had completed, including the following:

1. I would like to be able to realise my own feelings and act based on self-responsibility;
2. Since I had too much respect for others, I would like to pay more attention to myself by using assertiveness from now on;
3. I had not been sure what assertiveness training was, but it was easy to understand questions and answers and then I found a problem with which I was concerned;
4. It was good to meet the world of assertiveness. I am feeling as if I am liberated and pleased to know that there is a way to manage human relations;
5. I was not good at role-playing, and I found that I could not talk about what I wanted to say. I would like to find a way to express what I want and feel. I will do my best to improve self-expression from now on;
6. I was impressed that my role-play partner who had not been able to express what she had

⁹⁶ As I showed in Chapter Three, WOO also established a new advanced assertiveness training class, for which, unlike the assertiveness training class for beginners and the Assertiveness Club, participants were supposed to pay. Those who said that they would be willing to pay 20,000 yen (£100) for advanced training overlapped with the original members of the Assertiveness Club. For the chief of the Projects Section, the advanced assertiveness training class worked as perfect accountability, to show how much WOO and a programme of WOO was required by citizens.

wanted to say at the beginning of the class gave a presentation properly at the end of the class;

7. I found I was Dulcie. I would like to start to make what I am feeling happen in reality. Two lessons were not enough, but I learned a lot from the lecturer's clear explanation and role-playing.

It appears that these responses indicate that assertiveness training made it possible to change these participants into self-regulating, autonomous subjects able 'to act in their own self-interest' as aimed and planned (Cruikshank 1999: 59). As Shirota-san had hoped in her request report and the budgeting proposal for the assertiveness training class for beginners planned in compliance with policy, it seems that these participants tried to think about and problematise what they had experienced so far, and change themselves in order to solve their issues. In this respect, it is vital to explore what aiming at producing self-governing and autonomous subjects through the assertiveness training class means, especially if public women's organisations are seen as 'new publics' where there is no government relationship (see Horii 2007; Ida 2005; Naito 2005, see also Fraser 1992). Barbara Cruikshank (1999: 69), for example, describes how 'government works *through* rather than against the subjectivities of citizens' (see also Burchell 1996; Rose 1996a; Shore & Wright 1997). In Japan, it is also pointed out that volunteer work might result in a form of governance through participation as subjects (e.g. Nakano 2001; Shibuya 2003). For example, Toshio Nakano is concerned that praising volunteer activities as subjects-citizens without reservation might overlook how these activities are connected with Japanese neoliberal nationalism, which, like the Second World War, makes it possible to mobilise citizens into nationalism and militarism (2001: 252-253). Likewise, Etsuko Yaguchi points out that public women's organisations restrain themselves from becoming the basis for women's mobilisation in various ways (Yaguchi 2005: 14-15). Considering these concerns, it is possible that the assertiveness training class became the basis for women's mobilisation and changed the participants into self-regulating subjects who could govern themselves through their voluntary participation. In this sense, they were governed 'both *on* and *through* the agency and subjectivity of individuals as ethically free and rational subjects' (Shore & Wright 1997: 6). In sum, participants were to be formed 'as the subjects of governmental technologies, ethicalized individuals capable of exercising self-mastery, discipline, foresight, reason and self-control' through participation in assertiveness training (Rose 1991:

683).

However, are people always inevitably governed by a form of governance which 'we have already known' (Kato 2008: 117)? For instance, David Mosse notes that 'governance brought by development schemes cannot be imposed; it requires collaboration and compromise' (2005: 7). Likewise, there was a form of governance which produced collaboration and compromise at WOO. Moreover, in this section, I suggest that the assertiveness training class and the Assertiveness Club might not only have produced government relationships but also spawned an alternative meaning of being subjects, who have autonomy and are self-regulating, which is not necessarily connected with integrated governance and mobilisation. Were these participants all governed as free, rational, autonomous, and self-regulating subjects who could solve their issues by themselves through assertiveness training at WOO? Were these practices of self-regulation integrated and mobilised into a form of governance? What does it mean to be self-regulating subjects and to be governed? Through ethnographic examples, this section interrogates these taken for granted relationships, processes, and effects in relation to what we call a form of governance.

Clients who were targeted, but did not come

As I described at the beginning of this chapter, at the planning meeting of the assertiveness training class for beginners, we discussed who would be ideal participants. As a result, places were reserved for two clients of the Counselling Section. The counsellors thought that assertiveness training would be helpful for those particular clients in dealing with their concerns. According to the counsellors, the two clients who were selected had continued to attend for counselling for a certain period at WOO, but could not find any solutions for their issues. The counsellors thought that it might be better for them to attend group work such as assertiveness training rather than continue to receive personal counselling. However, it turned out that only one of them applied for the class and neither of them came to the class. They were targeted as ideal participants for assertiveness training by WOO, but they refused to participate in the class. It appears that they evaded a form of governance, which works on and through their subjectivities.

Yet I do not intend to argue that the two clients were entirely free from a

particular form of governance, which ‘seek[s] to mobilize and maximize the subjectivities of those perceived to lack the power, hope, consciousness, and initiative to act on behalf of their own interests’ (Cruikshank 1999: 71). Nor do I intend to see their responses as a form of resistance to neoliberal policy or feminist governance (Mosse 2005: 6; Kelly 2006: 99). Rather, it is probably also important to question how such a particular form of governance is discursively and theoretically fixed, determined, and naturalised through academic analysis, though I do not intend to undermine efforts which attempt to reveal the way in which governance works.

Furthermore, their refusal or absence shows that, no matter how ‘publics’ are diversified, it is almost impossible to include those who cannot participate in discussion and refuse to participate in it (Yoneyama 2003: 43). In this sense, ‘[p]rogramme success depends upon the active enrolment of supporters including the “beneficiaries”’ (Mosse 2005: 8). As I briefly mentioned in Chapter Two, although WOO is located close to establishments such as massage parlours and brothels, as far as I know, the Counselling Section has never had clients from these and WOO has never run projects for current sex workers and the sex work industry in Okinawa.⁹⁷ It was sometimes obvious that many clients of the Counselling Section and some participants of programmes belonged to the working class, but WOO did not draw attention to class issues at WOO and in Okinawa. This reminds us that ‘the notion of the formally equivalent citizen in representative democracy suggests that all individuals of different constituencies have equal access to and are represented within the political sphere, while simultaneously masking the degree to which strata and inequalities continue to exist’ (Lowe 1996: 144).

This status quo of WOO indicates that WOO might internalise and take for granted the ‘global feminist’ conception of ‘a unitary female subject’ which ‘was developed through asserting the existence of gender-based subordination oppressing all women across time and space’ (Volpp 2001: 1199). Following Lisa Yoneyama (2003), I mean the view of regarding women’s human rights as human rights, advocated by global feminists such as Charlotte Bunch (2001), by global feminism. This global feminism may be bound up with what Chandra Mohanty calls ‘Western

⁹⁷ Some programmes focused on a feminist historical analysis of sex slavery during the Battle of Okinawa and sex work in the pre-war period, but no programmes have been aimed at current sex workers and the sex work industry near WOO and in Okinawa.

feminism', 'which codif[ies] Others as non-Western and hence themselves (implicitly) as Western' (Mohanty 1991: 52). Bunch asserts that 'global' and 'local' are not dichotomous in 'global feminism' and global feminism must include 'women's diversity' (Bunch 2001: 133). Yet, according to Yoneyama, Bunch regards 'local' not as the agency, which mutually negotiates with and construct with 'global', but as something, which is supposed to be added and inclusive by 'global' (Yoneyama 2003: 122). While Bunch sees 'violence, reproductive rights, pay equity, women's political participation' as 'common goals' (Bunch 2001: 136), by doing so, she simultaneously ends up fixing 'issues concerning neo-colonialism, nationalism, class, race and religion', which might be more urgent for certain women than 'common goals', as secondary and complementary for 'common goals' (Yoneyama 2003: 123).⁹⁸ In this way, '[s]ex differences were privileged over any other form of oppression, such as poverty and racism, ignoring the contexts that differentially shape a woman's experience' (Volpp 1991: 1199). Thus the conception of 'unitary female subjects' were problematised by women of colour and the third world and non-Anglo-American feminists (see Alarcón 1990; Chow 1991; Minh-ha 1989; Narayan 1997).

I intend neither to underestimate nor to overlook the above critiques. Yet I suggest that, in the context of WOO, it is also important to consider how WOO could not but help presupposing such 'unitary female subjects' rather than condemn the status quo of WOO by directly applying these critiques to WOO. As I will discuss in Chapters Six and Seven, it was almost impossible to ignore the fact that there were considerable differences between participants, users, clients, and staff members at WOO. As described above, WOO chose and targeted two clients as ideal participants for assertiveness training by differentiating them from other clients and assuming that they needed empowerment. However, the refusal or absence of those clients paradoxically indicates not only the impossibility of changing/empowering particular citizens but also the impossibility of taking no account of the differences between citizens. Those clients showed their differences through their refusal or absence. That is to say, the conception of 'unitary female subjects' inevitably accompanied the

⁹⁸ Bunch's view (2001) might also overlap with 'United Statean feminism', which dominates global and international organisations (Halley 2004, cited in Riles 2006: 56).

differences between women citizens in a praxis level at WOO, although, like law and policy, WOO was required to presuppose monolithic female subjects at a discursive level.

Some doubt about assertiveness training

Among the comments in the questionnaires that the participants had completed, some doubt about assertiveness training is also found. For instance, one of the participants noted that she doubted whether what she had learned was assertive or selfish, and assertive or making an excuse. Another participant stated that she thought that there was no need to change herself, though she had tried assertiveness training. For these participants, assertiveness training did not necessarily lead them to become the self-governing, autonomous subjects that the budgeting proposal and Shirota-san had hoped for. On the contrary, they had some doubt about the purpose of assertiveness training.

However, neither participant attempted to denounce or problematise assertiveness training. Instead, they showed uncertainty and confusion about what it was. Certainly they had voluntarily applied for the assertiveness training class and participated in it on both days. However, all the more for this reason, they found assertiveness training and/or the assertiveness training class for beginners uncomfortable and unconvincing. This indicates that even if one participates in a programme that aims at the transformation of women 'into self-sufficient, active, productive, and participatory citizens' (Cruikshank 1999: 69), participation itself does not necessarily mean that one automatically and undoubtedly becomes a self-sufficient, active, productive, and participatory citizen as planned and intended. On the contrary, one might rebel against or destabilise the policy underpinning the programme. However, such doubt, confusion and uncertainty about the assertiveness training class might open up an alternative way to reconsider so-called technologies of governing and what we mean by 'governing', 'self-governing' and 'being subjects' not as 'what we have already known' but as what we have not known yet. Although both participants who expressed doubts about assertiveness training might have neither changed nor become 'subjects' who could govern themselves and solve their issues by themselves, this paradoxically suggests that they clearly problematised a

form of governance, that is, the way in which the assertiveness training class attempted to change them into self-innovative subject-citizens.

Assertiveness Club

The Assertiveness Club started activities in July 2002 shortly after the assertiveness training class for beginners finished.⁹⁹ It took place at fortnightly intervals. The lecturer said that she might be too busy to come every time, but she would like to come sometimes. Hence, the club usually had self-training activity. WOO offered the club the same bright room on the ground floor, free of charge. About five people participated every time. After chatting for a half hour, they would start to talk about their experiences, which assertiveness training might be able to change, for example, what they had wanted to ask someone to do, but had found difficult. As the lecturer did at the assertiveness training class, they asked each other for more details and tried to clear what they had not been able to do and what they had wanted in reality. After that, they did a role-play based on everyone's story in turn and commented on one another. But, in most cases, they rarely role-played each case. They spent the morning discussing someone's talk.

I joined the activities of the Assertiveness Club as a staff member who was in charge of the club almost every time. Most of the members came from Naha City where WOO was located. We talked about various things, including daily life, family and relatives, workplaces, jobs, neighbours, WOO, assertiveness, assertiveness training, shopping, religion, traditional custom, norms, friends, public services, hobbies, gardens, pets, schools and the lecturer. Since we met together every fortnight, I had the sense that we became closer to one another than did members of other programmes at WOO. While I would run into someone who I came to know through programmes at WOO in public places in Naha City such as in the street, or at a library, post office or supermarket, I tried to neither notice nor speak to them, in case she might not want to let others know that she had visited WOO for various

⁹⁹ I heard from one of the members of the Assertiveness Club that some other participants of the assertiveness training class formed another independent group for assertiveness training outside WOO. She was asked to participate in the group and joined them several times. They gathered at a café in Ginowan City, fifteen kilometres north of Naha City, every Saturday. She did not come after the summer and I thought that she must have attended the outside group instead of the Assertiveness Club within WOO. The establishment of this independent group from WOO also pleased the chief of the Projects Section, seeing it also as an ideal result of public services.

reasons.¹⁰⁰

Nevertheless, when I saw one of the members of the Assertiveness Club queuing at a supermarket near to my flat, I did not hesitate to speak to her and called her surname. However, unexpectedly, she left me at once, while bowing down and murmuring something inaudibly. I cursed myself for my imprudence and bitterly regretted what I did. Yet, at the same time, I was surprised at her unanticipated quick response, since I thought that we had become close to one another. I had to admit that I had interpreted our relationship on my own terms and I was worried that she would not come to the Assertiveness Club any more. However, to my surprise, on the following Saturday, she came to the Club as she used to be before, as if nothing had happened. Needless to say, I did not mention our accidental meeting at the supermarket and nor did she. But we seemed close again and she talked about what had happened to her in the last week. She complained about her neighbour's dog and we role-played based on her story. My understanding might be wrong, but I thought that she wanted to talk about her issues and do assertiveness training at WOO, but she did not necessarily want to act upon and practise 'assertiveness' in reality. She might have immersed herself in 'Okinawan traditional customs' such as the *munchû* system and the *tôtômei* issues in daily life. In this sense, she might not be regarded as the self-governing and autonomous subject, that is, 'an abstract subject standing separate and apart from the particular and local', which 'global feminism' has promoted (Volpp 2001: 1201, see also Montgomery 2001; Taylor 2005). However, her stance should not be seen as a failure of governance or the assertiveness training class. It is also true that she looked confident and pleased when she talked about her life, tried to tackle someone's issues, and role-played at the Assertiveness Club. In a sense, she beautifully performed 'self-governing' and 'autonomy' by separating activities at WOO from her daily life. However, this performance should be seen neither as 'what we have already known' nor as a general effect of a form of governance. We can say that by separating her assertiveness training from her daily life, she skilfully handled and manipulated a form of governance at WOO by herself. Her performance might suggest an alternative meaning and way of 'self-governing' and 'autonomy', which we have not known yet and which are different from the

¹⁰⁰ WOO did not have guidelines for staff about how to handle meetings outside of projects.

taken for granted effects of neoliberal technologies of governing.

To conclude this section, let me illustrate how the members of the Assertiveness Club saw WOO. When WOO was founded it set up the Supporter System, which annually collected membership fees from individuals and groups and made it possible to establish projects not dependant on funding from Okinawa Prefecture. According to a feminist local government official who directed the formation of WOO in the late 1990s, the Supporter System aimed to let 'prefectural citizens' (*kenmin*) get involved in WOO and to raise their awareness that WOO was not only the Prefecture's but also citizens' property by financially supporting it. An annual individual membership fee of 5,000 yen (£25) and a group membership fee of 10,000 yen (£50) was charged. As I showed in Chapter Two, there were five hundred supporters when WOO was formed, but only fifty of them paid membership fees as of 2002 and 2003. This was probably because there was no rewards for supporters, even if they paid. WOO never let them know about events and news such as new programmes and other changes. At the staff meetings, the staff would point out that WOO undermined the system and needed to consider how it could re-embrace its supporters who had been engaged in the establishment of WOO but were now steadily leaving WOO. Yet WOO did not try to work out how to rescue the system.

At the Assertiveness Club, the participants would talk not only about their daily lives but also about WOO. They wanted to know who worked for WOO and how they worked. They were also interested in how a programme was planned and approved. Moreover, they were worried as to how WOO would survive in the era of the financial difficulties of local governments in Okinawa. Meanwhile, one of the participants of the club said that she was a WOO supporter. Other participants did not know what that meant and asked her what a WOO supporter was. She critically described how the Supporter System was supposed to work, but how it did not work as she would have expected. Let me sum up her explanation:

I have been a WOO supporter since its establishment, since I was happy to hear that WOO was established and wanted to support WOO. My understanding is that the Supporter System was supposed to make use of our supporters who financially supported WOO, by letting us know about new information and new events. But WOO never sent me anything. No programme flyers, no annual reports, no leaflets. Nor did WOO respond to my support. No letters, no greetings. I came to know about the assertiveness training class through newspapers. This always makes me sad. Five thousand yen is not cheap for me. I think WOO should be aware that we supporters assist WOO not only financially but also theoretically,

structurally and mentally. WOO should remind itself that we supporters are very important for WOO. Without us, WOO cannot stand up.

I asked her if she had ever raised this issue with WOO, and she replied that of course she had not. I told the participants that there were only fifty supporters including her who paid annual membership fees now. She was shocked to hear that and then continued that WOO would not be able to overcome this financial crisis until it seriously tried to rethink how it should respond to its supporters.

Every time after the Assertiveness Club finished, the chief of the Projects Section would ask me how it went and if everything was all right. I reported to her what the participant of the Assertiveness Club who was also a WOO supporter had said about the Supporter System. The chief then asked another staff member to send all the WOO supporters annual leaflets and programme flyers by post. Her advice made a change to the Supporter System which had not been functioning well. Neither the original budgeting proposal for the assertiveness training class nor Shirota-san had planned and expected such a response from participants of the class. Both expected participants to solve issues concerning themselves, not WOO. But the response of the WOO supporter described above indicated a turning point in the relationship between citizens (supporters, users, clients, participants and the like) and WOO. Thus this WOO supporter might have sought to restore the institutionalised dreams and possibilities of the relationship between citizens and WOO, that is to say, 'vanishing mediators' (Zel 1991). To do so, she might have re-described dreams and possibilities, which she and other supporters had dreamed and generated in the process of the establishment of WOO by making use of assertiveness training.

The Assertiveness Club shows some important aspects of the process of promoting gender equality in the public sector. On the one hand, the Assertiveness Club embodied an ideal form of neoliberal governance to make citizens self-governing and autonomous subjects under neoliberal policy. It made it possible to govern participants through their subjectivities rather than subjection. At the same time, the Assertiveness Club was also an ideal strategy to change women into feminists who were eager to promote gender equality. In the feminist view, women were expected to change for gender equality. Following Cruikshank's analysis of neoliberal governance (1999), I have seen this strategy as a mode of governance in

this chapter. In this sense, the Assertiveness Club is a focal point of contact between neoliberal and feminist governance.

However, on the other hand, the Assertiveness Club also revealed that such various modes of governance might have failed to govern targeted people, and therefore people might not necessarily have governed in the way the existing research and literature has taken for granted. Instead, the Assertiveness Club indicated that there would be alternative meanings and implications of ‘governing’, ‘self-governing’, and ‘being governed’ in the process of promoting gender equality at WOO. Such complex and multiple dimensions of the Assertiveness Club draw attention to how various actors, including staff members, participants, and clients of WOO, faced inconsistencies between the ideal and reality in the practice of law and social movements geared towards gender equality. The Assertiveness Club showed both the ideal and reality of the process of negotiating gender equality in a public institution as a result of social movements.

Conclusion

The lecturer of the assertiveness training class would say to me that women’s autonomy was problematic and tricky and she wanted to neither easily promote it nor to say that women should be autonomous financially, socially and mentally. At that time, she had three part-time jobs including the assertiveness training class, but it was still difficult for her to support her two children by herself. She lived with her partner who financially supported her and their children. When she was asked to give a lecture entitled ‘women and autonomy’ (*josei to jiritsu*) at WOO, she declined, saying that it was a difficult problem to think how women could become autonomous from being ‘full-time housewives’ (*senyô shufu*) in the grip of an economic depression in Okinawa and therefore she was not happy with the aim of the lecture. Perhaps at least one third of the participants of the assertiveness training class were so-called ‘full-time housewives’ whose husbands were breadwinners and who were not engaged in wage labour. The member of the Assertiveness Club whom I met by chance at the supermarket was a full-time housewife too. Even if women want to be financially independent from their breadwinners, in Okinawa it is hard to find a job which guarantees a permanent and sufficient income for autonomy. Furthermore,

even if they can be financially independent from their partners, this does not guarantee freedom from 'Okinawan traditional customs', which make them devote themselves to preparing daily rituals and cooking for ancestral ceremonies. The lecturer pointed out that the discourse of 'autonomy' in policy and budgeting proposals tended to overlook and disregard this status quo. Even though individual women become assertive, society will thus not 'automatically be rid of the ailments that plague it' (Sharma 2008: 17).

