Notes

CHAPTER 1: WHAT IS LONG-TERM RESISTANCE?

1. In contrast, the U.S. fertility rate in 2010 was 2.1 (Google Public Data 2011), a rate at which the population is reproducing itself. In the United States this depends in part on the high degree of immigration, which Japan does not have. The mean age of women at first marriage in the United States was below Japan at 26.1 in 2010 (Info Please 2011), and the mean age of women at first birth rose from 21.4 in 1970 to 25 in 2006, again well below Japan (Center for Disease Control and Prevention 2011).


3. They prefer to remain anonymous.

4. Lila Abu-Lughod (1990) wrote that often the resistance that Western researchers track shows more about the various effects of power than it does about resistance. She describes young Bedouin women who have moved into the cities in Egypt. They resist old norms about marriage based on parents’ choices and on social stability rather than love, but as they shop for sexy lingerie to seduce their husbands, they enter a new set of media-led norms about women, sexiness, and marriage based on sexual bonds rather than family and community ties. Similar observations can be made about the use of media as part of resistance in Japan or the United States as well.

5. Saba Mahmood, an Egyptian anthropologist, criticizes agency as a Western feminist/liberal idea that is “a synonym for resistance to relations of domination” (2001, 206). She studies the Mosque Islam movement in Egypt and claims agency, but within the self-cultivation and discipline of Islamic norms. It is the religiously based patience and modesty of these women that allows them to deal with social suffering even as they cry about it with a friend. Her definition of agency aids in analyzing
actions in contexts that are non-Western: “capacity for action that historical relations of subordination enable and create” (2001, 203).

6. Sherry Ortner points out that agency and resistance are full of tension between a person’s intentions and socialized norms (2006, 77). Ethnographers should listen for details in people’s narratives in order to hear the ambivalence inevitable in agency because “people are reacting to more than one form of domination and individuals are themselves heterogeneous with internal contradictions and ambivalences” (Ortner 2006, 179). Here Ortner accepts the argument of Shahbano’s multiple identities, but emphasizes that she is “at the low end of every form of power in the system” (Ortner 2006, 56).

7. Laura Dales writes that Japanese women have “limited agency . . . bounded by context” (Dales 2005, 150). Lyn Parker (2005), whose book The agency of women in Asia Dales writes in, uses the term “conflicted agency” for the women in Bali she studies, who want to use biomedical clinics for childbirth because they are safe but often end up with traditional healers because they treat the women more respectfully.

8. Talal Asad (2003, 79) attacks the idea of agency as a Western notion that Western scholars cannot give up because they are imbued with the historical idea of freedom. Yet he cites hypocrisy, because the same scholars want a subject who is historically constructed.

9. Nandini Gunewardena (2007) suggests that we avoid seeing women as either “wholly antagonistic or fully compliant to the gender norms of the day. . . . In my long-term ethnographic observations . . . ambivalence is a far more common response to encounters with power than is wholesale antagonism.”


11. Gupta and Ferguson (1997) take off from a footnote of Foucault’s that claims that points of resistance are earth-shaking experiences. not because they change the era’s truths, but over the long run because they “cut across individuals themselves . . . fracture unities and make new groupings” (Foucault 1980, 56–57, n.13). They write that experiencing these small points of resistance leaves traces of tension in individuals and relationships that change people in terms of how they are subject to others and how they are linked with their own identities through how they think about themselves (1997).

12. “Games” here means the social fields of power that people live and compete in. The rules of social games are complex and strong, but games may change over time, causing dilemmas for some people (Bourdieu 1990).

13. Raymond Williams (1981) uses the phrase “structures of feeling” to name this ambiguous arising, and the ideas and practices that take form he calls “emergent discourses.” They are uncertain and may or may not become social movements.
They vie or combine with other powerful sets of ideas and practices: dominant discourses—powerful in everyday society now—and residual discourses—powerful from social and cultural history.

14. Butler proposes that small changes occur in the margins of society as people fail to enact or act differently from certain societal expectations of their identity, especially gender identities. In her story of a hermaphrodite, the courage and risk involved in such “slippage” is clear.

15. In 2004, 9.7% of university professors were women, 16.1% of assistant professors, and 22.9% of lecturers. Nearly 30% of students in PhD courses were women (Sodei 2005).

16. Bourdieu experienced two games of power in his life, one in his peasant village and another at the Sorbonne in Paris. He knew how to play the village game in his bones because he had been raised in it, but he had to learn, and always felt out of place, in the academic game. He described this as a double bind, which presents dilemmas in people’s lives as they try to adjust (Charlesworth 2000).

17. Das (2007) writes of the poignant silences of wives kidnapped by the enemy and sometimes impregnated during the partition of India and Pakistan. These silences are another aspect of agency for Das.


19. I have chosen to use the term “late modernity” in this book after the style of Anthony Giddens (1990). I have settled on late modern as an indication that this is an era that has lost faith in the institutions of modernity as a path of progress. Globalization has increased information and risk, broadening people’s imaginations. Dynamics of consumption and production have changed, but the institutions and values of modernity still have a strong claim on the era (Harvey 1990).