Shirota-san expected women to be empowered and to realise self-innovation as subjects through programmes such as the assertiveness training class at WOO. In doing so, she wanted these women to act in order to solve 'women's issues' by themselves. In Shirota-san's report, it is stated that if an individual woman can perceive women's issues as her issues too, as a result of empowerment, then she can solve them by herself and thus contribute to achieving gender equality. Likewise, the budgeting proposal of the assertiveness training class sought to have women gain certain abilities for the empowerment of women and gender equality in compliance with policy. In this sense, the realisation of gender equality is all up to individual women rather than to historical, economic, and socio-cultural systems and institutions. While both neoliberal policy and feminist politics tend to call upon women to become self-governing and autonomous subjects, there is little possibility in reality for these women to do so, independent from their breadwinners and other institutions financially, socio-culturally and historically.

In this chapter, I have suggested that the feedback from the assertiveness training class participants problematised the gap between 'being subjects' and 'not being subjects' and spawned a new relationship between them, while WOO sought to govern gender equality by following law and policy and juxtaposing gender equality as 'empowerment of women' and 'autonomous subjects'. Consequently, 'becoming subjects' and 'becoming autonomous' were indeterminate, dichotomising and juxtaposing subjects and objects, autonomy and dependence, 'power and powerless, subjectivity and subjection, coercion and consent, as opposite effects of government' (Cruikshank 1999: 81). Unlike what Dickson (1982) and Tuttle (1986) have presumed, these implications show how the assertiveness training class spawned not only governing relationships but also alternative relationships, which we had not

known yet and might not necessarily have mobilised through their subjectivities. All the dreams and expectations for the assertiveness training class 'were not necessarily integrated into a legitimate social project' (Nakagawa 2008: 295). The reactions and responses to the class should be seen neither as a form of resistance nor as a failure of governance. Rather, they allow us to imagine again what possibilities people dreamed and described in the process of establishment of WOO as a new political focal point of the feminist anti-militarist social movement and women's studies and administration.

Chapter Six

Okinawa, woman, contract worker

Introduction

In summer 2002, after work, two of my colleagues, who were contract workers, and I went to a trade union office in Naha City to talk about our precarious working conditions and low-wages at Women's Organisation Okinawa (WOO). This trade union was an Okinawa branch of one of the biggest trade unions to organise various kinds of local trade unions in Japan. The reason for approaching this trade union was that someone in a public women's organisation in Japan proper had been introduced to one of my colleagues and it was located only a couple of minutes' walk from WOO. After listening to us for a half an hour and glancing at a copy of our office regulations and working contracts, three trade union members, all men, fetched and looked through a list of salary grades for non-regular workers (including contract workers) of the Okinawa Governmental Prefectural Office. Putting the list down on the table for us to read, one of the trade union members said:

Well, you see, your grade for non-regular workers at WOO is much better than the Okinawa Prefectural Library's. See here. They are also female workers. So your situation is comparatively good, I think. But, as you know, a few months ago we established a new trade union for workers like you, those whose workplace doesn't have a trade union. [He showed us a news article about this union and an application form.] If you join our union now, we can help you anytime! Here is an application form. It would be nice if you can organise as many contract workers as possible at your workplace without being noticed by the administrators.

I had noticed that the air conditioner was definitely working when we entered the office, yet I was feeling rather hot and uneasy, and I drank up a cup of cold green tea which a female trade union member had made. The union member continued to talk about who had newly joined the trade union and how they were happy with it. Meanwhile, I heard one of my colleagues answer, 'Thank you very much for your offer. We will discuss this with our colleagues and let you know how everything goes. Thank you for your time'. The three union members looked happy and concluded, 'Good. Please try to organise as many union members as possible. It would be also useful when you have collective bargaining'. After we left there, on the way to WOO, one of my colleagues gently but firmly said to us:

Quite frankly, I'm not surprised at what they said. They are just men. They undoubtedly think that our salary is good enough for us women and we don't have to get more than that. We don't have to be used by them. We don't have to rely on them. Did you see a female member make a cup of tea for us? Those men didn't think that they should have done it themselves. I wouldn't be surprised to hear that her salary is one third of theirs. All right, we can manage ourselves.

I realised that we were all really angry at the three male trade union members. We decided not to join this trade union. The following morning, we told other contract workers about our decision and they did not disagree with our conclusion. The main reason we did not join was that those trade union members intended to engender us, our working conditions and our labour. They naturalised and essentialised us as 'female' workers and justified our inferior employment conditions merely in terms of our gender rather than questioning it. While they gendered us, our working conditions and labour, they did not try to reconsider and problematise their own permanent employment and the high salary which enabled them to support their wives and children. They presupposed '(a) the focus on male ... subjects and (b) the employment of conceptual schemes that fail to adequately explain the way women experience class and, further, render gender and race epiphenomenal to class formation' (Bettie 2000: 4). Julie Bettie points out that this gender reductionism is seen in feminism as well as classic labour works such as Paul Willis's by assuming gender 'as an essential category prior to its historically specific and politically influenced emergence' (ibid.: 5).¹⁰¹ Thus, paradoxically, the contract workers were gendered through their employment conditions, their labour processes and the labour movement to improve their working conditions at WOO where various actors had aimed to achieve gender equality in the process of the establishment of WOO.

The words 'Okinawa', 'woman' and 'contract worker' have all been deemed and categorised as secondary to their dichotomous categories such as 'Japan', 'man' and 'regular worker' in academia and the mass media in Japan (e.g. Asato 2008; Nomura 2007a, 2007b; Shimabuku 2007; Tomiyama 1990). In other words, these categories, as secondary, are positioned as 'others' to complement subjects as

¹⁰¹ However, I do not necessarily deny all Willis's perspectives of labour in my analysis of the performative labour processes of the WOO contract workers, in taking Bettie's point into consideration Willis (1977). I will reconsider Willis's analysis of the reproduction of the working class in Chapter Seven.

Japanese, men and regular workers (see Minh-Ha 1989). In this chapter, I explore how these categories are constantly defined and redefined in the gendered labour process at WOO. What does Okinawa mean, and what does it mean to be an Okinawan? What does it mean to work as a contract worker? What does it mean to work as a woman? How is 'female labour' produced through the process of working as a contract worker? How does one become an Okinawan, contract worker and woman in the labour process in Okinawa? How are these categories intertwined and how do they negotiate with each other? What kind of relationship do these categories produce? To consider these questions, the chapter describes how individuals encounter, think of and deal with these words and what these words signify in contemporary Okinawa.

As I noted in the Introduction, I do not presuppose 'women', 'contract workers' and 'Okinawan identity' as *a priori* categories to explain the experience of the staff at WOO. Rather, this chapter points to the way in which 'experience' is 'not the origin of our explanation, but that which we want to explain' (Scott 1992: 38). To do this, the chapter centres on how the politics of gender cultivated by the staff makes a difference in the labour process. By doing so, the chapter draws attention to how these existing categories are questioned and judged and then become confused and transformed. However, I do not intend to argue that categories will disappear and that we can 'overcome politics of identities' (Kinjo 2007: 404). Rather, I examine the way in which these categories are reproduced and reinforced through projects and the labour process, and how they are simultaneously parodied, unstabilised and problematised through daily practices at WOO. In conclusion, I shall suggest that experience drawn from the politics of gender opens up and constructs a new arena or relationship between the existing categories in the performative process of labour.

1. Being an 'Okinawan' and 'Okinawa'

It was not long before I came to recognise who were Okinawans and who were Japanese when I started to work at WOO. Since Okinawan surnames are different from Japanese ones, it is not difficult to discern whether a particular surname such as Oshiro, Kinjo, Uehara and Chinen is Okinawan or not. However, the Japanese Civil

Code does not allow people to keep their respective surnames after marriage.¹⁰² As a result, 97% of women have changed their surnames (maiden names) to their husbands' surnames (Shimbun Akahata, 12 July 2002). Therefore, even if a woman has a seemingly Okinawan name, she might be Japanese as a result of her marriage, and *vice versa*. All the staff at WOO between 2002 and 2003 had Okinawan surnames except me. I heard that two staff members were Japanese and came to Okinawa for their marriages to their Okinawan husbands. These women are called *yamaton yome* (Japanese daughter-in-law) in Okinawa. Uehara-san (a pseudonym), a contract worker, who was *yamaton yome*, did not like this naming, saying, 'Why do I have to be called *yamaton yome* after staying in Okinawa for more than twenty-five years? I really hate this expression. I have done my best for my community. I feel as if I am an outsider forever'. Someone also told me that one of the government officials in the Gender Equality Office of the Okinawa Prefectural Government Office who was Japanese and married to an Okinawan woman, was *uchinâ mûku* (Okinawan son-in-law). It should be noted that the word '*uchinâ mûku*' shows a gender difference: while a Japanese man who has an Okinawan wife is called by a term with the possessive case of 'Okinawan', a Japanese woman who has an Okinawan husband is still called a term with the possessive case of 'Japanese'. All the more for this reason, Uehara-san was annoyed at being called *yamaton yome*. Thus it was common to distinguish who was Okinawan and who was not at WOO. In this next section, I examine how categories of 'Okinawa' and 'Japan' are defined and redefined at WOO.

Okinawan 'natives' in the Korean peninsula?

As we all came to WOO as new staff members in April 2002, Asato-san (a pseudonym), Chinen-san (a pseudonym), and I, whose desks were very close, often chatted about ourselves between jobs. Asato-san, an Okinawan contract worker in her late thirties, used to work for a TV station branch in Naha City. This TV station had its headquarters in Tokyo and hired local staff in Okinawa and also seconded Japanese staff members to Okinawa. Asato-san said that she was rather surprised to

¹⁰² The current government is attempting to modify the Civil Code so that a couple can retain separate surnames after their marriage (Japan Times, 10 April 2010).

hear a former Japanese colleague who was seconded to Okinawa from the headquarters in Tokyo call people in Okinawa *genjûmin* (natives) in front of her. The word *genjûmin* was used before the war to signify colonised people or local people studied by anthropologists and folklorists. It therefore connotes discrimination and is rarely used in Japan any more. She was startled that her former colleague did not notice that she had been surprised. She said to us, 'He was young and in his twenties. We Okinawans speak Japanese and we don't live naked. This happened a couple of years ago, but I think they still call us *genjûmin* unconsciously. What era is he living in?'

Chinen-san, an Okinawan seconded local government official in her early twenties, said, 'That was shocking, but it is likely that Japanese people know very little about Okinawa'. She shared an example of her Japanese friend who studied with her at the same university in Okinawa. Her friend said to Chinen-san that before she came to study in Okinawa she thought that Okinawa was located where the Korean peninsula is. This was because the weather forecast map of the Japanese media tended to modify the geographical map, thus putting the Ryukyu Islands at the upper left of Japan proper where the Korean peninsula is in reality. The Japanese Archipelago, including the Ryukyu Islands, is rather long from north to south and it is impossible to fit the Archipelago into a slightly wide television screen. This misunderstanding made us laugh, but it was no laughing matter. I also heard that many staff members complained that the Japanese media only focused on the weather forecast in Japan proper, especially Tokyo, and then ignored Okinawa even if a typhoon had hit Okinawa.¹⁰³

For Asato-san and Chinen-san, Okinawa had been forgotten by Japan and Japanese people, and for this reason both the categories of 'Okinawa' and

¹⁰³ However, the staff members did not necessarily perceive such categorisation as permanently fixed. For instance, Asato-san, who was born of Okinawan parents and had lived in Okinawa since she was born there, was often regarded as a Japanese rather than an Okinawan. Even if she gave her surname which was apparently an Okinawan name, she was told that she must have married an Okinawan and changed her Japanese maiden name. Asato-san explained that this was because with her white skin and narrow eyes she did not look like an Okinawan at all and she spoke standard Japanese without an accent of *uchinâ guchi* (Okinawan language). According to her, a typical Okinawan is supposed to have big eyes and dark skin and be hirsute, but her example obviously shows that such a distinction does not make sense in reality. This example of misunderstanding or bias amused not only her but also other staff members, including Okinawans and Japanese, and made the distinction between Okinawans and Japanese complicated in practice.

'Okinawans' were constructed as secondary and subordinate beings to Japan and Japanese. Thus they suggested that for the Japanese, Okinawans are 'natives' who live in the Korean peninsula. In this way, 'Okinawans' are not objectively constructed as an 'attribute' but a 'given category' (Tomiyaama 1990: 275). This categorisation of 'Okinawans' or '[t]he production of the native' might be better seen as a very postcolonial process (Chow 1993: 30).¹⁰⁴ However, Okinawa had not been necessarily totally forgotten by Japan and the Japanese. Rather, in a way, Okinawa has been the centre of attention as a colonised political arena and as a basis for the anti-military social movement. I now turn to how such attention also upsets and angers people in Okinawa.

Okinawa is nothing!

The Secretary-General, who was in his early fifties, was seconded from the Okinawa Prefectural Government Office to WOO. It seemed that he was not very interested in the 'women's issues' or 'gender issues' that WOO was supposed to tackle according to its mission statement and policy, but he was in charge of examining all the projects under the Executive Director at WOO. Every official draft for a project was to be submitted to him. When one of the staff members, a Japanese contract worker, submitted an official draft (*kiansho*) for a programme for the coming year focussing on colonialism and third world women, he declined her proposal, saying, 'The phrase "the third world" is not appropriate for a programme at WOO. Neither is the word "colonialism"'. The staff member persisted by contending that Okinawa had much to do with 'the third world' and 'colonialism' and therefore it would be crucial to establish such a programme at WOO. However, her counter-argument made him more excited and insistent. He almost shouted at her as she was standing by his desk:

We need neither colonialism nor imperialism. Some still say, 'Okinawa is colonised'. But Okinawa is not special at all. I'm fed up with all these stories. People keep saying, 'Okinawa!

¹⁰⁴ In this sense, it is not enough to criticise Japan when problematising this relationship between Okinawa and Japan. Naoki Sakai explains:

Japan did not stand *outside* the West. Even in its particularism, Japan was already implicated in the ubiquitous West, so that neither historically nor geopolitically could Japan be seen as the *outside* of the West. This means that, in order to criticize the West in relation to Japan, one has necessarily to begin with a critique of Japan. Likewise, the critique of Japan necessarily entails the radical critique of the West (Sakai 1989: 113-114).

Okinawa!' I hate this. Okinawa is nothing! Okinawa is nothing at all! We don't have to have a programme about colonialism and imperialism and the third world at WOO.

The staff members who were in the main office witnessed what happened and were surprised at this. Not unexpectedly, after that, all the staff members stopped using the words 'colonialism', 'imperialism' and 'the third world' especially when they planned a new project at WOO. Nevertheless, I do not intend to indicate that the Secretary-General was apolitical.¹⁰⁵ On the contrary, I suggest that he was reacting to a premise that it was natural that all Okinawans should have resisted Japan and the US military forces, and that he tried to deny it. Okinawa is a place that Japanese leftwing activists and intellectuals tend to see as the base of the most radical anti-militarist social movements because of the presence of the US military forces (Nomura 2007a). They expect Okinawan people politically resist the presence of the US military forces. In other words, they tend to politicise Okinawa and being Okinawan by 'romanticising' both as ideal political actors of resistance (Abu-Lughod 1990b). The reaction of the Secretary-General to the words 'third world' and 'colonialism' should be seen as a response to this politicisation of Okinawa and Okinawans. Several contract workers and local government officials occasionally discussed this response of the Secretary-General during lunchtime and after work. They needed to figure out how their proposed projects could strategically be approved by the administrators, including the Secretary-General. One of the contract workers said that it would be more difficult for Okinawan men, especially conservative and patriarchal local government officials to be seen as victims of colonisation than women. Her view of colonisation overlaps with what Wesley Ueunten calls 'gendered and sexualised colonisation' which men of the US military forces have controlled (Ueunten 2010: 362). She also told us that the more strongly he denied particular words, such as colonialism and the third world, the more he could not help showing that he realised the status quo of postcolonial Okinawa in reality. Another contract worker added that the Secretary-General neither wanted to

¹⁰⁵ I mean by apolitical those who were considered at WOO as indifferent to 'politics' such as Okinawan politics, gender politics and sexuality politics. Some staff members, including local government officials on secondment and contract workers, who proclaimed themselves as left-wingers (*sayoku*), feminists or transgender, would call those people 'apolitical' (*non-pori*) in secret and differentiate apolitical people from themselves. As I shall show below, it was a daily practice for the staff to discern who were political and who were apolitical at WOO.

be seen as a victim of American and Japanese colonisation nor as a political actor of resistance against such colonisation. According to her, for the Secretary-General, 'being an Okinawan' and 'being Okinawa' had already been politicised enough, and therefore he attempted to deny this very politicisation of 'Okinawa'. However, such a 'depoliticised' view of 'Okinawa' paradoxically shows that it is almost impossible for Okinawan people, including the Secretary-General, to escape from what Okinawa might signify, even if they try. These several contract workers said that although the Secretary-General was born, grew up, lived and worked in Okinawa, he might have attempted to move away from his given positionality, which forced him to face and act for the status quo of contemporary postcolonial Okinawa. Moreover, a seconded local government official said that she thought that it was common for male local government officials to deny or pretend not to see colonialism in Okinawa, though she had been actively involved in the social movement that made it possible to have Okinawa return to Japan in the late 1960s and early 1970s. She added that the reaction of the Secretary-General did not surprise her really. This official simply recommended that all the staff members should avoid using particularly problematic words such as 'emperor', 'colonialism', 'imperialism', 'the third world', and 'communism' in the public sector. According to her, it was natural that staff members of WOO should have strategically acted in alliance with law and policy rather than the ideal of social activism.

These staff members tried to understand why and how the Secretary-General attempted to deny colonisation in Okinawa through their daily discussion, and attempted to find out how they could cope with this negation of colonialism to realise a gender-equal society or gender equality. Their understanding might have been wrong, but it is probably crucial to see how postcolonialism has re/produced such differences and conflicts among people in Okinawa and how people tried to interpret each other's reactions in the workplace on a daily basis. These staff members wanted to comprehend the meaning of the response of the Secretary-General to colonialism not only in terms of postcolonialism but also in terms of gender. Furthermore, one might suppose that the Secretary-General also sought to cope with the status quo of contemporary postcolonial Okinawa as a male local government official.

Lastly, let me look at how a staff member tried to be apolitical at WOO.

There are various political parties in Okinawa. But, roughly speaking, people are divided into two groups between ‘conservatives’ (*hoshu*) and ‘reformists’ (*kakushin*) in daily life and in elections. The former group generally upholds the Liberal Democratic Party and the New Komei Party which both endorsed the Japan-US Security Treaty. The reformists generally support the Japanese Communist Party, the Social Democratic Party and the Okinawa Social Mass Party, which have resisted the US military bases. It was rather easy to discern who was a reformist or a conservative through daily conversations and meetings at WOO. As I mentioned in Chapter Three, in autumn 2002, Okinawa Prefecture had an election for a prefectural governor. The WOO staff talked about the forthcoming election almost every day and some disclosed their voting intentions. However, Asato-san, a contract worker, would usually say that she did not want to reveal her political stance in the workplace in order to keep working safely in Okinawa. She said that she would like to ‘go along with’ her colleagues rather than politically argue with them about Okinawa. Sometimes she sounded like a reformist, and at other times she seemed a conservative. According to her, this apolitical stance was essential when working in her former workplace, the TV station, because she was a freelance announcer. For this reason, she did the same at WOO where she was a contract worker. Her strategy worked well in terms of her projects which were passed relatively easily for approval by the Secretary-General, compared to those of other staff members at WOO who proclaimed that they were feminists and reformists. Moreover, her apolitical stance also helped her to renew her contract at WOO. But most of the reformist staff members did not like Asato-san’s ambiguous political stance and deemed her a conservative rather than a reformist.

The Secretary-General and Asato-san might be perceived as apolitical Okinawans who were too ‘docile’ and ‘meek’ to overturn or resist the US military occupation in Okinawa in terms of the anti-bases social movement (Medoruma 1999). However, their stances do not necessarily mean that they were controlled under military occupation. There were also several staff members including government officials on secondment and the contract workers who once were actively engaged in the social movement against the US military bases, but who now pretended to be indifferent to such politics of Okinawa. Although I described a rather lineal

genealogy of the social movement in the Introduction and Chapter Two, it is crucial to note that the social movement was neither lineal nor monolithic. On the contrary, while its political groups such as the Okinawa People's Party (*Okinawa jinmin tō*) attempted to represent Okinawan people in resisting military occupation and aiming for ethnic liberation in the 1950s and the 1960s, at the same time, they ended up oppressing and controlling people in the process of representation (Kinjo 2007: 386-387). The Okinawa People's Party was merged into the Japanese Communist Party in 1973, after Okinawa 'returned' to Japan in 1972. Yet, even after Okinawa's restoration, the US military bases and nuclear weapons remained in Okinawa. Like some staff members of WOO, there were many people who were disappointed and decided to leave the political groups and the social movement itself in Okinawa (*ibid.*). Yet their defection should not be seen as docility, abandonment or compromise. Rather, as Masaki Kinjo notes, we should see this transition to seemingly a 'apolitical' stance as a 'politics' which is completely distinct from the existing politics which tends to mould people's dreams and expectations into codified aspirations (Kinjo 2007: 395). Instead, this new politics opens up a 'residual arena' where the existing politics cannot identify with this politics (*ibid.*). I will return to this argument again in the last section.

2. Being a 'contract worker' as a 'woman'

In this section, I illustrate how the WOO contract workers were structurally, administratively and socio-culturally situated on the bottom rung of WOO through daily practices. In doing so, I will discuss how this position is bound up with the process of becoming a 'female worker' at WOO.

Staff members who are not called 'staff'

There were fifteen contract workers at WOO who were all female and aged between their twenties and sixties. Contract workers were called 'contract' (*shokutaku*), while government officials on secondment were called 'staff' (*shokuin*). Contract workers in reality were staff members of WOO who carried out projects at WOO, but they were differentiated from the 'staff' and not addressed as 'staff' by the Prefectural and other local municipal government officials. There were two shifts, morning and

evening, at WOO. All the staff members, excluding the Executive Director, worked in shifts to ensure services between 9.00 a.m. and 9.00 p.m. The morning shift started at 8.30 a.m. and finished at 5.15 p.m. and the evening shift started at 1.00 p.m. and finished at 9.45 p.m. However, the contract workers did not have a key to the main office of WOO and had to ask a security guard to unlock it if they arrived first in the morning. The government officials on secondment all had keys of the main office and did not have to ask anyone to let them in. This difference made the contract workers feel as if they were outsiders. Moreover, a government official phoning from the Prefectural Government Office sometimes asked a contract worker who received the call to put it through to a seconded government official. This distinction is similar to the relationship between 'salaried men' and 'office ladies' in a Japanese company (Ogasawara 1998: 12). Thus it was difficult for a contract worker literally to identify as being 'staff' at WOO, though they were staff members in practice.

As I showed in Chapter Two, payments for contract workers at WOO were based on their grades and working days. For example, a contract worker of the Projects Section corresponded to 'Grade Three' in the Okinawa Prefectural ranking list and worked for twenty days a month. Consequently, her gross monthly payment was 174,400 yen (£872), including income tax, residence tax, and national insurance, with approximately 8,000 yen (£40) for transportation expenses. This amount was generally enough to allow one to survive oneself, but not to support others. But some contract workers (librarians and counsellors) were paid only about 120,000 yen (£600), since they worked for fourteen days a month on 'Grade Two'. Accordingly, some contract workers had more than two jobs. In addition, there was no overtime payment or other bonus for contract workers. By contrast, government officials on secondment received a bonus twice a year (June and December) and overtime payment if they were required to work overtime. However when they received a bonus, they bought all the contract workers Okinawan *zenzai* (cold sweet bean soup with adzuki bean, white dumplings made from glutinous rice and ice) from *Fujiya*, which was the most famous shop for Okinawan *zenzai*, to compensate for the pay gap somehow. I heard that this had been a ritual since the establishment of WOO. This ritual ironically made some contract workers angrier because it was a reminder

of the pay gap between them, even though *zenzai* were really tasty.¹⁰⁶

Some contract workers pointed out that their low wage was directly connected to their being 'women'. They said that WOO internalised or made use of the presupposition that a woman is financially maintained by her husband or father. Furthermore, they discussed how if the WOO had wanted 'men' as workers, then these men would have been employed under much better conditions than they were. This sentiment is given credence by the Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training (JIL) (2000) which found that it is more difficult for senior high school and university graduate women to find employment as full-time tenured workers than senior high school and university graduate men and college graduate women in Okinawa Prefecture. This is probably because college graduate women have more opportunities to work in the private sector as 'office ladies' (OL) who are supposed to assist male workers (see Ogasawara 1998). In this sense, the WOO has played a role of subsuming the surplus women labour force in the labour market and using it as a cost saving measure.

Clerks who do clerking

At the end of April 2002, in the staff meeting of the Projects Section, the chief of the Projects Section asked Uehara-san, a contract worker of the Projects Section, to take a two-day business trip on her behalf involving a training seminar for staff members of public women's organisations throughout Japan held by the National Women's Education Centre (NVEC) in Saitama Prefecture.¹⁰⁷ Uehara-san was happy to do so. She had been recruited by the Executive Director while she was working in another public sector. Uehara-san's mother had been physically and verbally abused by her father and she asked the Executive Director to be put in charge of projects for domestic violence. Uehara-san identified herself as a feminist and thought of her

¹⁰⁶ Mami Nakano, a Japanese feminist lawyer, points out that there are non-regular workers who mentally cannot manage to go to work when government officials receive a bonus (Nakano 2006: 13-14).

¹⁰⁷ As I noted in the Introduction, NVEC was established as the first public women's organisation in the public sector by the Japanese government in 1977. NVEC is only one national organization which aims 'to promote women's education and contribute to realize the gender-equal society, through conducting training programs for regional government officers, educational and group leaders, and international trainees and other personnel in women's education, and conducting specialized research and surveys on women's education' (NVEC's homepage in English). <http://www.nvec.jp/en/about/object.html>, accessed 30 June 2010.

work at WOO as feminist practice. The chief thought that it would be more meaningful if Uehara-san attended the seminar rather than herself. The morning after Uehara-san's return from the business trip, she and the chief were called to his desk by the Secretary-General. They stood in front of his desk which was located at the back of the main office and overlooked all the other desks in the office, and listened to him. He said:

It is a crucial problem that you, a contract worker, who doesn't need any professional knowledge for your job, participated in the training seminar. The problem is that you got behind with your clerking routines (*jimu*) while you were away from WOO. I only admit the specialities of counsellors and librarians as contract workers. Not yours. The contract workers of the Projects Section are not specialists but clerks (*jimu in*). You, a contract worker, must confine yourself to clerking.

Uehara-san was named not only as a contract worker but also as a 'clerk' and her feminist life's work was also named as 'clerking'. Uehara-san was not satisfied with her low-waged, one-year fixed-contract working conditions. But she wanted to deal with 'women's issues' and 'gender issues' – domestic violence – as work, and for this reason she had come to work at WOO. However, the Secretary-General gendered her labour as a contract worker based on the worker's gender, and then deemed her feminist work as clerking, in other words, unskilled work.¹⁰⁸ In this sense, naming her as a contract worker reconfirmed that she was a 'woman' who would only work as a contract worker and that her feminist practice was not 'the work of the movement' but clerking (Ferree & Martin 1995: 3). Therefore, naming her in such a way was 'injurious' for her and other contract workers (Butler 1997a, see also Althusser 1971). Uehara-san sat at her desk without saying anything after she came back from this rebuke. A year later, she recalled:

When this happened to me, at first I felt self-reflexive. But later I decided that it had not made any sense and it had been unacceptable for me. When I realised that this was violence or power harassment, my self-esteem was also deeply damaged. Everyone else in the workplace became familiar with this situation, but everyone was controlled by power, felt fear, and could not help but keep silent. Although it was my vocation, I gradually lost zest for it and only felt helpless.

¹⁰⁸ However, as I noted in the Introduction, contract workers of the Projects Section were supposed to work for 40 hours a week with special skills on one-year fixed-term contracts based on Article 3-3-3 of the Local Public Service Law.

Uehara-san found her work as a ‘vocation’, but this naming of a ‘clerk’ and ‘clerking’ prised apart the movement including ‘professional knowledge’ from work.¹⁰⁹ Thus Uehara-san and other contract workers in the Projects Section were positioned at the bottom of WOO.

Reordered administrative procedures

In June 2002, the Secretary-General suddenly called an urgent staff meeting. Most of the staff members, including the Executive Director, the government officials on secondment and the contract workers, gathered together in the meeting room. No one knew why he had called the meeting so suddenly. The Secretary-General distributed an A4 size document entitled ‘Arrangement of Projects’ to everyone.

Arrangement of Projects

1. Structure of WOO
 - 1-1. Official duties
 - 1-2. Roles of each post
 - 1-3. Regulations
2. Decision making
 - 2-1. Role of the Executive Director
 - 2-2. Role of the Secretary-General
 - 2-3. Role of the chiefs
 - 2-4. Role of staff members
3. How to deal with a project
 - 3-1. Planning a project
 - 3-2. Communication and arrangement of a project
 - 3-3. Arrangement of dates and roles
 - 3-4. Procedures of exercising budgets
 - 3-5. Performing a project
4. How to report a project

He then started the meeting saying:

Today I’d like to tell you how things should be carried out at WOO. You must know what your official duties are and how you are officially positioned as chiefs, managers and contract workers. You also must know how the Executive Director is highly positioned in the Prefecture. Her position corresponds to the Director-General (*buchô*) in the Prefectural Government Office. There are only a couple of Director-Generals in the government office. So they are the highest-ranking people apart from the Governor, two vice governors and the Head of Accounting. The Director-General is such a high-ranking person that you cannot speak to her directly.

He stressed how the Executive Director is very highly ranked not only at WOO but

¹⁰⁹ I will discuss how the work of the contract workers was bound up with ‘the movement’ in Chapter Seven.

also in the Prefectural Government Office. Hitherto, the contract workers had said hello to the Executive Director everyday and always directly asked her about her schedule. The Secretary-General added that there were only seven or eight Secretary-Generals (like him) in the Government Office and two of them were decision-makers at WOO.

Moreover, the Secretary-General said that the entire schedule of the Executive Director would be controlled by a seconded local government official of the WOO Letting and Accounts Section from now on. He minutely elucidated how to enquire after her schedule. If a staff member wanted to know about the Executive Director's schedule for establishing a new project, firstly she should ask the official who was in charge of all the schedules for the Executive Director. If she was away, then she should ask her boss, the chief of the Letting and Accounts Section. After that, the official or the chief would ask the Secretary-General and then he would ask the Executive Director. Finally he would let the official or the chief know about the schedule and then the contract worker would know about it. He emphasised that other staff members, especially contract workers, should not speak to the Executive Director directly.

Furthermore, the Secretary-General explained how the role of 'arrangement' (*chôsei*), a Japanese administrative term, was important for carrying out a project at WOO. In using the term 'arrangement', he meant that every programme had to be examined and approved by him at every stage: i.e. planning a programme (title, objective, content, speaker, subjects), making a draft and formal document, contacting a lecturer, advertising a programme, fixing the date and venue, sharing roles among staff members (reception, driving for a lecturer, taking care of children of participants, chair, arranging a venue), paying and carrying out a programme. He repeated that all the projects should be carried out through 'arrangement' and this meeting was also 'arrangement'. That is, 'arrangement' served to reinforce power relationships by focussing on procedures rather than the content of projects which is related to gender politics.

The meeting lasted more than an hour. The Secretary-General had noticeably made careful preparations and talked with the Executive Director in advance. The meeting re-established the hierarchical power relationships that would carry out all

the projects by making sure who could decide on all projects. The end result was an attempt to separate gender knowledge from the projects and restore the administrative order by re-setting all the projects entailing a gender component, and which were therefore political, as ‘procedures’ which require ‘arrangement’ with the proper authorities, the Secretary-General behind the Executive Director. After the meeting, all the staff members kept talking about this urgent meeting and new order every time they came across other staff members, in the toilets, in the common room for female staff members and in the counselling room where the Secretary-General would not show up. Especially the feminist contract workers could not help sighing at this new order established by the Secretary-General. As a result, the contract workers were newly positioned at the bottom of WOO in decision-making.

Prohibition of the usage of ‘gender’

Seven months after that, in January 2003, the contract workers faced another ordeal. The Secretary-General announced that all the staff members, by which he meant all workers, should not use the word ‘gender’ any more and contract workers could only offer their ideas for a project but could not participate in decision-making meetings at WOO.¹¹⁰ Yet the word ‘gender’ was used and found here and there in every document, and the phrase ‘gender equality’ coexisted with the administrative term ‘a society in which both men and women participate’ (*danjo kyôdô sankaku shakai*) at WOO. For instance, two of four lectures, ‘Patriarchy and Gender Studies’ and ‘Gender and History’, included the word ‘gender’ in their titles in 2002. WOO also had a training seminar for counsellors and a leaflet introducing WOO’s annual events and programmes which stated the aims of the training to be: ‘to learn skills to support (clients) from the viewpoint of gender’. Moreover, the word was used especially when the feminist contract workers explained to the Executive Director and the Secretary-General why WOO required a specific project. For instance, the Executive Director and the Secretary-General once tried to invite a linguist who was famous for his knowledge of the Okinawan language, but tended to neglect gender issues and did not pay attention to the politics of gender, but happened to be a personal

¹¹⁰ As I mentioned in Chapter Five, the word ‘gender’ was not translated into Japanese but introduced as it was in Japan, by using Japanese syllabaries, which are used for transcription of words from foreign languages.

connection of the Executive Director. The contract workers persuaded the seconded government officials to join them in objecting to the invitation and all of them disagreed with it by showing that there were more appropriate speakers who were experts in gender studies and gender issues which were more linked with the goals of WOO. As a result, the Executive Director and the Secretary-General backed down.

In this way, the term 'gender' has a dual function. On the one hand, it serves as a euphemism for 'feminism' which is avoided in administration and institutionalisation. On the other hand, in its more exact and academic usage, it serves as a more useful term than the vague and jargonistic phrase: 'a society in which both men and women participate'. By using 'gender', the contract workers, especially feminist contract workers, attempted to secure WOO as a political arena where the social movement had aimed to achieve. In other words, they sought to bridge a gap between the administrative term 'a society in which both men and women participate' and 'gender equality' which the social movement had attempted to introduce as an administrative and legal term, but failed not only in Okinawa but also in other prefectures (see Chapters One, Five and Seven). Because of the importance of the usage of the term 'gender', it seemed that it would be extremely difficult then to continue planning and carrying out projects at the agency. Indeed the feminist staff members predicted that this would be the end of the WOO, and were all shocked at the prohibition of using the word 'gender' at WOO.

Especially to the feminist contract workers, the Secretary-General seemed to control all the projects and staff members through the denial of the use of gender knowledge as a professional skill. As discussed above, he re-named a contract worker as a clerk and her work as clerking. He imposed a new decision-making order, based not on gender knowledge, but on job rankings, and he structurally re-positioned the contract workers at the bottom of WOO. In other words, he tried to place all the contract workers including the feminist contract workers into the same category at the bottom of WOO. Additionally, the staff members were banned from using the term 'gender' and the contract workers were banned from decision-making meetings. It appears that he tried to disconnect gender knowledge from the work of contract workers in order to make it easier to control especially feminist contract workers who sometimes refuted hierarchical decisions by making full use of their

gender knowledge and analysis. On the one hand, the Secretary-General attempted to regulate what the social movement had aimed for in the process of the establishment of WOO and to replace it in administration and institutionalisation. His attempt might be seen also as male resistance to gender equality (Cockburn 1991). On other hand, the feminist contract workers sought to restore what the social movement had aimed for, namely gender equality. As a result, the power relationships in the workplace were clearly seen in the antagonistic relationship between the feminist contract workers and the Secretary-General.

By his actions, the Secretary-General became a representative of the male dominant world especially for the feminist contract workers. Even among the non-feminist staff members, he symbolised a typical Okinawan patriarchal man for other reasons. They learned that he was a first born son who, in Okinawa is considered to be taken care of the most carefully of all the children and is guaranteed to inherit property. The staff members would say that a first born son in Okinawa must not have ever made a cup of tea for himself or others, must never have cooked, washed and cleaned, never taken care of children, looks down on his wife and women, is against changing the existing gender roles, but thinks much of his mother. Accordingly, the Secretary-General came to embody a symbol of power, authority, 'men', bureaucracy, patriarchy and the Prefecture.¹¹¹ At the end of the fiscal year of 2002, in March 2003, three contract workers, including feminist and non-feminist reformist contract workers, did not renew their contracts, and left WOO although in reality they wanted to keep on working there.

3. Categories in the politics of gender

The Secretary-General intended not only to control staff members and projects at WOO, he was also trying to control what the term 'gender', which was intangible and vague to him, signified at WOO. However, the staff members did not completely obey his orders and the hierarchical power relationships introduced by him. They elaborately ignored or simplified some parts of the procedures, while they pretended to properly follow the order and the 'formal' procedures which he established. For

¹¹¹ Yet I do not insist that he embodied all of these for everyone all the time. He embodied each of them or some of them in every context.

example, some contract workers and seconded local government officials sometimes acted in conspiracy by doing without a specific document which was not necessarily required in practice, but which the Secretary-General demanded. Moreover, most staff members directly continued to speak to the Executive Director even after the Secretary-General changed the procedures. This was not only because they did not want to bother the staff member of the Letting and Accounts Section who was always busy with her own official duties but also because it was more accurate, practical and quicker to do so. Furthermore, some contract workers sometimes directly negotiated with the Executive Director by skipping 'formal' procedures and asked her to persuade the Secretary-General to approve a particular project. This worked and the Secretary-General could not object to the Executive Director as his direct boss. The contract workers made use of the very order which the Secretary-General had established. It should be noted also that the more he tried to control other staff members, the more they thought about what he had done in terms of the politics of gender, because he made use of his gendered power which he had obtained due to his gender. In this sense, the more he tried to do, the more 'gender' as an analytical framework and as a conception proliferated and overflowed. I now look more carefully at how the attempts to remove the movement from work paradoxically led to the flourishing and stimulation of the politics of gender and how this ultimately led to the failure to govern 'the work of the movement' in terms of the politics of gender. This section highlights an example of this.

Gentlemen's Boats

The WOO staff members shared a lot of jokes with each other in the workplace at lunchtime, in corridors and toilets, and after work. The staff members would regularly have dinner together. Above all, 'Gentlemen's Boats' was invented by one of the contract workers and became the most popular and frequently repeated joke among the contract workers. The joke was changed and modified almost every day and it might better be described as a parody rather than a joke. When we were depressed in the workplace, we would quote from 'the Gentlemen's Boats' and laugh away.

'The Gentlemen's Boats' was based on a real project called 'Women's Wings'

organised by WOO as a series of projects for women leaders in local communities under the gender equality policy of the Prefecture. The project 'Women's Wings' has been carried out annually since the establishment of WOO. Its aims are 'to train and develop women leaders and to improve their qualities'. Between eleven and twenty women leaders were selected in their communities annually to visit various countries (Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Canada, the US, Germany, Switzerland, Australia, New Zealand, Holland, Norway, and Sweden) for about ten days in order to study gender equality policies and women's organisations such as domestic violence shelters. Participants were supposed to bear half of the cost of travelling. They were selected after submitting essays and CVs as well as being interviewed by the committee of the project consisting of five 'intellectuals' from Okinawa such as professors and solicitors. In 2002, ten women and the WOO Secretary-General went to Norway and Sweden for ten days.

All the women who participated in Women's Wings have become members of the Association of the Women's Wings (AWW). However, Hiruma-san, a contract worker, would say that women who went to abroad thanks to the Women's Wings were rich enough to have power in their communities. In her view, being a member of AWW reflected high status and prestige as a female leader in Okinawa, not necessarily that the woman was a feminist or interested in gender equality. For example, it was impossible for a contract worker to take a ten-day-holiday from the workplace at WOO and so contract workers could never participate in the project. Some contract workers criticised the Women's Wings as a junket or a pleasure trip, because it used public money.