20. Meanwhile, single men were also increasing, though more gradually, with the increase starting from 1975, according to the Kokusei Chosa of 2005. Although men tend to marry later than women, single men in the thirty to thirty-four age group were 32.8% in 1990 and 47.1% in 2005. At age fifty, 5.6% of men were single in 1990, but by 2005, this had risen to 16% (Shakai Jitsujo 2011). By 2010, 46% of men were single and never married between the ages of thirty and thirty-four; 35% between thirty-five and thirty-nine; and 28% between forty and forty-four (Statistical Survey Department 2012).

21. Japan has the highest proportion of mothers who earn less than 20% of household income when compared with Taiwan, Germany, Italy, Sweden, the UK, and the United States. Taiwan and Italy are more like Japan in having a lower percentage of working mothers with small children. Among working mothers, the United States has a comparatively high proportion of full-time workers (two-thirds), whereas part-time workers are high among working mothers in the UK and Germany (Shirahase 2007, 46–47).
CHAPTER 2: AMBIVALENCE AND TENSION

1. Butler takes off from Foucault’s idea that there is “an ambivalence at the site where the subject emerges,” arguing that everyone is brought into ambivalence from the beginning—“a strong vacillation between subordination and a will to our own power” (1997, 7, 17). We are vulnerable to subordination in the complete relationship with mother or caregiver, but we do have the potential to “transform the social terms that have spawned us” (1997, 29).

2. Louis Althusser (1970) argued that the subject, especially the modern “individual,” comes into being through structures and social practices tied to economics and politics. Thus, “ideological state apparatuses,” such as the policeman pictured here as hailing the subject, constitute the subject and “interpellate” a person into being in ideological form. He is now criticized for overdrawing the power of ideology, but Butler uses this example as one aspect of the process of psychic ambivalence.

3. One in three women between the ages of twenty and sixty-four living alone were in poverty in 2010, defined as earning under 1.25 million yen per year for a single-person household. Married women experienced a poverty rate of 11% compared with the poverty rate of 31.6% for single women living alone (Aoki 2012).

4. Kitamura (2007) finds proof of just such a dilemma of choice. Japanese men and women attend parties that are arranged meetings for potential mates between groups: women graduates from a particular university and men who are lawyers or doctors, for example. She finds them unable to commit, forever searching for the ideal spontaneous encounter (en), and thus, perhaps conveniently, keeping themselves out of the formal familial roles they reject. She describes them as in an ongoing liminal state, always within the rite of passage to adulthood but never willing to cross the threshold that would commit them to identities in modern society.

5. This generation is slightly older than the generation of “cuties” studied by Kinsella (1995), who resisted by refusing to grow up and remained childless as a way of protesting the narrow roles of postwar Japanese society.

6. Although the regions lag behind large urban areas economically, after the tsunami of 2011 Tokyoites were surprised to find out that Tohoku (northeast) has an economy the size of Argentina’s, with many labor-intensive suppliers of small parts. Its problems affected the national economy. Several such factories near small regional cities employ husbands of women in this book as blue-collar laborers. The economy of the larger Tokyo area, however, is the size of Russia’s (Economist 2011).

CHAPTER 3: LIVING WITHIN THE DILEMMA OF CHOICE

1. In 2011, a government survey of singles aged 18–34 found that 61.4% of men and 49.5% of women had no girlfriends or boyfriends respectively. Forty percent said
there was no need to marry. Furthermore, a quarter of unmarried men and a quarter of women aged 35–39 said that they had never had sex (Buerk 2012).

CHAPTER 4: NO CHILDREN DESPITE RUNNING THE GAUNTLET OF CHOICE

1. Like others, they inherited the ideology of the mother that has grown strong in the last century in Japan. In the late 1800s, “wise mothers” began to be valued for the growth of the nation (Uno 1991), and the idea grew with the increase in middle-class urban mothers in the twenties, honor given to war mothers in World War II, and importance of professional housewife-mothers in the 1960s and 1970s. Mothers’ value in time spent with and for children ratcheted up postwar, because mothers supposedly gave the physical and emotional stability, along with gradual discipline, that would produce children with the idealized Japanese psychological characteristics of cooperation, empathy, emotional dependency, and perseverance. The success of postwar institutions in Japan was supposed to depend on mothers’ contributions and made them significant.

2. The popular way of quickly labeling a person who is divorced is to refer to them as having an X (batsu), a word that can also mean a penalty.

3. “Old miss” is used in Japanese as a derogatory term for an unmarried woman and is spoken with a Japanese pronunciation of the English words. Americans would use the phrase “old maid.”

4. A survey done by the Asahi Newspaper Company of 600 wives in 2005 showed that 26% of married women had not had sex with their husbands in the last year (Cameron 2005). Other surveys of men and women have shown even longer time statistics.

CHAPTER 5: PLANNING AND COCOONING

1. If just considering women who have had children in this study, the overall rate of children per mother is 1.63, with a rate of 1.72 in the regions and a rate of 1.44 in Tokyo.