'The Gentlemen's Boats' parody was invented to humorously criticise the Women's Wings, suggesting that the Prefecture should use public money more usefully for 'Gentlemen's Boats' rather than for Women's Wings. This radical project would send *men* who are 'harmful' to Okinawa in terms of gender equality to sea without sufficient fuel to return to port, so that they could not get back to Okinawa. The idea was intended also to sarcastically problematise the famous *kamikaze* (suicide attackers) of the Battle of Okinawa as a symbol of machismo, and the sex tours in Asia as a symbol of gendered neo-colonialism. 'The Gentlemen's Boats' was also based on the positionality of contract workers at WOO and in Okinawa.

Contract workers were seen as neither privileged, famous, rich nor honourable. Therefore they would never be selected as participants of the Women's Wings project.

The imaginary Gentlemen's Boats' project was elaborated as follows: the Prefecture openly calls for 'honourable' and 'privileged' men who want to go abroad in the name of the Prefecture. Participants do not learn the truth of the situation until they get into a boat and sail into sea away from Okinawa. That is, 'the Gentlemen's Boats' will be an inexpensive way to promote 'gender equality' in Okinawa by sending patriarchal, sexist men to out to sea. However it should be noted that this project did not aim at promoting 'a society in which both men and women participate' which was invented as an administrative term in the 1990s and circulated all over Japan including Okinawa. Rather, more directly and radically, the project attempted to promote 'gender equality' by eradicating 'harmful' men from Okinawa. When we contract workers found someone who was patriarchal, macho, bureaucratic, or sexist, we would let him get into 'the Gentlemen's Boats'. We would also imagine and describe how we would throw paper streamers up to 'the Gentlemen's Boats' on the pier and how they would willingly embark without knowing about the one-way supply of fuel.

'The Gentlemen's Boats' was invented, modified and quoted by the contract workers, but the Secretary-General and others (for example, the three trade union member who said that wages of contract workers at WOO were not low) indirectly contributed to 'the Gentlemen's Boats'. Without them, 'the Gentlemen's Boats' would not have been so popular among contract workers. Through 'the Gentlemen's Boats', the contract workers analysed patriarchy, family system, sexual violence, heterosexuality, misogyny, sexism, machismo, male chauvinism, gendered payment gap, and US military bases. In this sense, 'the Gentlemen's Boats' shows that the Secretary-General's attempt at banning the signifier of gender contradictorily proliferated the signified of gender.¹¹² He tried to ban the word 'gender' as a sign, but as a result the contract workers produced the signified of gender more and more.

¹¹² In the light of this discussion, it is interesting to bear in mind that Judith Butler explains that 'as a consequence of the regulation, in fact, it appears that public discourse on homosexuality has dramatically increased' in the context of sanctions on homosexual speech in the military in the United States (Butler 1997a: 104).

Thus by reversing the taken for granted meanings and deployment of gender and class, 'the Gentlemen's Boats' parodied and problematised the existing hierarchy and norms rather than reproducing them. This practice of parody does not necessarily subvert the order in reality, but the politics of gender flourished and was stimulated in the very process of gendered labour and working conditions at WOO.

4. Unspeakable contemporary sex work in Okinawa

Throughout this thesis I have examined how neoliberal and feminist governance overwhelmed WOO and how users and staff members of WOO individually and collectively responded to various forms of global governance. However, there were at least two different levels of politics going on at WOO: global governance and local politics. Chapters Three and Five examined forms of globalised governance, such as feminist governance and neoliberal governance in the context of WOO. To conclude this chapter, I consider how WOO internalised local politics in the process of aiming to promote gender equality. In other words, through an example, I show the ways in which certain 'political' issues were absent and unspeakable on the agenda of WOO.

In the 1960s and 1970s (during the Vietnam War), sex work was implemented through a 'control system', in which it was extremely difficult for an Okinawan sex worker to stay out of debt. This was a serious issue in Okinawa (Nihon Bengoshi Rengokai 1971: 298; Suzuki & Tamaki 1997: 239-240, 259; Takazato 1996: 46). Under the control system, sex workers were paid only 10% or 20% of their earnings and could not quit sex work until they could pay off their debts (Suzuki & Tamaki 1997: 260). As noted in Chapter Two, women activists, including counsellors for sex workers in the public sector, tried to tackle this issue through various kinds of activism such as the Group of Okinawa Women 80, the Nairobi Forum, and the *Unai* Festival especially in the 1980s. This strong feminist social movement indirectly contributed to the establishment of multiple public women's organisations including WOO in the 1990s. WOO convened several workshops and symposiums about Korean, Japanese and Okinawan sex slaves for the Imperial Japanese Army during the Battle of Okinawa. It should be noted that right wing activists and politicians put pressure on public sector institutions that planned to hold seminars and workshops on sex slavery during the Second World War for the

Imperial Japanese Army, and as a result the public sector institutions came to refrain from holding such seminars in mainland Japan (see Kim & Nakano 2008; Yoneyama 2003). Like other public women's organisations in Okinawa, WOO has never planned or convened any workshops, lectures, or seminars about contemporary sex work or for sex workers in Okinawa. Moreover, WOO has not attempted to get involved in issues surrounding the concurrent sex industry, including trafficking of non-Japanese nationals in Okinawa. For instance, when a local newspaper disclosed that Colombian women, including teenagers, were trafficked and worked as sex workers in the city centre of Naha City (Ryukyu Shimpo, 16 June 2004), WOO neither problematised trafficking in Okinawa nor attempted to support those Colombian women. In contrast, Suzuyo Takazato, a co-chair person of the Okinawa Women Act Against Military (OWAMV), made critical comments about Okinawan culture allowing people to buy women on a daily basis and asserted that it was imperative to help them (ibid.).

It is also crucial to note that sex workers describe public shelters for sex workers established by local governments in Okinawa as 'prisons', and those who have experienced public shelters never want to go back there (Takazato 1996: 134). These public shelters were established under the Prevention of Prostitution Law to find and 'educate' (*shidô*) sex workers and potential sex workers in the early 1970s after Okinawa returned to Japan from the US military occupation. During my fieldwork, some staff members of WOO told me that several male local government officials who worked at public shelters for sex workers avoided using a toilet which 'inmates' (*shuyôsha*) had used because they were 'filthy' (*kitanai*) and 'contagious' (*densen suru*). These public shelters have claimed to 'protect' sex workers and potential sex workers, but instead they have controlled them as 'inmates' (Hayashi 2008). Such labelling of sex workers was criticised and problematised by the feminist contract workers of WOO unofficially, not as an official task of WOO, but informally as part of their feminist practices.

Moreover, as also noted in Chapter Two, the counsellors of WOO have never had clients who have issues regarding the sex industry despite the fact that WOO is located rather close to one of the most famous sex industry areas in Okinawa. This is probably not only because sex workers did not simply know about WOO and what

WOO was doing, but also because they did not want to come to WOO as a public body which tended to control and regard them as 'filthy' and 'contagious' rather than help them and offer the support they needed. In the light of this, one might think that there is a possibility that sex workers might have come to WOO not as sex workers but as women who had 'gender issues' with which WOO officially dealt. However, as a result of the difficulty and reluctance of sex workers to visit WOO, the issue of contemporary sex work and sex workers in Okinawa was substantially and literally absent at WOO. This absence of sex workers and sex work indicates that it is taboo to deal with sex work as part of 'gender issues' at WOO as a public body. Instead, it is left to non-public women's organisations such as OWAMV, which was established a couple of years before WOO was founded, to deal with issues which WOO excludes from its official duties. Thus WOO ends up officially segregating contemporary sex work from gender issues that focus on women, and thus excludes sex workers.

WOO as part of the public sector was officially expected to aim to solve so-called 'gender issues' such as domestic violence, gender roles, and divorce, to improve women's status, and to realise a gender-equal society under policy and law. In the process of doing so, by excluding sex workers from the category of women and sex work from 'gender issues', WOO has re/produced a category of women and re/defined what 'gender issues' as an administrative term were and meant. However, this does not necessarily mean that all the staff members were indifferent to sex work and sex workers in contemporary Okinawa at WOO. Several staff members tried to understand what was going on in the sex industry in Okinawa through their informal networks and newspapers. Moreover, they would talk to each other about the absence of sex workers at WOO in conversations between jobs and after work. I heard that several contract workers said that it was a shame that sex workers who might need more help did not, as sex workers, use the free public services at WOO. But, at the same time, they said that it might be risky for them to visit local shops such as massage parlours near WOO on an *ad hoc* basis to find out whether sex workers had any problems, because such an approach might end up cornering sex workers (such as runaway teenagers and illegal sex workers) and their employers rather than offering useful information or help. They stressed that even counsellors could not

take action to help someone until that person voluntarily came to ask for help at WOO. One of the feminist contract workers tried to plan a seminar to rethink the contemporary sex industry in Okinawa, but other feminist contract workers prevented her from doing so. As briefly noted in Chapter Two, another feminist contract worker pointed out that WOO could neither be seen as useful nor helpful by sex workers since WOO was neither for them nor for the contract workers. She continued by saying that WOO was a place for special and fortunate people who had enough money to freely go there whenever they wanted. Furthermore, most of the staff members realised that the local government would not be happy with a seminar or workshop for contemporary sex workers at WOO. In the context of the public sector, sex work issues should be dealt with at the public shelters for sex workers under the Prevention of Prostitution Law, though, like WOO, no public shelters took action against trafficking of Columbian women in 2004. Such understandings of sex work in the public sector was a tacit agreement not only at WOO but also in other public women's organisations in Okinawa.

When a newspaper disclosed that two sex workers, one of whom was a teenager who had run away from home and worked for a massage parlour near WOO, and their employer died in a fire (Ryukyu Shimpo, 15 October 2007), one of the feminist contract workers told me that it was deeply ironic and hopeless that she came to know about who was working for the nearest sex industry through such a shocking news item. Although several contract workers showed irritation at the absence of sex work from official daily practices of WOO, most of the staff members knew that it was extremely hard officially to problematise and overcome this segregation between 'ordinary' women and sex workers at WOO. This segregation was necessary in order to maintain WOO as a public body that was funded by public money. However, even if WOO could not deal with contemporary sex work as part of its official duties, this does not necessarily mean that WOO could completely separate itself from sex work. Rather, it is crucial to note that WOO could not help but internalise the contradictions and conflicts of the politics of 'gender issues' and the category of women through the segregation processes.

While in the 1960s and early 1970s most sex workers were Okinawan women, Filipina women came to Okinawa to work as sex workers after the late 1970s

(Suzuki & Tamaki 1997: 257). Newspapers have occasionally disclosed that sex workers came from (or were trafficked from) South America, Korea, eastern Europe, mainland Japan, and remote islands in Okinawa, and that not only US military personnel but also Okinawan professors and schoolteachers paid for the services of these women in the 2000s. The sex industry in Okinawa has become more and more globalised and racialised in the last two decades. Tackling sex work issues in Okinawa means not only helping women who come from all over the world but also dealing with class issues, racism, militarism, and globalisation. Moreover, as in Takazato's comments, cited above (Ryukyu Shimpo, 16 June 2004), tackling issues regarding the sex industry also means problematising the whole society of Okinawa, including those who might buy and sell sex. This task is too global, unstable, and political for the WOO agenda, which includes only generalised 'gender issues' through projects such as seminars and symposiums. Ironically, WOO cannot help segregating sex work from public sector matters in order to make 'gender issues' public social issues in the public sector. In addition, this may resonate with the fact that Okinawa Prefecture has never included sexual violence conducted by US military personnel in its annual reports about damages and sufferings caused by the US military bases in Okinawa (Takazato 1996: 34). The absence of sex work does not mean that WOO had nothing to do with the contemporary sex industry in reality. Rather, this politics of sex work indicates that, in the process of attempting to realise a gender-equal society at WOO, so-called 'gender issues' and the category of women are problematic, contingent, and unstable. WOO necessarily embraced such contradictions and conflicts in its daily practices and thus revealed the gap between the ideal and reality in negotiating gender equality.

Conclusion

WOO was established in the public sector thanks to the long-standing, patient calls of feminist and anti-militarist activists and grass-roots movements. However, as I have observed, working at WOO also entailed 'encounters with anti[-]feminist ... opposition' (Simonds 1995: 248). On the one hand, the Secretary-General tried to define feminist work as clerking, to rename feminist contract workers as clerks, to re-position feminist practice as administrative procedures, and to ban the use of the

word 'gender', in order to regulate the workplace. For him, the politics of gender was invisible and intangible. On the other hand, the feminist contract workers carried out their projects by making full use of gender knowledge intertwined with feminism, postcolonial studies, and anti-militarism. The more that the Secretary-General attempted to administratively control the contract workers, the more he wanted to restrict the politics of gender as manifested by the word 'gender', which he did not actually fully grasp. In a way, he might have attempted to keep institutionalising the social movement in the process of administration.

The feminist contract workers analysed their working conditions and the labour process as a practice of the politics of gender. In doing so, they also interpreted the Secretary-General's actions in such a way that he came to embody and represent patriarchy, male chauvinism, and a male dominated society. As a result, paradoxically, the politics of gender flourished at WOO. The feminist contract workers might have tried to identify the institutionalised social movement with what they respectively dreamed of gender equality. In this sense, the antagonism between the Secretary-General and the feminist contract workers might indicate a fatal gap between 'a society in which both men and women participate' as a term of institutionalisation and administration and 'gender equality' as a term of the social movement.

I have shown that WOO was an apparatus to re/produce various categories through projects, the labour process and daily conversations. However, 'the Gentlemen's Boats' points to the way in which the feminist contract workers transformed, reversed and problematised the given meaning of the categories such as 'Okinawa', 'women' and 'contract workers' through daily conversations, while they were gendered as 'women' and 'contract workers' in the labour process at WOO. Moreover, the absence of sex work draws attention to the way in which WOO was a practical site for reinforcing and destabilising what women's issues and gender issues mean and for reconsidering various taken for granted categories as contingent and unstable, because it was the very praxis site where these categories are re/produced and re/defined through daily practices. This reminds us that we need to look at the 'experience' of the incident as well as the WOO staff, 'by analyzing the terms of definition offered in political discourse (by the state, employers, discrete political

movements, etc.)' (Scott 1988: 56). In this chapter, I have suggested how their experience cannot be interpreted by using *a priori* categories and relationships between them. This is because the staff members transformed and destabilised such categories and relationships in the very process of their gendered labour.

Chapter Seven

Fatal Loyalty to Feminism?

‘A women’s institution must be run by a zealous staff member who tries to solve women’s problems’ (Sakurai 1995: 84)

‘It is essential [for a women’s organisation] to be an institution where a staff member who has her zeal and a point of view of gender equality can show her ability’ (Yoneda 1997: 102)

‘Whether [a women’s organisation] can play numerous roles or not depends on passion and acting power of staff members including me and women in this prefecture’ (Funahashi 1995: 51)

Introduction: a miniskirt and black mesh tights

‘Did you notice the pink miniskirt with the sexy black mesh tights that Chief Kyan is wearing today?’ ‘Of course, yes. It’s really astonishing that she wears things like that. Where does she think she works?’ ‘Her shocking pink miniskirt is really short, at least ten centimetres above the knee. Does she want to look sexy here, at a women’s organisation?’ ‘I just can’t believe that. I’m just wondering if she knows how she is seen as the chief of WOO by outsiders’. ‘Who does she want to show this to? It’s absolutely disgraceful’. ‘Her clothes represent her. I heard that she was also like this when she worked at the Prefectural Government Office. You know the way she talks’.

It was highly controversial among contract workers that the chief of the Projects Section came to Women’s Organisation Okinawa (WOO) with a shocking pink miniskirt suit and bold black mesh tights. Several contract workers, who proclaimed themselves as feminists, were especially concerned with her outfit and talked about it all day. They regarded her outfit to reflect the absence of feminism in her way of thinking.

On the 1st of April 2002, Kazuko Kyan (a pseudonym),¹¹³ who was in her fifties, was seconded to WOO as the chief of the Projects Section from the Okinawa Prefectural Government Office. The position of the chief of the Projects Section has been occupied by a female local government officer of the Prefectural Government Office since WOO was established in 1997. On the one hand, this position was considered middle management, between administrative posts such as the Executive Director and the Secretary-General, and contract workers, to smoothly plan and run projects at WOO by the Okinawa Prefecture. On the other hand, this post was also

¹¹³ All the names except Chizuko Ueno, Yoko Haruka and Sachiko Kagami in this chapter are pseudonyms.

seen as her chance to show her ability not only in terms of her administrative skills but also an opportunity for her feminist politics to be interspersed throughout bureaucratic government especially by the feminist contract workers she employed. Thus the chief's post was the centre of attention at WOO.

As soon as she took the new post, Chief Kyan appeared at WOO wearing a colourful miniskirt suit with black mesh tights. Because most staff, including contract workers, were soberly dressed, that is, wore dark trousers rather than bright skirts, her outfit was distinct from others. Even staff members of other public women's organisations in Okinawa Prefecture used to gossip about her. Accordingly, she became famous not only for her outfit but also for her lack of feminist politics. In fact, the feminist contract workers had expected that she could be a feminist, because they thought that she must have experienced gender discrimination through her career in the Prefectural Government Office. Female chiefs represented only 8.3% of all the chiefs in the Prefectural Office, whereas there were 39.4% female managers in 2002 (Okinawa Ken 2008: 8).¹¹⁴ It was considered that it would be hard for female local government officials to be promoted in the Prefectural Office, even though they had the same careers as male colleagues. Chief Kyan was highly sensitive to class issues and had been engaged in social work in the Prefectural Government Office before she came to WOO. However, she happily said to some of the staff members that she had never heard of the word 'gender' before and did not seem interested in feminist politics, which the feminist contract workers wanted to share with her. Chief Kyan was not a so-called feminist and in fact became a symbol of non-feminism for the feminist contract workers.

A women's organisation is a 'greedy institution' (Coser 1974; Franzway 2000). It requires staff members to show not only labour, which corresponds to payment, but also 'considerable depth of commitment and loyalty' (Franzway 2000: 258) such as 'zeal and a point of view of gender equality' (Yoneda 1997: 102) and 'passion and acting power' (Funahashi 1995: 51) to 'solve women's problems' (Sakurai 1995: 84). To begin by stating the conclusion, the demand for loyalty, 'zeal

¹¹⁴ In 2008 6.7% were female chiefs (Okinawa Ken 2008: 8). There was no record for female managers as of 2008.

to solve women's problems', 'gender equality',¹¹⁵ or feminism came not only from inside the WOO but also from the outside, and was directed more to the contract workers – as feminist workers – rather than seconded officials like Chief Kyan. However, one feminist worker thought that she spontaneously and intentionally tried to be a feminist through differentiation within WOO rather than passively and impulsively accepting the demand for loyalty to feminism from the outside of WOO. In this sense, there was a gap between the feminism demanded by the outside and the feminism embodied within the inside of WOO. A feminist contract worker embodied feminist politics as the self-disciplined, self-governed, and self-responsible subject in the workplace. This is a process by which '... a human being turns ... herself into a subject' (Foucault 1982: 208). This process was also inseparable from the politics of participation within WOO that I have discussed in Chapter Five. Not only feminist contract workers but also participants, clients, and users were all required to be the subjects through 'technologies of citizenship' (Cruikshank 1999) under the national policy of gender equality. Yet, as I showed in other chapters and shall show in this chapter, simultaneously, these 'subordinate actors...create everyday spheres of action autonomous from the organising policy models' (Mosse 2005: 10).

This chapter ethnographically explores how a feminist contract worker struggled with her feminist politics under low-waged, low-prestige, flexible and gendered working conditions at WOO, an organisation whose aim was to officially promote gender equality, when she 'views her work as feminist activism as much as a job' (Martin 2005: 96). In other words, this chapter looks at how a contract worker became subject to working conditions, and, at the same time, formed the subject as a self-identified feminist contract worker in subordination. A feminist one-year fixed-term contract worker identified herself as a feminist and attempted to be involved in the local government administration to pursue gender justice, while she ended up embodying women's oppression and reinforcing the existing gender division of labour by working as a contract worker. A central question is: Does loyalty to feminism become fatal for a feminist one-year fixed-term contract worker as she becomes the subject and subjugates herself to a form of power (Foucault

¹¹⁵ As I have discussed in other chapters, in Japan, within the public arena 'gender equality' has been frequently used as a euphemism for 'feminism' by feminists.

1982)?

1. To be a feminist at work

When I started working at WOO in April 2002, all of the twelve new staff members consisting of contract workers and seconded local government officials were obliged to attend a one-day staff training seminar for new staff members at WOO. The seminar consisted of five lectures and talks about the official duties of WOO, each section, what a gender equal society means, how to produce an official document, and so on, were given by the existing and former staff members including the Executive Director.¹¹⁶ One of the lectures and talks, which took an hour, was entitled ‘What is gender?’ and was given by a former contract worker who had belonged to the Projects Section for three years. She explained that the conception of ‘gender’ was born from women’s liberation movements and the feminist movement in the United States and that this has been interpreted as ‘social, cultural, and mental sexual differences’. She also illustrated concretely how ‘gender’ was deeply embedded in our daily life. She explained; if a person has a gender perspective, s/he wonders why female primary school students tend to have red or pink satchels, while male students have black or blue ones, and why there is a double standard of gender roles, in which women are supposed to be engaged in domestic chores, even if they have a paid work. This is often referred to as the ‘double burden’. She then stressed that working with a sensitive ‘gender perspective’ (*jendâ no shiten*) was every staff’s task at WOO and it was important to see daily work, daily life and the world in terms of this gender perspective. She was considered a feminist among all of the staff at WOO.

I suggest that there were two objectives of this talk. First, the lecturer made sure that WOO and its staff recognised that a gender perspective as an official idiom was needed to perform daily work for a gender equal society in front of all of the new staff members, especially seconded government officials such as the Secretary-General and the Chief Kyan. Second, she indicated that a gender perspective could replace feminism in the public sector. More precisely, she meant that it might be hard to refer to feminism at WOO, but a gender perspective could

¹¹⁶ To avoid using a long complicated administrative term, I replace ‘a society in which both men and women participate’ with ‘a gender equal society’ in this chapter. For ease of reading, I avoid using inverted commas for ‘a gender equal society’.

imply feminist politics. Thus, she strategically attempted to combine a gender perspective as an official idiom with feminism, which tended to be incompatible with the public sector including the government sector (e.g. Brown 1995; Eisentein 1996). In other words, at WOO, she tried to embody feminist politics in the name of gender perspective. As Amy Fried has described in reference to a rape crisis centre in the United States, 'gender analysis was equated with feminism' at WOO (Fried 1994: 573).

Separate bedrooms

Whilst working at WOO we used to talk about our private lives during lunchtime, a tea break, or after work. One day, in the Counselling Room during lunchtime, two of the contract workers started to talk about whether they had their own bedrooms at home. Hiruma-san (a pseudonym) in her sixties asked Maeda-san (a pseudonym) in her early thirties and married several years ago, 'Do you have your own bedroom?' Hiruma-san had two grown-up sons with her divorced husband and lived on her own. Maeda-san gave a wry smile and answered, 'Of course. We have two bedrooms and sleep separately in different bedrooms'. 'That's nice. Before I divorced, I used to do the same. That's important to secure your own space and time not only to sleep but also to live. And it's also crucial to be able to refuse to have sex with your partner when you don't feel like it. It's much easier to refuse him if you have your own bedroom. Even if he knocks your door, you can just say to him, "I'm tired today. Good night"'. Maeda-san agreed with Hiruma-san and replied to her, 'Yes, indeed. Separate beds in the same room are not enough. We need separate bedrooms. He is a part-time worker and I earn more than him. So, it's not difficult to have my own room. *I pay the rent*'. Then I asked Maeda-san, 'So if you want to sleep with him, what do you do?' 'I just visit his bedroom', she smilingly replied. Finally, Hiruma-san admonished me, 'You had better do it, too. That will make a huge difference in your relationship with your partner when you live together'.

At WOO, among fifteen contract workers, there were about six self-proclaimed feminist contract workers. This informal group was fairly fixed rather than flexible. It was a part of their daily routine to analyse something in terms of feminism or gender perspective in the workplace. There were some small tacit

regulations on feminist politics among them. For instance, some of them have been demonstrated in the above lunch conversation in the Counselling Room; (1) don't call one's partner *goshujin* (master) or *okusan* (married lady or madam);¹¹⁷ (2) affirmation of divorce; (3) denial of a 'traditional' gender division of labour, for instance, even if she marries, a woman can choose if she continues working or quits; and (4) decision making for having sex. They used to analyse not only their private lives, including the issue of 'separate bedrooms', but also their daily work, such as planning and managing a project at WOO, counselling, and people such as staff members, lecturers and celebrities. However, they did not use the terms of 'feminism' and 'feminist' every time. Although they used to ask one another if someone who was a stranger to them was a feminist or not, they seldom referred to the words 'feminism' and 'feminist' in daily life or in the workplace. Rather, they used to analyse, value, question and criticise something by referring to the idiom 'gender perspective' at WOO. By doing so, they sought to explain how something was like feminism or not like feminism or against feminism in a certain context, as I ethnographically describe in the following sections.

The feminist contract workers were diverse in terms of ages, career, marital status, birthplaces (Okinawan or Japanese), domicile, and so on. Let me briefly introduce other members of the informal group. Kinjo-san (a pseudonym) was in her middle twenties, and had a boyfriend who was a US military serviceman in Okinawa, but she was critical of the US military presence in Okinawa and Asia. She had studied social work for her Master's Degree and became a counsellor who could speak English at WOO. She was also a staff member of the Rape Emergency Intervention Counselling Organisation Okinawa (REICO). Uehara-san (a pseudonym), was in her late forties, and had worked as a one-year fixed-term contract worker at another local government office in Okinawa Prefecture to establish a gender equality plan. She and her husband had three children, but they divorced several years ago. She was in charge of the project for the prevention of domestic violence under the Law for the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the

¹¹⁷ It is common in Japan to call one's husband a 'master' (*shujin*) and someone else's husband a 'great master' (*goshujin*). *Go* connotes respect for *shujin* (master) in Japanese. This kind of expression is also linked with middle class consciousness and has been developed especially since the end of the Second World War (e.g. Kotani 2007; Nakano 2009).

Protection of Victims. Yamashiro-san (a pseudonym) was in her early thirties and a clinical psychologist both at WOO and local state schools. She read numerous feminist books and articles and willingly introduced her colleagues to them. She was in charge of mental health counselling, was single and lived with her cat.

There were various public institutions which aimed to promote a 'gender equal society' in Okinawa, but it was highly competitive to obtain a post in these institutions, including at WOO. One of these is REICO (Rape Emergency Intervention Counselling Organisation Okinawa), which was privately established to help people who have suffered from sexual violence carried out by US military personnel. However, staff members of REICO are all volunteers and cannot be paid like those of other public institutions such as WOO. In this sense, it was significant for a person who was interested in gender justice to obtain paid work in public women's organisations. Likewise, finding a post at WOO offered a very good opportunity for feminists to be involved in gender justice as part of practices of public policy in Okinawa. As Keiko Kakizuma, a sociologist, points out, it is crucial for a staff member of a women's organisation to 'obtain a job which can create an alternative value', such as feminist politics, which cannot always be found in the profit-making private sector (Furuta & Kaizuma 2007: 9), and 'is worth working' for (ibid.: 8).

When I met Maeda-san for the first time, she explained that she wanted to work at WOO, because she wanted to know what worries and problems women in Okinawa had. She had studied Okinawan history for her Master's Degree and conducted research on sex workers in the Philippines with several Okinawan activist women who belonged to both REICO and Okinawa Women Act Against Military Violence (OWAMV). She wanted to know more about women in Okinawa. Uehara-san came to WOO, because she wanted to work at a higher-level-institution for a gender equal society than municipal governments offered. She thought that it would be more worthwhile for her to work at WOO in order to be involved in gender equality and feminism. I do not intend to ignore the differences among them, but I would like to point out that they wanted to work at WOO because they thought that it might be possible to do some feminist work in the workplace. They 'value[d] the chance to engage in feminist activism and be paid for it' (Martin 2005: 96). For them,

working at WOO meant something absolutely different from working as a part-time or contract worker in a private company, which would not care about gender equality officially. They spontaneously and intentionally chose WOO in terms of their feminist politics.

Feminist contract workers

The feminist contract workers did not share everything, but shared a part of feminism or gender perspective, such as the idea of having separate bedrooms from their partners.¹¹⁸ Feminism was formed through daily routines, conversations, happenings, gossip, newspapers, outfits, rumours, informal information, life-styles, marriage status, sexuality, sexual desire, and so forth. Moreover, they agreed with one another about their resentment of the US military presence in Okinawa, as well as militarism in general. It should be noted that this feminist anti-militarist view is at odds with the view of the majority of Japanese feminists. Furthermore, they all politically supported *kakushin* (reformists), including the Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party rather than *hoshu* (conservatives), including the Liberal Democratic Party.

In May 2002, a local newspaper reported that Okinawa Prefecture had the ‘worst’ divorce rate (2.74 couples per a thousand population) among all of the forty-seven prefectures in Japan for sixteen years (Ryukyu Shimpo, 31 May 2002). As soon as she arrived at WOO in the morning, Hiruma-san dashed into the Main Office from the Counselling Room with the article, angrily saying to her colleagues in front of a photocopy machine where we used to stand chatting and exchanging information, ‘Have you read this article? Why “worst”? Should be “highest”! Not “worst”! Don’t you think so? Why do they still see divorce as a bad thing, even now? Given this bad image of divorce, even if they face the fear of domestic violence, people might hesitate’.

¹¹⁸ Feminist contract workers saw themselves as working class rather than middle class through their gendered working conditions, even though some of them had wealthy husbands. On the contrary, some of the staff members including seconded prefectural government officials were very sensitive about class based on their family’s class. For instance, a seconded government official said to me, ‘Takeuchi Maria [a well-known Japanese singer and composer] is great and I like her songs, but, you know, her family was very wealthy and she must never have been in financial difficulties’. She was a government official and did not have to worry about money herself, but her siblings were not wealthy enough (some of them lost jobs) and she helped them financially. In this sense, it was difficult to define who belonged to the middle and working classes at WOO.

Among the ten staff members in the Main Office, two of us, including myself responded to her. Uehara-san, one of the feminist contract workers, said that it was shocking to hear that they used ‘worst’ instead of ‘highest’. I had read the same article, but, unfortunately, I did not realise that the word ‘worst’ was inappropriate. I was impressed by Hiruma-san’s feminist critical viewpoint and said that I fully agreed with her. Other staff members of the Projects Section including Chief Kyan looked indifferent to Hiruma-san’s criticism. They raised their heads, but did not say anything. Once Hiruma-san left, the Secretary-General asked me to explain why it was not appropriate for newspapers to describe the divorce rate as ‘the worst’. I elucidated that the newspaper, by using that term had reported it with a bias against divorce and Hiruma-san wanted to problematise such discrimination, especially against divorced women who might have divorced as a result of domestic violence. Then he phoned the local newspaper to complain about the way they had reported the matter. He could not understand her point at once, but he decided that in his position as the Secretary-General of WOO, he had better criticise the newspaper. I heard afterwards that three counsellors, Kinjo-san, Maeda-san and Yamashiro-san all agreed with Hiruma-san. Hiruma-san’s gender perspective was valued among all the staff at WOO, even if not all of them could grasp what she had really criticised.

Hiruma-san eventually came to talk with someone who would appreciate her feminist criticism. At the same time, it was not long before the staff members of WOO came to realise those who identified themselves as feminists and who had a gender perspective. They admitted to one another that they identified themselves as feminists or not, by understanding how to judge or analyse daily lives. Thus the informal group of feminist contract workers was formed through feminist criticism and gender perspectives, or more precisely by sharing and differentiation among WOO staff members. In other words, they constructed what feminism was and meant not only through sharing but also through differentiation. However, this does not mean that feminism within WOO was constructed only by the feminist workers. It is crucial to point out that there were other various informal groups at WOO at the same time and there were as many interpretations and understandings about gender, sexuality, feminism, and so on as the number of individuals and informal groups. Therefore, in the following section, I highlight how feminism was also connected

with those who were not interested in and were against feminism at WOO. In other words, I show how at WOO, diverse perspectives, interpretations and critiques regarding gender equality and feminism overlapped and negotiated with one another.

Feminism, non-feminism, and anti-feminism

It is significant to emphasise that not all the contract workers necessarily wanted to work at WOO so as to pursue their feminist politics or gender justice. Therefore, the feminist contract workers faced ‘the gap between their own commitment to the goals of the organization and that of the majority of the members’ (Franzway 2000: 263). However, I do not insist that only feminist contract workers constructed what gender equality meant at WOO. Rather, I suggest that all the actors were engaged in activities in relation to gender equality or feminist politics. In this section, I examine how feminism was cultivated through the feminist contract workers and those who were against gender equality and those who had never heard of ‘gender’ before.

Shinjo-san

Shinjo-san (a pseudonym) was in her late forties and had four children with her husband who worked as a local government official in Okinawa Prefecture. She was in charge of accounting when she started working at WOO. In April 2002, after the training seminar for new staff, she said to me in front of the photocopier machine: ‘I know I’m not an appropriate person to work here. I don’t know anything about feminism or gender. I am wondering if it is alright for me to keep working here like this. What do you think? I know I shouldn’t work here. But...’ I replied to her that it would be alright if she would like to work here and I did not know everything about gender or feminism, either. She looked a little bit relieved. A month later, she told me another story at the same place:

You know, I used to work at a private company before I came WOO. I just wanted to ask you something. I had a female colleague, about the same age as myself, who was a single mother. I don’t know if she was divorced or was a single mother from the beginning. We were the only two women in the workplace. But, of course, I didn’t mean a bad thing, but I said to her, ‘It must be hard for you to take care of your daughter yourself’. Then, maybe she got angry with me and never talked to me. She was always harsh with me. What do you think of that? Was I wrong? I didn’t discriminate against her at all. I just thought I had better say something to her. That’s all. But she got angry and I couldn’t do anything after that. But I came here, to WOO, and I am rethinking what happened. What should I have said to her?

Shinjo-san looked perplexed to be working at WOO presumably because she did not expect to be required to have a gender perspective, which the former contract worker introduced to the new staff in April, and which was also linked with implicit demands of loyalty to feminism around WOO, that I will discuss in the following section. She tried to behave like other staff members who accepted such demands of loyalty to feminism in the name of gender perspective, but it was difficult for her to practice and show feminism or a gender perspective in the workplace. She did not identify herself as a feminist, but she could not stop being sensitive to feminist politics or a gender perspective. Reconsidering Foucault's argument (1982), Judith Butler explains that a subject emerges from norms 'that regulate reflexive relations: How might and must one appear? And what relation to oneself ought one manifest?' (Butler 2005: 114). It is probably not sufficient to say that Shinjo-san did not know what to do in terms of gender perspective at WOO. Shinjo-san faced a new norm, which embraced a gender perspective, and therefore she was expected to give an account for herself to another staff member in terms of this gender perspective.¹¹⁹ By doing so, she constitutes 'a subject who is not self-grounding, that is, whose conditions of emergence can never fully be accounted for' (ibid.: 19). As Butler precisely notes, '[t]he account is an act – situated within a larger practice of acts – that one performs for, to, even *on* an other, an allocutory deed, acting for, and in the face of, the other and sometimes by virtue of the language provided by the other' (ibid.: 130). Therefore, '[t]his account does not have as its goal the establishment of a

¹¹⁹ There is another episode, which shows accountability for the feminist stance or gender perspective. When only Asato-san (a pseudonym), a contract worker, and Chinen-san (a pseudonym), a seconded government official, and the Secretary-General were on duty on Sunday, they talked about shopping at a supermarket. Both Asato-san and Chinen-san, who did not identify themselves as feminists, were surprised that he said that a man who was queuing at the checkout of a supermarket was foolish and that was a job for women. They answered him back that they thought that it would be nice for men to do so as well. Chinen-san said that her father always did. But the Secretary-General did not change his opinion. The following morning, the two of them waited to talk with Uehara-san and me and we shared this story with other staff members as well. Unlike the Secretary-General's original intention, other staff members started to critically rethink the existing gender roles in the domestic sphere. Moreover, for the feminist workers, it was a landmark discovery that Asato-san and Chinen-san who did not previously seem interested in feminism, very much argued against the Secretary-General about gender roles. This was because the two of them confessed at the first meeting of WOO that they had never heard of the word 'gender' before and wanted to have a training course to work at WOO. Furthermore, as in Shinjo-san's case, it is probably not appropriate to see that the Secretary-General's opinion was only against feminism or a gender perspective. Rather, it is noteworthy that he could not help saying something about gender roles at WOO. Thus he gave an account of himself.

definitive narrative but constitutes a linguistic and social occasion for self-transformation' (ibid.). Shinjo-san did not necessarily try to transform herself at WOO. However, she tried to explain herself 'by virtue of the language provided by the other' (ibid.). Taking a gender perspective into consideration, she started to give an account of herself and of her relation to others. As such, she was apparently engaged in the construction of a gender perspective or feminist politics at WOO.

After several months, Shinjo-san became an assistant to the project for the prevention of domestic violence because a seconded official from the Okinawa Prefectural Office came back to WOO after her parental leave and took over her post.¹²⁰ Therefore, in November 2002, Shinjo-san was preparing the exhibition for the Domestic Violence Prevention Week between the 12th and the 23rd of November before the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and was asked to type manuscripts written by women who had suffered from domestic violence. When she was typing in front of Uehara-san and myself, Shinjo-san muttered: 'I think that the two of you are strong enough to read their stories. [She recited some paragraphs to us.] Horrible experience! I'm not strong enough to face it. My husband would never behave like this towards me. Never, ever! I just don't understand that. Do you understand this? I know this is my job. So I'm doing this. But it is horrible!'

Shinjo-san's husband knew the Secretary General of WOO through work. It was not only because of this reason, but in accordance with gender roles in the workplace in Japan, she made a cup of tea for him and the Executive Director every morning and afternoon. The feminist contract workers did not like *ochakumi*, making a cup of tea in the workplace for their bosses, because making a cup of tea in the workplace has been long considered as women's role at work in Japan and refusing to make a cup of tea is often regarded as a form of 'resistance' against a male-dominant working society (e.g. *Ochakumi no seijigaku jikkô iinkai* 1992; *Nihon hisho kurabu nôryoku kôjô kenkyûkai* 1992). Thus, in the eyes of the other

¹²⁰ All the local government officials are guaranteed three years of parental leave and one year of maternity leave from work in the Okinawa Prefectural Government Office including the third sector like WOO. But a one-year fixed-term contract worker cannot practically take maternity leave, which is guaranteed for all the women by law, because her contract is for one year and it is impossible to take leave for one year. Needless to say, she cannot take parental leave because of her fixed-term contract. This lack of parental and maternity leave for contract workers was highly controversial among all the contract workers at WOO and other public women's organisations.

members of staff, her activity of making a cup of tea showed a lack of gender perspective or feminist politics.

Some of the feminist contract workers expressed their dissatisfaction with Shinjo-san, saying 'I'm wondering why Shinjo-san is working here. I don't think she is very happy with WOO'. For the feminist contract workers, it was crucial to find or point out what was *not* feminism at work rather than what *was* feminism. They clearly distinguished feminists from non-feminists in the workplace. Among all the contract workers at WOO, for them, Shinjo-san was the most obvious person who was *not* a feminist. What she said and did, such as making a cup of tea for her bosses, was deemed to be far from feminism. Thus it was deemed that what Shinjo-san did was as a non-feminist. As she asked me about her eligibility for working at WOO, Shinjo-san herself also doubted her compatibility with WOO (this did not mean that she wanted to quit WOO). She knew that she was different from the feminist workers. However, Shinjo-san also contributed to feminism and gender perspectives at WOO by being analysed as a non-feminist. Thus in daily life feminism was closely associated with non-feminism.

The Executive Director: I'm on a diet

There was another staff member who was not considered a feminist by the feminist workers at WOO: the Executive Director. Her feminist stance was more critically evaluated than that of Shinjo-san by the feminist workers because of her official position as the head of WOO. Since the Executive Director was not a seconded local government official but nominated among citizens by the Prefectural Governor, she was expected to be a feminist not only by the feminist contract workers but also by feminist users of the organisations. However, in the eyes of the feminist contract workers she often appeared to be *against* feminism rather than non-feminist like Shinjo-san.