2. I have used the fertility rate for Iwate Prefecture, where Morioka and the village are located. However, by 2004, four married women (all with children, nonworking) lived in the regions, but outside Iwate. Two were in Sendai, a large northeastern city, and two in other regional cities. The fertility rate for Miyagi Prefecture where Sendai is located is 1.25, while the other two prefectures have rates of 1.44 and 1.51 (Naikakucho 2008, 13).

3. Rayn finds that child raising is understood as a “part of individualistic formation of self” and developing potential resources of self among young women in Norway (2005, 39).
4. Goldstein-Gidoni (2012, 103) found that the generation behind this one is insistent on enjoying life as housewife-mothers.

5. Ishii-san’s father is registered as a disabled person. His disability is classified as fourth in a five-tier system. A plan manager makes a plan for him: a home helper takes him back and forth to an adult day service twice a week where he is bathed, and to a dialysis center three times a week. They pay 10% at 10,000 yen per month, and the rest comes from the government’s tax program known as “care insurance,” paid into by everyone over age forty. A commercial company delivers his special-diet meals to him for $700–$800 per month, which was expensive for the family.

**Chapter 6: Working and Raising Moral Children**

1. Shinnyoen is a new Buddhist sect founded in 1936 by Shinjo Ito in Japan and is now headed by his daughter Shinso Ito. It follows Buddhist ideas of spiritual awakening to the nature of reality, but places special emphasis on altruism through individual contributions to the planet and philanthropic foundation. It is active in the United States, Taiwan, France, and Japan (Shinnyoen.org 2011). Like other new religions in Japan, it is focused on the founder or leader as a prophet/ess, a position that often is inherited within the family, and it is viewed perjoratively by mainstream Japanese.

2. I am including the teacher Kawahara-san in these four, but in this section I discuss the three retirement home workers who grew up in the village and have both parents and parents-in-law there.

3. This is the only woman in this study who had gotten divorced by 2004. The divorce rate has risen significantly since the 1960s. It reached a peak of 290,000 divorces in 2002, and in 2009 there were 253,000. The divorce rate in 2009 was 2.10 per thousand population (*Statistical Handbook of Japan* 2010).

4. The number of children born to couples married after pregnancy has risen in Japan. In 2004, 26.7% of births were in this group—2.5 times higher than in 1998 (*Mainichi Shimbun* 2006).

5. Rosenbluth (2007, 13) states that rural prefectures have a flatter M-curve, indicating that women take less time off from work as they raise children. The correlation between residence in relatively rural areas and female labor-force participation goes beyond the positive effect of grandparents caring for children.

6. In 2012, a survey of married women aged twenty to forty-nine with children under nineteen found that 45.3% wanted to work part-time and 25.8% wanted to work full-time (*Japan Times* 2012).

7. This organic movement is associated with the Japan Organic Agriculture Association. Its principles include *teikei* or community-supported agriculture (CSA) outside of the commercial system. The first CSA operated in Japan in the early seventies. It challenges organic farmers to live entirely off the products of their
land and eschews moneyed economy. Finally, the movement stands for a local cycle of plants fed by compost made from local plant and animal waste without any chemical fertilizers or pesticides. Tsuchiya-san and her husband run a CSA for people in the small nearby city where they go to distribute vegetables and some pork and traditionally processed foods in boxes every week; the members pay for these boxes weekly, but they can refuse for that week or just order half-boxes, thus cutting down on money for the farmers.

CHAPTER 7: THE NUANCES OF LONG-TERM RESISTANCE

1. Anthropologists who rethink agency and resistance include Abu-Lughod (1990), Asad (2003), Dales (2005), Gunewardena (2007), Mahmood (2001), Ortner (2006), and Parker (2005). Studies of psychosocial development and of sociocultural development have lent explanatory concepts for delving into these ideas of ambivalence and tension in people’s lives and how people deal with them over time: vulnerability to subordination and a will to power in development (Butler 1997); symbolic bootstrapping with objects (Vygotsky 1966); mental orchestration of various social voices (Bakhtin 1981); and double binds (Bourdieu 1990).

EPILOGUE

1. In her study, Okano (2009) also shows how women in her long-term study got on with their lives after the Kobe earthquake of 1995.
2. At that time, only the Tokyo Shimbun (Tokyo Newspaper) was giving full coverage to the nuclear demonstrations and was openly antinuclear in its reporting, although the Asahi Shimbun had declared it was against nuclear power.
3. Microsievert is the amount of ionizing radiation required to produce the same biological effect as one rad or gray of high-penetration X-rays. This is measured in the air in various places throughout Japan to estimate how much radiation people are receiving.
4. On April 1, 2012, the Japanese government tightened restrictions on the amount of cesium allowed in food. For general foodstuffs, the limit is 100 bequerels of radiation per kilogram, down from 500; for milk 50 bq, and for water 10 bq (Japan Today 2012). A bequerel equals one unit of nuclear decay or other nuclear transformation per second and is used to measure the radiation present in things such as food.