In August 2002, WOO held a lecture about the relationship between daughters and mothers, given by a feminist psychiatrist counsellor especially for women. Before her lecture, three contract workers including myself, the Executive Director, and the chief of the Projects Section had lunch with her at a restaurant within WOO. We ordered the Okinawan noodle special lunch set, some small dishes,

and dessert. The Executive Director said to the psychiatrist counsellor, 'You're so young and beautiful'. The Director liked to use this compliment to praise lecturers and used to say it to most of lecturers when she introduced them to participants at their lectures at WOO. I heard that several participants and WOO staff members complained about this. Likewise, the feminist workers thought that it was not appropriate for the Executive Director of WOO to make comments such as these. After Chief Kyan nodded and said, 'Yes, I think so, too', the psychiatrist counsellor answered, 'You, too, Executive Director'. It was not clear whether she was being ironic or not at that time. Eventually, *Okinawa zenzai* (Okinawan sweet red-bean broth with ice) were served for dessert. The Executive Director turned to me and said, 'You know, I'm on a diet. You can take it if you like'. Before I replied to her, the psychiatrist counsellor smilingly but sharply uttered to the Executive Director, 'Can you say that you are on a diet? As the Executive Director of a women's organisation?'

This lunch conversation 'event' was immediately circulated among most staff members before the day was over. Most staff members including non-feminist staff members (both seconded government officials and contract workers) were critical of the Executive Director's diet. The 'event' was also personally reported to staff members of other public women's organisations who were also concerned with what the Executive Director said and did through the informal study group organised by both staff members. Above all, the feminist contract workers at WOO were quite happy with it, because the feminist psychiatrist counsellor, who was an outsider at WOO and was formally invited by WOO to give a lecture about gender issues, critically pointed out the Executive Director's lack of a feminist stance in front of her. Being on a diet, as the Executive Director, was deemed as being more against feminism than a lack of gender perspective. The Executive Director became the symbol of anti-feminism at WOO.

Two months after that, in October 2002, WOO held a 'special lecture' in Nakijin Community Organisation, Nakijin-son Village, the northern part of the main island of Okinawa. The 'special lecture' was aimed at letting the prefectural people know about a gender equal society and was given by the Executive Director. Forty people attended the lecture on that day. After every lecture, WOO asked participants

to fill in questionnaires and these were circulated among all the staff members with a final report of a project, as usual. One of the participants stated in her questionnaire:

I was really disappointed with her lecture, because her logic was not good enough, and 'maternalism', which Imperial Japan had had during the war, still remained in her discussion. I think we should problematise the presupposition that a woman is supposed to bear and look after a child. Notwithstanding this, WOO invited Chizuko Ueno and Yoko Haruka as lecturers. She doesn't understand at all. She had better try to change her sense of values as the Executive Director. How does she understand the phrase 'regardless of gender' in the preamble of the Basic Law? I was very very discouraged by her.

This comment was apparently based on books and papers written by Chizuko Ueno who is a professor of sociology at Tokyo University and a pioneer in gender studies, especially Marxist feminism, in Japan (e.g. Ueno 1982a, 1982b, 1990). She has delivered lectures at numerous women's organisations all over Japan. WOO also invited her several times. Yoko Haruka, a comedian, studied gender studies under Ueno and her book titled *Studying a Fight under Chizuko Ueno at Tokyo University* (2000) turned into a bestseller.

The establishment of the Basic Law for a Gender-equal Society (hereafter, the Basic Law) was highly evaluated by Chizuko Ueno, because the conception of 'gender' in the Basic Law presupposes the early 1990s post-structuralist theory that socio-cultural gender precedes and defines biological sex (Ueno & Osawa 2001: 21-29). According to Mari Osawa (2002), this presupposition includes Ueno's discussion (Ueno 1995) of Judith Butler's theory of the relationship between gender and sex (Butler 1990). It seems that the above participant's comment was based on Ueno's interpretation of gender. The recognition of the conception of gender in the above comment was not necessarily linked with exactly what the feminist contract workers shared, but it was more crucial for them to know that someone as a citizen outside WOO in Okinawa was also critical of what the Executive Director talked about in terms of feminism.

The feminist contract workers were happy with this criticism of the Executive Director's lecture. It was almost impossible for them to point out that the Executive Director lacked a sense of gender from the inside, if they wanted her to renew their contracts. Hence, they thought that this citizen's critique might change the Executive Director and WOO from the outside. As usual, it took a month for this

questionnaire to be circulated among all the staff, including the Executive Director. The feminist contract workers expected that the Executive Director would change her stance and thinking, and that the administrators would discuss this questionnaire at a monthly staff meeting. Yet surprisingly nothing happened after this. The feminist contract workers were bitterly disappointed. Although she might not have read it, it was discouraging for them to know that the Executive Director would not change whatever happened. However, if she had been not the Executive Director but one of the contract workers like Shinjo-san, she would not have been set up as the symbol of anti-feminism. The classification by the feminist contract workers was largely based on her social position. Although the Executive Director was expected to be a symbol of feminism by the feminist contract workers, she was regarded as an anti-feminist by them in reality. As I have described in Chapter Six, the male Secretary-General became the representative of the male-dominant world for the feminist contract workers, while the Executive Director became an indicator of anti-feminism, because of the very social status and post as the Executive Director of WOO. Thus, at WOO feminist politics was bound up with non-feminism as well as anti-feminism.

2. Implicit demand for loyalty to feminism

Implicit feminism within WOO

When my friend, Nakama-san (a pseudonym), let me know that WOO was looking for some one-year fixed-term contract workers for the Projects Section at the end of March 2002, she also suggested that I had better not mention feminism or feminist on my CV. At that time, she was employed as a contract worker by WOO and had worked there for three years, but had to leave because her contract would not be renewed for the following year. She knew that I was looking for a job in Naha City and it was ideal for me to work at WOO for my fieldwork. However, I was rather shocked that staff members and candidates were prohibited from showing feminism at WOO because it was obvious that Nakama-san identified herself as a feminist and she therefore worked at WOO after she obtained a Master Degree in gender studies. I asked her why I should not mention feminism or feminist on my CV. She answered that WOO was controlled by seconded government officials and they did not need

any feminists at WOO. She stressed that the Secretary-General who was in charge of the appointment for contract workers was very high-ranking and we could not even speak to him if we were in the Prefectural Government Office. That is, he was a typical high-ranking male civil servant who did not have to care about gender equality or gender politics. She explained that it was important to pretend to be 'neutral' rather than a feminist in my CV and job interview in order to obtain this job. Hence, I omitted one of my publications titled by 'Rethinking of *Onari-gami* Belief from the point of view of feminist anthropology'. Instead, she recommended that I add 'gender studies' and 'gender issues' in its reference column and I followed her advice. She carefully checked my CV several times and introduced me to her boss, the chief of the Projects Section, the predecessor of Chief Kyan. Then, I had a job interview with the Secretary-General and the Executive Director on the following day. As I was advised by my friend, I emphasised that I was very interested in gender studies and gender issues in Okinawa. They looked satisfied with our interview. As a result, I started to work at WOO on the 1st of April 2002.

As soon as I began to work at WOO, I found that it was taboo to formally use or mention feminism or feminist. Feminism was totally displaced by 'gender'. No one used feminism or feminist at staff meetings – as if we had totally forgotten these terms or did not need to use them at all. Apparently, the terms feminism and feminist were missing.

I however thought that this invisibility of feminism explained why Nakama-san let me know about this position and helped me to obtain it. Namely, the reason why she introduced me to her boss was that she wanted a feminist to send into WOO after her. But it was not only her that thought that WOO required feminist staff members. I eventually became aware that the distinct lack of feminism of WOO led contract workers who identified themselves as feminists to establish an informal, personal, grass-roots, open-ended, and ad hoc network to secure feminist staff members or a feminist stance within the organisation. In addition, this network has flexibly worked, not only for WOO but also for other posts in local government offices and women's organisations to promote gender equality in Okinawa Prefecture. The more contract workers found non-feminism or anti-feminism within WOO, the more they informally and implicitly cared about feminism there. Simultaneously,

feminist contract workers tried to pursue their own feminism in the workplace and at home.

Cultivating feminism

In the above section, I looked at how the feminist contract workers distinguished feminism, non-feminism, and anti-feminism among all the workers at WOO. In this section, I will look at how the feminist stance of feminist contract workers was trained, cultivated, and disciplined in the workplace. It is crucial to stress that the feminist stance was a valuation based on feminist criticism. This feminist stance or gender perspective was trained and disciplined through daily working lives through feminist criticism, evaluation, or interpretation. For a feminist contract worker who was in charge of planning and managing a project such as a workshop on domestic violence, it was inevitable to show her feminist stance by organising a project. Some questions she needed to consider were: Who does she invite to a workshop as a lecturer? What topic does she focus on to rethink the issue of domestic violence on the remote island of Okinawa? Every single topic could be connected with a feminist stance. Simultaneously, it was also unavoidable for her to reveal her feminism when she said something about someone or what that person had done, such as Chief Kyan's outfit and the Executive Director's diet. I now turn to how a contract worker became a self-responsible, self-disciplined feminist subject by cultivating her feminism in relation to WOO.

There was no formal job evaluation form for contract workers at WOO. As I have shown in Chapter Six, their salary was based on the section they belonged to and how many days they worked. If, for example, a staff member of the Projects Section worked for twenty days a month, the salary would be 177,400 yen (£887). There was no overtime allowance, or term-end allowance, which government officials are paid twice a year, increase in salary, advancement in rank, or promotion. Neither educational background, age, experience, qualification, nor the length of her service were considered when determining wages or the renewal of a contract.

For example, as I have shown in Chapter Six, the seconded Secretary-General would emphasise that contract workers were not 'specialists' in gender knowledge but 'clerical workers', especially when he did not want to approve of contract

workers' plans and projects. He played a role in censoring all the projects: certain terminology and discourse, such as colonialism, imperialism, and feminism (later gender), and critiques of the emperor system and the Japanese government were prohibited by him. He would say that what contract workers had to do at WOO was to submit plans to the seconded officials. That is, contract workers could not have decision-making power. According to him, only the administrators could decide who should be invited by WOO, and what should be talked about. By re-positioning a contract worker as a clerical worker in the context of controlling contract workers in the workplace, he tried to deny her speciality as a feminist.¹²¹ In this sense, one's feminist stance could not be valued in terms of working ability to plan and manage a project to promote a gender-equal society in Okinawa, which WOO was supposed to do under the mission statement and various prefectural plans. Rather, working ability was judged in terms of clerical skills, in other words, a mark of the lack of feminism, which showed how her docility or submission might be able to guarantee her a new contract.

As a result, the feminist stance became one of the most important *informal* basis of evaluation for the contract workers and, informally and implicitly, was cultivated in daily lives. As I have described above, it was routine 'work' for feminist workers to judge something or someone including lecturers, the Executive Director, Chief Kyan, and their colleagues, including themselves from the point of view of feminism or gender perspective. For them, it was essential to point out that something should be criticised by their feminist viewpoint in order to be valued as feminists.

For Okinawa Prefecture, the year of 2002 was the 30th anniversary of the 'reversion' to Japan from the US military occupation. The Okinawa Prefectural Government Office had various anniversary events in Okinawa in 2002 and in November of that year held a project event entitled 'Thirty Years for Women' in the hall of WOO. They invited Sachiko Kagami, the Executive Director of Chiba Municipal Women's Organisation and the former NHK (*Nippon Hoso Kyokai*, Japan Broadcasting Corporation) announcer, as the main lecturer, and eight Okinawan

¹²¹ In Chapter Six, I have shown how antagonism between several feminist contract workers and the Secretary-General was reinforced through the interaction between them.

panellists including a coordinator and commentator who had been involved in women's groups, education, women-oriented policies, and a library in Okinawa.

Kagami's anniversary lecture was titled 'The Twenty-First Century: Exploring a Key to Our Way of Living'. The feminist contract workers were excited by her lecture, because they thought that Kagami would give a feminist talk at WOO. The WOO staff members were asked to help the Prefectural Office to organise this big event with more than five hundred participants. Kinjo-san, Maeda-san, Yamashiro-san (all counsellors) and I were positioned as reception staff. We stood in front of the hall of WOO and handed participants a set of pamphlets, including a questionnaire, one by one. After the lecture began, Kinjo-san and Yamashiro-san went into the hall to listen to her lecture. Maeda-san and I were still outside the hall to welcome the rest of participants. We could hear her lecture through the speakers on the outside of the hall, but we were still busy receiving participants and could not listen to her lecture properly.

After a while, Kinjo-san and Yamashiro-san came back to us excitedly and asked us if we had heard what she had said in her lecture. We answered that it was difficult for us to listen to her outside the hall. Kinjo-san dropped her voice and said that it was too terrible to listen to her lecture any more, because she happily insisted that we should have a family and children for our new gender equal society. Maeda-san and I were surprised at that. And Kinjo-san and Yamashiro-san said that she must be a totally 'heterosexualist' and 'familist' and she was absolutely disgusting as the Executive Director at the Chiba Municipal Women's Organisation. Maeda-san and I agreed with them. Yamashiro-san added that the Prefecture wasted our tax on her. Kinjo-san continued that it was just unbelievable and unforgivable to invite her to WOO. Maeda-san said that it was a great pity and she had thought that she would enjoy listening to her. Since the officials of the Prefectural Government Office came over to us, we stopped talking about Kagami's talk and Kinjo-san and Yamashiro-san went back to the Counselling Room and did not go back to her talk again.

This event showed that the feminist contract workers shared the view that a feminist should not be a 'heterosexualist' or 'familist' who admires a family system, which is notoriously linked with the Japanese Emperor System that supported

Japanese Imperialism and colonialism during the wars. To be a feminist meant to judge and value someone and something in terms of feminism. However, this also signifies that her feminism was always judged and valued by other feminist stances. While WOO did not have a formal job evaluation system for contract workers, they spontaneously and intentionally tried to be feminist at work. If contract workers want to be feminists, they are expected to be independent subjects under the discourse of the Basic Law, which presupposes that both women and men equally participate in all the activities as individual citizens regardless of gender. As a result, this process of pursuing feminism makes them self-disciplined, self-responsible subjects at the same time. The more they want to be independent subjects who work at WOO, the more they attempt to become feminists in the workplace. Is this a fatal loyalty to feminism? I try to tackle this question in the final section.

3. Fatal loyalty to feminism?

Uehara-san, one of the feminist contract workers, worked hard and did not mind working overtime and on holidays, even though she was not paid for this. Rather, she was proud of her hard work on her project for the prevention of domestic violence. She usually worked for twenty days a month and her overtime hours were more than fifty or sixty hours a month. However, she was never paid for her overtime hours, because she was a fixed-term contract worker. Why does a feminist contract worker work so hard? In this section, let me rethink both the discourses of exploitation of contract workers and the ‘social-cultural reproduction of working-class inequalities’ (Arnot 2003: 97) by looking at the relationship between loyalty to feminism and working conditions at WOO. In other words, I explore ‘[w]hat makes people work’ rather than focussing on ‘exploitation’ and reproduction of the working class (Harris 2007: 137-165). This exploration will also examine what ‘politics as a vocation’ means (Weber 1948).

Hiruma-san’s Dilemma

Hiruma-san would express her dilemma between being a feminist and her gendered contract.

I'm wondering why I'm here at the corner of the meeting room where a feminist guest speaker's giving a lecture. While she's talking about gender issues, women's problems, human rights of women, gender equality, and so on, I cannot help asking myself, 'Why am I working at WOO under these working conditions, low-income and one-year fixed-term contract?' Why? We are sitting as staff members of WOO at the back of the meeting room as if we are alright! Participants would never know how we are working here. Of course neither would a feminist guest speaker.

Hiruma-san thought that working as a contract worker at WOO was incompatible with her feminist thought. She could not help feeling self-betrayal, while she was sitting down at the back of the meeting room during every lecture. The more she pursued her feminist thought in the workplace, the more she had to face the gap between gendered working conditions and her feminist thought. Hiruma-san's knotty dilemma lay at the embodiment of women's oppression caused by working under the low-waged, low-prestige, fixed-term contract working conditions that were typical of woman's labour in Japan.¹²² At WOO, as a women's organisation aiming for a gender equal society, a contract worker wanted to be an independent feminist subject whose work was evaluated not as a woman but as a worker and who had a wage with life-time employment. But she could not help giving up her feminist ideal and facing the dilemma between the ideal and reality. This dilemma was not only Hiruma-san's but also that of other feminist contract workers'.¹²³ On the one hand, she conducted daily practices through differentiation of feminism in her work at a women's organisation geared towards a gender equal society. On the other hand, the more she became a passionate feminist pursuing gender equality at work, the more her dilemma became serious and difficult. She could not help realising that her low wages and working conditions did not correspond to her labour. Moreover, the more she devoted herself to feminist criticism, the more she became aware of the issue of women's labour that she was also falling into. As a result, she became a feminist subject in subordination.

¹²² Working (being engaged in paid work) under the double labour market often means not liberation but oppression for women (Harris 2007: 85).

¹²³ This dilemma is not seen only at WOO but also at other women's organisations. For example, Reiko Aoki notes that while staff members discuss the issue of part-time employment of women for planning a project, they are also gendered part-time workers in a public women's organisation in Tokyo (Aoki 1997: 162). Nobuko Ueda also points out that she wanted to securely work at a public women's organisation in Osaka Prefecture, but it was not secure to work under inadequate working conditions with low-waged and fixed-term contracts. She was in dilemma between the desire to keep working to change the organisation and her need to earn a salary to maintain her livelihood and that of her daughter. As a result, she left there (Ueda 2004: 52).

This dilemma looks too fatal for the feminist contract workers to overcome. For example, Fumiko Yakabi, who won a lawsuit against the payment gap between female workers and male workers for the first time in Kyoto, Japan, points out that gender equality organisations (including women's organisations) all over Japan have exploited women's *nôryoku* (abilities), *netsui* (zeal), *yarigai* (fulfilment), and *kokorozashi* (good will) and have had women work half-voluntarily (Yakabi *et al.* 2008: 5). This resonates with other critiques against the exploitation of enthusiasm of non-regular workers in Japan (e.g. Abe 2006; Honda 2007; Kaizuma & Motohashi 2007a, 2007b). They alert us to note how it is fatal for employees who have ardour and satisfaction to work under low-waged, low-prestige, and unstable working conditions, and to criticise how employers exploit that ardour and satisfaction. According to the sociologist Honda, a 'workaholic' is now a person who is not only a white-collar worker but also who is a non-regular worker including a part-timer and fixed-term contract worker (Honda 2007: 109-110). She highlights that Japanese companies have presumed upon the 'passion and contentment' of these new non-regular workaholics, by using the discourse of 'self-responsibility' (*ibid.*: 109).

Nozomu Shibuya, another sociologist, is also concerned about the relationship between 'self-realisation', social movement/activity, and labour (Shibuya 2003). He asserts that a discourse of 'self-realisation' makes it possible to eliminate the distinction between social activity and labour (*ibid.*: 56). This approach of 'self-realisation' desires the subject who flexibly moves between the sphere of labour (economy) and the sphere of the social in the name of 'self-realisation' (*ibid.*: 57). Following Jacques Donzelot (1991), Shibuya maintains that emphasising labour as 'pleasure' or 'self-realisation' unties the fatal psychological bond between individuals and labour and dismantles the unity among trade unions (Shibuya 2003: 55).

Moreover, Nikolas Rose describes post-industrial society as the production of the self (Rose 1990). He states that '[t]he worker is an individual in search of meaning, responsibility, a sense of personal achievement, a maximized "quality of life", and hence of work. Thus, the individual is not to be emancipated *from* work, perceived as merely a task or a means to an end, but to be fulfilled *in* work, now construed as an activity through which we produce, discover, and experience our

selves' (Rose 1990: 103). At the end of this section, he concludes that '[i]n the psychologies of human relations, work itself could become the privileged space for the satisfaction of the social needs of individuals...Work is an essential element in the path to self-fulfilment' (Rose 1990: 118).

This psychology of human relations can be found in Toyota Way, which is famous for its Quality Control Circles (QCC)¹²⁴ and personnel management that have been developed in various human relation theories including Argyris (1957), Herzberg (1966), Maslow (1954), McGregor (1960), and Likert (1961), as well as the notorious plan titled 'the Japanese business management in the new era' (1995) issued by *Nikkeiren* (Japan Federation of Employer's Association). That is, this 'new personnel management aims to realise individual satisfaction and self-fulfilment' (Saruta 2007: 47). Masaki Saruta, who has conducted research into labour-management relations in Toyota, introduces a 'Toyota-man' who says, 'What's wrong with working for 3,000 hours a year?' and claims that 'Toyota tries to thoroughly use souls and bodies of workers' (Saruta 2007: 49, 55).¹²⁵ Zygmund Bauman alerts us that 'in the present day flexible labour markets, embracing one's work as a vocation carries enormous risks and is a recipe for psychological and emotional disaster' (Bauman 1998: 35). Moreover, Richard Sennett suggests that '[i]t is quite natural that flexibility should arouse anxiety: people do not know what risks will pay off, what paths to pursue' (Sennett 1998: 9). Having a flexible job as a 'vocation' seems to be potentially fatal (Bauman 1998: 33).

Taking these suggestions into consideration I look at the discourse around workers in a public women's organisation in order to rethink Hiruma-san's dilemma. I have already introduced some voices and demands from people who are concerned about women's organisations and gender justice at the beginning of this chapter; a worker in a public women's organisation is required to have 'her zeal and a point of view of gender equality' (Yoneda 1997: 102). However, advocates, such as Reiko Yoneda, Yoko Sakurai, and Kuniko Funahashi (who I introduced at the beginning of this chapter) do not specifically elucidate exactly who is 'a zealous staff member who tries to solve women's problems' (Sakurai 1995: 84). To clarify this point, I

¹²⁴ QCC is one of Toyota's control systems, which is based on team activities to improve efficiency, productivity and safety in the workplace.

¹²⁵ See Ihara (2003) for an ethnographic analysis on temporary workers at Toyota.

show Chizuko Ueno and Kiyomi Kawano's discussion about counsellors at women's organisations:

Ueno: Now who can be a counsellor?

Kawano: First of all, she should be a feminist.

Ueno: Then, who is a feminist?

Kawano: To tell the truth, that's a problem....

Kawano: Whether she is a feminist or not depends on whether she can understand and analyse a really delicate and obscure problem of her client rather than whether she supports a specific law....

Ueno: But, who can judge that?

Kawano: You know, but we cannot help depending only upon self-assessment. Then, she has to be trained later (Ueno & Kawano 1998: 133).

Their talk reveals that it still remains ambiguous and difficult to embody the conception of a feminist at a public women's organisation. The Group *Mikoshi*, which aims to network local government officials who are in charge of gender equality policy in Osaka Prefecture and Yoneda is a member of this, insists that 'it is essential that a staff member herself improve her skills to examine the structure of sexism and grasp it as her own problem' and 'above all it is necessary for a staff member to learn [women's issues] as the subject [in public women's organisations]' (Gurûpu Mikoshi 1994: 250, 240). This assertion shows that a public women's organisation requires staff members to be subjects to tackle women's problems and to try to improve their skills in terms of feminism or 'a point of view of gender equality' in daily life. In this respect, it is almost impossible to distinguish private life from working life. She is required to be a feminist not only in the workplace but also at home.

It is said that 85.3% of public women's organisations in Japan employ contract workers with one-year fixed-term contracts and that government officials and contract workers work together under different working conditions (Zenkoku josei kaikan kyôgi kai 2001: 20). Moreover, 90 % of non-regular workers, including contract workers at public women's organisations, are women.¹²⁶ Keiko Higuchi rhetorically questions whether we can ask government officials to be feminists (Ueno

¹²⁶ The Japanese government for the first time conducted a national survey of staff members of public women's organisations in 2008 (Naikakufu danjo kyôdô sankaku kyoku 2008a). But some results were not disclosed in the survey report. This rate of 90 % was stated by Chief Tukaguchi at the 41st Professional Study Meeting for Basic Issues of the Bureau of Gender Equality within the Cabinet Office of the Japanese government (Naikakufu danjo kyôdô sankaku kyoku 2008b).

& Higuchi 2003: 89). What she implicitly indicates here is that this demand is addressed to contract workers who voluntarily come to work at a public women's organisation rather than to government officials who are compulsorily seconded from government offices only for a couple of years. It is the mandatory *duty* of government officials to work at a women's organisation and it is impossible to ask them to be feminists, while it is considered 'self-realisation' or a 'vocation' for contract workers to work there.

Moreover, not all the contract workers necessarily want to work at a women's organisation as a means to pursue their feminist politics or gender justice. For some, working there merely means working for a living. In this sense, the very person who 'was really happy with the establishment of a public women's organisation geared towards a gender equal society and willingly wanted to work there' (Kawahata 1998: 65) is considered as the subject who can express her loyalty to feminism by people who have stated the demand of loyalty to feminism with zeal. As a result, a women's organisation becomes a 'greedy institution [which] includes a strong allegiance to the possibility of achieving goals based on particular values', such as gender justice or feminist politics in the name of 'self-realisation' and 'self-fulfilment' (Franzway 2000: 262).¹²⁷ In this sense, loyalty to feminism seems to be fatal to feminist contract workers.

However, let me draw attention to Hiruma-san's dilemma, which originally resulted from gendered working conditions. It is notable that it has been repeatedly said that 'public women's organisations should not reproduce unacceptable working conditions for women' (Ueno & Sato 2001: 104) and 'we should not make a public women's organisation promoting gender equality another hotbed of women's problems' (Kumazawa 1999: 157). According to a femocrat who was in charge of the establishment of WOO as a government official, WOO did not want to employ women on the cheap, but did not have enough funds to employ women as lifetime workers like government officials.¹²⁸ As a result, since 1997 WOO has employed women as one-year fixed-term contract workers with low-wages. As such, other public women's organisations have also reproduced gendered employment all over

¹²⁷ Anthony Hopgood also shows how human rights workers are required to have 'moral altruism' and how they adored working for Amnesty International (Hopgood 2005: 16).

¹²⁸ I interviewed this retired local government official in August 2002.

Japan.

Thus, Ueno and others insist that 'it is essential for staff members to work under working conditions that they can be satisfied with and show their abilities and passion' (Ueno *et al.* 1995: 22) and 'it is important that staff members with expertise can work under long-term and stable working conditions' (Arima *et al.* 1999: 56). However, Ueno *et al.* also point out that a worker at a women's organisation cannot work properly and show her zeal and ability under inadequate working conditions (Ueno *et al.* 1995: 22). Although this comment is stated forwards the improvement of working conditions, it is significant to note that a feminist worker tries to work hard in spite of her working conditions. Rather, it should be noted that unsatisfactory gendered working conditions are linked with the dilemma of being a feminist rather than indolence.

Moreover, I also highlight that there is a critical difference between Hiruma-san's dilemma and Shibuya's argument (2003). As far as WOO and the labour movement and lawsuits regarding women's organisations in Japan are concerned, it is difficult to say that a contract worker who deems her work as 'self-realisation' or 'vocation' does not try to improve working conditions in the workplace. In the case of WOO, the attempt to improve their working conditions might not be as visible as trade unions and collective bargaining, but the more they tried to be feminists, the more they were eager to improve working conditions in the workplace. What Shibuya overlooks in his argument is that Hiruma-san could not help finding herself in conflict with working conditions because she became a feminist subject. If she does not become a feminist subject, she does not have to care about gendered working conditions to that extent and does not have to face this dilemma. For her, this dilemma and being a feminist are inseparable.

In between a vocation and exploitation

In his classic book, *Learning to Labour*, Paul Willis ethnographically examines the 'continuous regeneration of working class cultural forms in relation to the most essential structure of society – its working relations' (1977: 2). Quoting Willis (1977), Ogasawara's case study of female workers, called 'OLs' (Office Ladies), who are 'treated as low-level clerical workers' (Ogasawara 1998: 44) in companies in Japan

suggests that ‘the irony for defiant OLs is that their acts often serve to reinforce traditional gender relations’ (ibid.: 162). Both Ogasawara and Willis focus on how workers – ‘OLs’ and ‘lads’ – are embedded in the reproduction system of ‘traditional’ power relationships of gender and class. According to their argument, people who are low-ranked in their society can never overturn this power relationship, even if they try to resist against those in a higher social position. They ‘ensure the reproduction of social relations within a closed system’ (Kondo 1990a: 222).¹²⁹ Consequently, Ogasawara claims that ‘[i]t is extremely important that OLs assert certain rights within the terms available to them...What enables OLs to take subversive action, in short, is their accommodation to company policies that set separate career paths for men and women’ (Ogasawara 1998: 161). Like Willis (1977), Ogasawara’s argument ends up stressing ‘continuous regeneration’ of OLs’ class position.

Both Willis (1977) and Ogasawara (1998) describe a certain form of ‘resistance’, whereas they underscore that such a form of ‘resistance’ does not work properly to subvert the existing power relationships between men and women, or the working class and middle class. Clearly, in my opinion there is a weakness in this logic: Ogasawara and Willis try to analyse their cases only in terms of ‘the simple binary of resistance/subordination’ (Mahmood 2005: 9). Needless to say, Ogasawara and Willis did not solely try to ‘romanticize resistance, to read all forms of resistance as signs of ineffectiveness of the systems of power and the resilience and creativity of the human spirit in its refusal to be dominated’ (Abu-Lughod 1990b: 42). However, as Saba Mahmood points out, Abu-Lughod, Ogasawara, and Willis ‘impl[y] that the task of identifying an act as one of “resistance” is a fairly unproblematic enterprise’ and ‘fail to problematize ... the universality of the desire – central for liberal and progressive thoughts and presupposed by the concept of resistance it authorizes – to

¹²⁹ In her ethnography of factory workers in Tokyo, Dorinne Kondo aptly points out that ‘the society he [Willis] constructs possesses the predictability of a well-oiled...reproduction machine. No matter what people do, they manage to reproduce the capitalist system’ ‘within a closed system’ (Kondo 1990: 222). She also carefully avoids a dichotomy between resistance and subordination. Her critique clearly problematizes Ogasawara’s static description of a gendered division of labour too. However, unlike her critique, it seems that Kondo falls into gender determination ‘within a closed system’ in her conclusion. She positions a factory’s part-timer as a woman, and her action (e.g. ‘refusals of the model of full-time work’) is only understood and analysed as a woman’s action (ibid.: 298). She pre-rejects a part-timer’s action and its meaning, which do not necessarily need to reduce to her gender. Therefore, in her ethnography, part-timers can neither subvert the existing power relationships between men and women nor change the gendered divided spheres.

be free from relations of subordination and, for women, from structures of male domination' (Mahmood 2005: 10).

I appreciate the apprehensions in Yakabi (2008), Honda (2007), Kaizuma (2007a; 2007b) and Abe's (2006) arguments about the exploitation of the ardour of workers, but I at the same time suggest that it is also risky to analyse the relationship between one's fulfilment and one's working conditions merely in terms of a discourse of exploitation. It is easy to overlook the fact that someone might not feel exploited by her/his employer or company.¹³⁰ Rather, we should explore, following Olivia Harris, what makes people work, notwithstanding 'the existence of inequalities and exploitation' (2007: 155). Insofar as this may be the case, I will now consider *how* they might *not* feel exploited and why this point of view has also been overlooked by Willis and Ogasawara.

At the fifth annual meeting of *Ikoru* (Organisation for Human Rights for Working Women) in Osaka City on the 2nd of March 2008,¹³¹ one of two panellists was Mariko Itô, who was the first person to take out a lawsuit against the pay gap that existed between regular workers and contract workers at a public women's organisation in Japan.¹³² I asked her what she had been thinking about 'exploitation of fulfilment' while working as a counsellor at Wings Kyoto. She answered:

Working at Wings Kyoto was the first experience to work properly for me. It was only when I was forty-eight years old that I became a human being who worked for long hours a day. Since I felt fulfilment and this job was my life's work, 'exploitation of fulfilment' is an expression I can use only after I can talk about myself. At that time I just tried to do my best to become a proper counsellor (Yakabi, Ban & Itô 2008: 11).

Her answer struck me and led me to begin rethinking Hiruma-san's dilemma from the beginning. Her predicament can neither be explained by virtue of the dichotomy

¹³⁰ Moreover, the critique of exploitation of the zeal of non-regular workers might undermine the fact that non-feminist and anti-feminist contract workers are employed as women under gendered low-waged, flexible working conditions too, and come to the conclusion that it is natural that non-feminist and anti-feminist non-regular workers should work on low-waged, flexible fixed-term contracts (see Fukazawa 2009: 40-43).

¹³¹ *Ikoru* literally means rest and meeting together in Osaka dialect. It was established to network all the labour unions and feminist groups and improve equal working conditions between women and men in Osaka in 2004. It has carried out counselling for workers, workshops, and research.

¹³² She sued the Kyoto Municipal Gender Equality Organisation, which run Wings Kyoto as the third body between the government sector and the private sector. Itô has reported all the documents and her comments in relation to her lawsuits on her website (available on-line: <http://homepage3.nifty.com/hatarakujosei/>, accessed 10 June 2010).

in the workplace between leaving as a loser and remaining as a winner, which tends to be taken for granted by the activities and discourses of trade unions; or by virtue of the binary between resistance and obedience. If we look at her dilemma from the point of view of the dichotomy of submission/resistance or leaving/remaining, we might inadvertently overlook how and why she was eager to work hard as a feminist. Further to this, why she did not think that she or, her fulfilment was exploited by this women's organisation or local government? In this sense, it is more critical to examine subject formation processes in subordination rather than looking at the result itself or only one side of the process.

Making a cup of tea as a feminist

Throughout this chapter I have wanted to look at how the feminist 'subject is formed in subordination' rather than identifying resistance (Butler 1997b: 3).¹³³ I have tried to show how it is difficult and meaningless to distinguish between resistance and subordination, as well as examining how a particular contract worker cannot help becoming a feminist subject under gendered working conditions. Following on from this, I will now explain a process of 'subjectivation', that is, 'the process of 'subjection', 'becoming subordinated by power as well as the process of becoming a subject' (Butler 1997b: 2), through an examination of *ochakumi* (making a cup of tea) at WOO.

As I have discussed above, Shinjo-san, a non-feminist contract worker, used to make cups of tea for the Executive Director and the Secretary-General in the morning and afternoon. No one asked her to do so, but she did it voluntarily and willingly. In Japan, both making a cup of tea and photocopying for someone else have been considered part of the role of OLs (office ladies). Making a cup of tea has especially been seen as a reflection of obedience and accommodation to the male-dominance prevalent in Japanese companies, since it is easily linked with the gender division of labour in the private sphere. Therefore, a refusal or strike in relation to making a cup of tea, conducted by unamiable feminists is described as a disaster for male colleagues in Japanese literature (e.g. Genji 1952).

¹³³ Butler asserts; 'Although Foucault identifies the ambivalence in this formulation, he does not elaborate on the specific mechanisms of how the subject is formed in submission' (Butler 1997b: 2). Therefore, she questions 'how the subject is formed in subordination' (ibid.: 3).

In WOO there were several different meanings that could be attached to making a cup of tea. Whilst the then Executive Director had preferred someone else to make a cup of tea for her between 2002 and 2003, I heard that the former Executive Director had said that staff members, including herself and the Secretary-General, had to make tea for themselves as a way to overturn the existing gender division of labour in the workplace. The Secretary-General apparently wanted contract workers to make a cup of tea too. It seemed that for him letting someone make a cup of tea could not only reinforce the power relationship between them but also make it explicit to others. One day, Tsuha-san (a pseudonym), a contract worker, let everyone know that the Secretary-General once asked staff members if anyone had not made a cup of tea for guests. It seemed that it was rather conspicuous not to make a cup of tea in the daily life of the small office. Thankfully, Tsuha-san told him that she often saw everyone make a tea for others, though several feminist contract workers did not do so in reality. In this sense, it was possible for contract workers to fabricate the convenient fact of making a cup of tea against his control.

Unlike Shinjo-san, Uehara-san, one of the feminist contract workers, rarely made a cup of tea for her bosses. However, she sometimes made a cup of tea for them on purpose, especially when she needed to negotiate something with them and required their approval for her feminist project. For instance, a couple of days before she had to talk with the Secretary-General about her new project, she started to make a cup of tea and talk to him for a while. It looked fairly obvious to other staff members that Uehara-san intended to humour him, but it seemed that he did not mind that and it worked well. For him, her act of making a cup of tea might have been seen as docility and submission. However, for Uehara-san, making a cup of tea for her male boss meant in general a non-feminist or anti-feminist act, but it was also possible for her to make a cup of tea for him as a feminist in a certain context. Undoubtedly, for her, the latter was totally different from the former. Making a cup of tea as a feminist is performative for her rather than an act whose meaning is fixed. Other staff members also understood this.

In this sense, making a cup of tea for a project as a feminist could displace the existing meaning of making cup of tea. This performative practice resulted in loyalty to feminism rather than in resistance or subversion. The Secretary-General was

happy with his cup of tea, since he thought that she had made a cup of tea for him to show a sort of 'obedience' or 'accommodation'. At the same time, she became the feminist subject through making a cup of tea in subordination. Consequently, making a cup of tea for Uehara-san is distinct from Ogasawara's analysis on OLs' 'resistance' that 'serve[s] to reinforce traditional gender relations' (Ogasawara 1998: 162). The dichotomised logic argued by Willis and Ogasawara overlooks the fact that the process of becoming the subject can only be possible within particular dilemmas and contradictions. Uehara-san purposely served a cup of tea to reinforce traditional gender relations on the surface and performatively became the feminist subject by doing so.

Conclusion

As I have shown in the Introduction, the Japanese government and local governments in Japan use the term 'a gender equal society' as translation for *danjo kyôdô sankaku shakai*, which translates literally as 'a society in which both men and women participate' (Osawa & Ueno 1998; Osawa 2002). Yukiko Tsunoda pointed out that such ambiguous Japanese translation of gender-equality, *danjo kyôdô sankaku*, might be understood as distant from the original meaning (Tsunoda 2002: 8-15). Under this vague policy of a gender equal society, 90% of women's organisations are established by local governments as part of the public sector in Japan (Sakurai 2008: 3). These public women's organisations are 'the latest institutions established by local governments, and therefore they have problems and possibilities' (Yaguchi 2005: 26). Hence, it is often said that 'a women's organisation must be the subject that has independence and subjectivity, even if it financially depends on local government' (Sakurai *et al.* 1999: 22). However, how can a public women's organisation become independent from local government that supplies both funds and executive staff members? That is, a contract worker who is not seconded from local government is supposed to be independent from local government and becomes the subject to spontaneously and intentionally pursue loyalty to feminism at a public women's organisation.

From the very beginning, public women's organisations have been charged with an important but informal mission of bridging the gap between 'a gender equal

society' as the ideal, and 'a society in which both men and women participate' as the reality as a praxis site. As a result, whether such a grand mission can be realised or not depends on 'a zealous staff member who tries to solve women's problems' (Sakurai 1995: 84) and who works under low-waged, one-year fixed-term contract working conditions. Hiruma-san's dilemma of her subject formation as a feminist is deeply linked with the inconsistency that exists between national policy, social movements, and labour.

A public women's organisation as a 'greedy institution' also makes it possible to provide 'women with many of the advantages of non-traditional women's work in that it allows for the exercise and development of a wide range of skills, the possibility of acting on political principles and a relative degree of autonomy' (Franzway 2000: 263). Therefore, working at a women's organisation means more than labour for a feminist worker, and it is a combination of a vocation and politics. Thus loyalty to feminism looks fatal. But it is not absolutely fatal. It is fatal only if one sees the labour process as the exploitation of fulfilment or as the socio-cultural reproduction of inequality. It is not until she faces the dilemma that such a worker becomes the subject in subordination. Her dilemma can be explained neither by theories of exploitation nor of reproduction.

Chapter Eight

Conclusion

In this thesis I have shown how WOO embraced the dreams, hopes, and anticipations of various actors – users and workers – who had been involved in WOO, but in reality, it also contained various contradictions. For instance, WOO constructed a new workplace for those who wanted to work in activism and get paid for their work, but also reproduced precarious, low-waged, gendered labour. Moreover, WOO was a praxis site, which put law into practice, while it also revealed that law internalised the inconsistency between what people had originally expected of the law and what was enacted as a result of institutionalisation. Furthermore, WOO unexpectedly became a focal point of contact between neoliberal and feminist governance through public services and the requirements of performing accountability for citizens and for feminist activism. Thus frontline practitioners attempted to bridge the gap between the ideal, reality, law, and practice and to negotiate with neoliberal and feminist governance in the labour process. The thesis has questioned how the inconsistencies between the ideal and reality arose in the daily working practices of contract workers under neoliberal and feminist governance in post-colonial Okinawa. More concretely, it has explored how contract workers attempted to negotiate, accommodate, and struggle with the gap between the ideal and reality through their lived experience at WOO, rather than fiercely resisting or merely being subject to various forms of governance or reality. In doing so, the thesis has revealed how the notion of ‘gender equality’ was unstable and problematic in the process of promoting ‘gender equality’ at WOO in post-colonial and neoliberal Okinawa.

The public sphere in post-colonial Okinawa

WOO was a public women’s organisation, which was publicly funded by Okinawa Prefecture, and which the long-standing, patient calls of the local feminist social movements had enabled the Prefecture to establish in the local government sector. In Chapter Two I described how WOO was historically and structurally positioned between the social movements and local politics in post-colonial Okinawa where the US military bases have been stationed since 1945. On the one hand, WOO has had a

close liaison with the local feminist anti-militarist movements, especially those against sexual violence by US military forces, since its establishment. For those who were engaged in the movements, WOO has been the counter public sphere that made it possible to recast gendered matters, to gain power within the government sector, and to redress gender injustice under the law. Unlike other prefectures in Japan, the feminists' engagement with local politics and the local governments was imperative in post-colonial Okinawa. On the other hand, the local government expected WOO, as the public sector, to supply public services to citizens to promote the administrative slogan 'a society in which both men and women participate' under the Basic Law for a Gender-equal Society and local policies. Needless to say, the structural and financial bond with the Prefecture ensured that WOO was caught up in local politics, which were also inseparable from global politics, especially international relations between the US and Japan. In this way, WOO was embedded in post-colonialism in Okinawa under the Japanese government and US military forces despite the fact that its establishment was bound up with the local anti-militarist social movements. However, as demonstrated in Chapter Four, several frontline practitioners attempted to reveal and problematise the hypocritical post-colonial international relationship between the US military, the Japanese government, and Okinawa Prefecture through their daily work, which the administrators required at WOO. Thus the thesis revealed how WOO as a public women's organisation was a contested political arena where individual staff members were tested to face and challenge the fact that Okinawa was situated in the post-colonial era in daily work.

Feminist governance meets neoliberal governance

As part of the public sector, WOO was bound up with neoliberalism, which has promoted New Public Management (NPM) throughout Japan. Nevertheless, as part of the counter public sphere, it was also inseparable from feminist social movements. From Chapter Three to Chapter Five I examined how WOO became a focal point of contact between neoliberal and feminist governance for citizens through its projects, and how practitioners were engaged in such governance.

Chapters Three and Four explored how the push to promote gender equality

in the public sector entailed the introduction of neoliberal accountability embodied as consumerism and the enumeration of all the projects at WOO. In other words, they described how the inconsistencies between the ideal and reality emerged at WOO under neoliberal governance. WOO changed direction in 2002 towards consumerism to supply citizens with better services and to reduce running costs. It is crucial to note that the words 'consumerism' and 'consumers' were not used at WOO, but the idea of them penetrated WOO and its users. In Chapter Three I illustrated how, as part of the public sector, WOO strove to adopt consumerism in its services in the name of accountability to prefectural citizens under NPM. In this way, I highlighted how neoliberal consumerism demanded that citizens be active subjects who willingly used public services, and that WOO be a consumerist autonomous organisation which planned and managed its own independent projects. As a result, WOO tended to put notions of gender equality aside in practice.

At the same time, as described in Chapter Four, citizens as subjects were enumerated and categorised to ensure accountability to the public, including taxpayers and Okinawa Prefecture, in the culture of neoliberalism. I demonstrated how WOO needed as many participants, users and clients as possible for this purpose and to keep account of numbers in its annual reports. However, while numbers were visible and clear, the extent to which WOO achieved gender equality was not tangible in practice. Thus I showed how frontline practitioners attempted to negotiate with and displace the meaning and function of the practice of enumeration and categorisation, which led to the maintenance of the status quo of post-colonial Okinawa. By doing so, as Chapter Four revealed, WOO needed numbers that were neither necessarily substantial nor correct, but as high as possible.

However, ethnographic analysis revealed that WOO was also rooted in feminist governance. Feminist claims and attempts to seek the legitimacy of the state bore fruit and brought about legislation such as the Basic Law for a Gender-equal Society (1999) and the Law for the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the Protection of Victims (2001). In Chapter Five I drew attention to how, like neoliberal discourses, feminist discourses expected women to become autonomous legal subjects who would actively participate in projects in a public women's organisation, change their ways of thinking and life, and solve their gender issues under these laws

in the name of gender equality. In this sense, feminist desires and claims were embodied and attempted to govern women through their subjectivity at WOO (see Cruikshank 1999). Thus WOO, as a fruit of the feminist social movement, could not help aiming to produce autonomous subjects who willingly came to WOO and could deal with gender issues themselves through projects such as counselling and assertiveness training programmes under feminist governance.

By doing so, I pointed out that there was a liaison between neoliberal and feminist governance in the light of the politics of subjects. Both neoliberal and feminist governance required subjects to be active and autonomous, and WOO to be responsible to itself. As a result, WOO unexpectedly became a focal point of contact between neoliberal and feminist governance. However, the ethnographic analysis revealed how such an attempt to produce autonomous, active, self-governing subjects inevitably entailed failing to rule what WOO had targeted under neoliberal and feminist governance. Thus, while WOO attempted to re/produce neoliberal and feminist subjects through the projects of WOO, it also showed how neoliberal and feminist governance resulted in unexpected and unplanned outcomes.

Gender perspectives

This thesis focussed on the term ‘gender perspective’ not as an academic and universal term which had been determined *a priori* with absolute certainty but as a colloquialism which conveyed dynamic relationships between given categories at WOO. In doing so, I tried not to reduce experience at WOO to that of Okinawans (Tomiyama forthcoming). Nor did I analyse the staff in terms of class by perceiving non-regular workers and their work as monolithic and fixed (Ong 1991). Nor did I examine them only in terms of their gender (Kimoto 2003, 2005). Instead, I delineated how multiple, metamorphous gender perspectives opened up a future which would not be enacted based on *a priori* categories, such as women, men, non-regular workers, regular workers, Okinawans, and Japanese. WOO keeps re/producing the category ‘women’ and essentialising ‘women’ through its projects under law. However, these gender perspectives made it possible to examine and confuse the existing categories and norms in the process of labour and political practices at WOO. I wanted to show how such gender perspectives tried to

re-describe dreams and possibilities of gender equality, which had disappeared in the process of the institutionalisation of the social movement, towards a possible future based on new relationships.

In Chapter Four I drew attention to how several staff members made an effort to supply users with projects and approaches in terms of a gender perspective in a consumer society. This accountability from a gender perspective was distinct from neoliberal consumerism, which tended to focus on better public services that were examined only through consumerist discourses by referring to accountability for citizens-consumers. Chapters Six and Seven turned to how gender perspectives were constructed and cultivated through interactions of feminist, non-feminist, and anti-feminist staff members in daily work. On the one hand, for the feminist contract workers, WOO was an irreplaceable and precious workplace where one could make gender equality a form of paid work. For them, it was indispensable to make use of gender perspectives as a form of political knowledge to carry out routine work and analyse their daily life, including that of the staff, guest speakers, users, all the projects, newspapers, and so on. In doing so, they saw their work as political activism. On the other hand, for those who were not interested in or were against gender equality, it was hard to work for it. Such individuals found themselves in conflict with the political work and tried to separate the politics of gender equality from the work. Chapter Six described how the administrators, who became the symbol of a male dominated society, tried to control the feminist contract workers and their gender knowledge and analysis. However, the ethnographic analysis revealed that the more the administrators tried to police gender knowledge, the more the contract workers thought and talked about what they had been doing from the point of view of gender. The administrators prohibited the word 'gender' as a signifier, but this paradoxically promoted the proliferation of the signified of gender politics around WOO because the feminist contract workers also analysed this prohibition from the perspective of gender. These gender perspectives should be seen not as the abstract term feminism but as a formation of socio-cultural and political practices.

Dilemmas between the feminist subject and gendered being

The feminist contract workers saw with passion and perspective the politics of gender equality as a vocation. It was crucial for them to make sure that they were engaged in feminist activism and paid for it through a job at WOO. They found this job meaningful and different from other jobs that they had experienced before. Chapters Six and Seven examined how the feminist contract workers worked for gender equality under the gendered working conditions, positioned between the ideal and the reality. In Chapter Seven, I argued that WOO was a 'greedy organisation' which required considerable commitment and loyalty towards gender justice from its staff (Coser 1974; Franzway 2000). This demand was not responded to by everyone but it was by feminist contract workers who wanted to do the work of the social movement at WOO. For such people, gender analysis using gender perspectives was equated with feminism, and therefore meant feminist activities. However, gender analysis also revealed that their working conditions under low-waged one-year fixed-term contracts were highly gendered. They proclaimed themselves as feminists and intended to work to realise gender equality, but ended up embodying women's oppression and reinforcing the existing sexual division of labour by working as contract workers at WOO. They found themselves facing a dilemma between being a feminist and being oppressed at WOO.

In the light of sociological concerns that seeing a flexible job as a vocation is a disaster (e.g. Bauman 1998; Honda 2007; Sennett 1998; Shibuya 2003), I questioned whether loyalty to feminism among the staff was fatal under the gendered working conditions at WOO. However, my ethnographic analysis revealed that loyalty to feminism looks fatal, but it is not absolutely fatal. A feminist contract worker became a feminist subject through making a cup of tea *in* subordination. She purposely served tea to reinforce traditional gender relations and performatively became the feminist subject in a dilemma by doing so. However, I showed that loyalty to feminism is fatal only if we see the labour process as the exploitation of fulfilment and enthusiasm or as the socio-cultural reproduction of inequality. The contract worker's dilemma cannot be explained by either theories of exploitation or reproduction. This ethnographic analysis makes it possible to reconsider *how* people work passionately under unsatisfactory working conditions without regarding themselves as exploited (see Harris 2007). The feminist contract workers found the

value of work in the very process of their gendered labour through their gender perspectives. This ethnographic analysis also cast light on how social movements work in between the ideal and the reality.

In conclusion

This thesis is a contribution to interdisciplinary research, which has an impact in overarching fields, including political anthropology, gender studies, labour studies, sociology, organisation theory, public policy, Japanese studies, Okinawan studies and post-colonial studies. I have also sought to bridge English and Japanese literature on these subjects where there has been little dialogue between them. I especially wanted to remedy the tendency for debates in Japanese to be absent in English studies. In doing so, the thesis has explored the dynamic relationships between social movements, law and work in contemporary Okinawa by focussing on the production process of gender equality as socio-cultural and political practices. I have tried to consider what was brought about in daily working practices when social movements' claims were embodied in law and institutions and when social movements became paid work. By doing so, I have demonstrated how social movements, the public sector, law, neoliberalism, a way of living, and work were intertwined with each other in the creation of gender equality on a daily basis.

As I have shown, I found serious inconsistencies between the ideal and reality in the practice of law and social movements at WOO. Consequently, I analysed how its staff and users faced the inconsistencies between them. Most of the staff had unreasonable or inexplicable personal experiences, which could be verbalised and understood only through gender perspectives. Why did one worker's father repeatedly hit her mother? Why did another worker have to perform oral sex for her husband every morning when she was pregnant? Why did another worker keep regretting that she had not been able to help an Okinawan girl who had been forcefully taken into a car by an American soldier on a street? Why did another worker have to divorce her American husband who left the military? Why did these workers have to work cheaply and on fixed-term contracts? Why were they gendered not only in the labour process but also in the trade union movement? They tried to reinterpret what they had experienced in the past, at home, in the workplace, and in

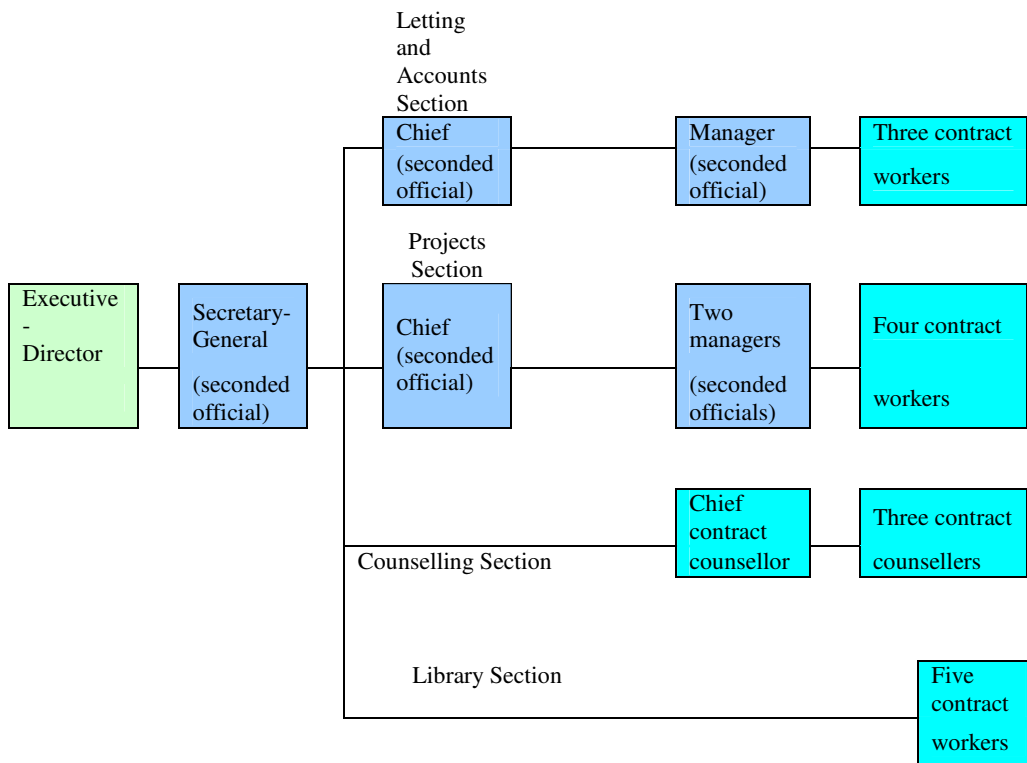
the movement, and why they had felt devastated, disappointed, helpless, sad, and uncomfortable.

Ironically, however, this may suggest that gender equality is not something which exists in front of you or is given by institutions such as governments and law. Rather, like peace, gender equality is required to keep being re/produced through the negation and conflict between daily activities of the staff members and those who are engaged in WOO as users, participants, clients, and lecturers, from policy and law, various social movements and academia. But, all the more for this reason, in the process of aiming at and producing gender equality, we may face not only dreams and hopes but also despair and abandonment. Nevertheless, the feminist staff members sought to seal an unbridgeable fissure between different aspects of reality as a result of the institutionalisation and the ideal as dreams which the social movement described. Throughout the thesis, I have demonstrated that by revealing and problematising the complexity, conflicts, and contradictions in relation to the notion of 'gender equality' in the process of promoting it, WOO has kept negotiating gender equality in daily work since its establishment.

However, this thesis did not intend to insist that the social movement always embodied the ideal and was monolithic. Rather, I indicated that the institutionalisation of the social movement paradoxically threw light upon the way that the social movement inevitably embraced inconsistency and various forms of government. Okinawa is a place that Japanese leftwing intellectuals tend to regard as the base of the most radical social movements, because, after twenty-seven years of American occupation, the US military forces are still present. However, it is probably not very easy for people to disclose their political stance at home, at school, and in the workplace in daily life in Okinawa, since political difference sometimes might lead to an irrecoverable outcome. Indeed, as I described in Chapter Six, some contract workers tried to conceal what they really thought of the presence of the US military forces. In the case of WOO, to be a feminist was equated with being against militarism and the US military forces, since the feminist social movements have been firmly based on anti-militarism in Okinawa. Others also said that they did not want to become a member of a trade union, since they might be put on a blacklist by local governments. I am not sure whether such a blacklist exists, but it is undoubtedly true

that they believed that it was fatal for contract workers in the public sector to be regarded as activists or radical leftwingers (or communists). Taking account of this preference for a non-political stance in Okinawa, I do not claim that there is a dichotomy between the ideal and reality as well as between resistance and subordination. Rather, I have stressed that being political and non-political, or resistance, accommodation and subordination contradictorily coexist together in Okinawa. It may be wrong to focus solely on either of these because not only WOO but also Okinawa and people in Okinawa cannot help being full of inconsistencies and contradictions. This is what we call post-colonialism. In the light of this status quo, through this thesis, I have tried to examine how self-proclaimed feminists worked for gender equality on gendered contracts in post-colonial, neoliberal Okinawa.

Appendix 1. Organisational tree of WOO



Appendix 2. Counselling categories and sub-categories

1) way of life

1. character, identity
2. reason for living, life planning
3. gender role, suffering about mentality
4. menopause, aging, way of life after retirement
5. solitude, loneliness
6. death, religion
7. sexual orientation, way of life
8. others

2) mind

1. anxiety, irritation
2. depression, insomnia
3. neurosis
4. psychosomatic disease
5. addiction
6. anorexia
7. paranoia
8. quasi-mental disorder
9. desire or attempt to suicide, self-injury
10. others

3) body

1. pregnancy, childbirth
2. birth control, abortion
3. sterility
4. menopause, aging
5. maintaining health
6. impediment, illness
7. anxiety, disorder on obstetrics and gynaecology
8. distrust of medicine
9. others

4) issues in the workplace

1. searching for work
2. returning to work after a career break, changing jobs
3. labour condition, issues of employment (gender-equal opportunity law)
4. leave before and after childbirth, leave for childcare, leave for nursing and care
5. dismissal, unemployment compensation
6. transference, removal
7. cannot work happily, cannot keep working
8. others

5) relations of married couples

1. character, friction and dissatisfaction with life
2. separation, divorce

3. sexual problems
4. violence
5. disappearance from home
6. affair with non marital partner
7. financial anxiety, financial problem
8. alimony for a child, parental authority
9. others

6) parents, children and household

1. worries about relationship with parents
2. problems with relationship with children (including child's marriage and divorce)
3. problems with relationship with parents and children-in-law
4. brother and sister relations
5. kinship
6. child abuse, anxiety about child care
7. caring for parents physically and financially
8. inheritance, testament
9. others

7) human relations

1. human relations in work place
2. cannot go to work place
3. human relations in school (bullying etc.)
4. cannot go to school
5. distress in friendship
6. distress in hetero-sexual relationship
7. distress in neighbourhood
8. violation of human right
9. others

8) sexuality and sexual abuse

1. sexual suffering (rape, molestation, etc.)
2. sexual harassment
3. sex industry
4. question, anxiety about sexual activity
5. question, anxiety about sexual orientation
6. question, anxiety about sexual education, sexual information
7. others

9) life

1. life environment
2. leisure, hobby
3. ceremonial occasion
4. tax, pension, insurance, and so on
5. consumer life
6. consumer credit business, credit card
7. welfare system, home

8. information
9. others

10) international problems

1. marriage, divorce
2. children
3. legal status such as nationality, family register, etc.
4. information of whereabouts, connection, documents
5. information
6. others

11) others

Appendix 3. International, national and Okinawa prefectural gender equality policies and events in Okinawa.

Year	United Nations	Japan	Okinawa
1975	World Plan of Action, Mexico City		
1977		National Plan of Action	
1979	Adoption of CEDAW		Stateless children issues raised
1980	Program of Action for the Second Half of the UN Decade for Women		
1981		Priority Targets for the Second Half of the Period Covered by the National Plan of Action	
1984			Action Plan of Okinawa Prefecture for the Solution of Women's Issues
1985	Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women	Amendment of the Nationality Law, promulgation of the Equal Employment Opportunity Law, and ratification of CEDAW	Over 20 people participated in the Nairobi NGO Forum from Okinawa. <i>Unai</i> Festival was held.
1987		New National Plan of Action towards the Year 2000	
1988			Abolition of the Festival of <i>juri</i> (prostitutes) and the age limit for female bus guides
1990	First Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women		
1991		New National Plan of Action towards the Year 2000 (First revision)	First female Vice-Prefectural Governor
1993			DEIGO Plan 21
1995	Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action		71 people participated in the NGO Forum in Beijing. Establishment of OWAMV and REICO
1996		Plan for Gender Equality 2000	
1997			Establishment of WOO
1998			Revised DEIGO Plan 21
1999		Basic Law for a Gender-equal Society	
2000	Five-year Review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action		
2002			DEIGO Plan 2002
2003			Okinawa Prefectural Ordinance for the Promotion of Participation of Men and Women
2005	Ten-year Review and Appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action	Second Plan for Gender Equality 2000	
2007			Priority Targets for the Second Half of the Period Covered by DEIGO Plan 2002
2010	15-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action	Third Plan for Gender Equality 2000	

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