

A Comparative Study of the Ideal of Women in Japan and England

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Introduction

In this paper I will try to consider the cause of the delay of the achievement of women's independence in Japan in spite of being modeled after England, where women have realized their independence in every field prior to Japan. I think that there is a particular intention of the Japanese government in the process of modernization and it is revealed in the history of the formation of the ideal of "the good wife and wise mother"

The ideal of women, "good wife and wise mother", had been formed and reformed from the later years of Meiji Era to the early Showa Era in Japan, and from the Victorian age to the Edwardian age in England. Japanese promoted modernization by introducing ideas, studies and other things from England. The image of "the good wife and wise mother in Japan" might have been modeled after that of "an angel in the family" and the style of the family in England.

What was England for Japan in former days?

Most Japanese recognized the existence of England in the middle of the nineteenth century. England grew to be the most developed industrial country and its society changed greatly. As the result of industrialization, people who got wealthy by industry and commerce rose to the upper middle class. This radical social and political reform resulted from not only the development of industry but also of commerce and trade. It also caused over-population in cities, and labor and unemployment problems. England entered into the time period called "the Victorian."¹ England stood at the head of the great powers of the West and she was the factory of the world which seemed to be a new and huge threat for Japanese and at the same time England became a country of chic life style and material civilization. When the political ideas and system of England were introduced to Japan, England became the model of democracy and liberalism based on empiricism. The Japanese government aimed at having armament and industry similar to England. England was the ideal for Japan in the process of modernization. It was the synonym of something modern and advanced. The construction of a modern country after the Meiji Restoration moved ahead mixing together imported and conventional thoughts.²

In such a relationship between England and Japan, we should pay attention the following points in the context of the argument of this paper.

One was the encouragement of education for girls. It meant the education to raise women as those who composed a country. A modern nation demanded a

consciousness of the people and allegiance to the country from women. Therefore it needed to educate girls in the national framework of the ideal women.

Another theme was the introduction of the divided labor role between the sexes. The biggest result of modernization in England seemed to bring about a modern family based on the division of labor roles between the sexes. It was a modern society where outside or public and inside and private places (houses) were separated into two interdependent territories (public territory = work and private territory = house) with the development of industry by the Industrial Revolution.³ And the division of labor role between the sexes compelled men to take part in the public territory and women in the private territory. As the condition for modernization Japanese society tried to drive women into the house based on the idea of the division of labor roles between the sexes. Therefore to drive women into their homes they tried to form a new image of women.

In the following, I will try to describe first some features of the ideal of women as “an angel in the family” which was accepted widely in the middle class that moved society in the Victorian Age (1837~1901) in England. Secondly I will examine the unique aspects of the historical background of the formation of the ideal of “the good wife and wise mother” in Japan.

1. The Ideal of the Good Wife and Wise Mother in England

(1) Angel in the family

The ideal of women in Victorian England was formed as the middle class became the core of English society in the early nineteenth century. It is said that the ideal was not only the model of women of the middle class mainly but that it also influenced the structure of the culture itself.⁵

Women in nineteenth century England were second-class citizens because of convention and prejudice. English society in the Victorian and Edwardian Ages, is said to be “the time when intelligent people tried to prove and make the frame of a theory about the difference between men and women by using “the latest science”⁶ so as to reach the division of labor roles between the sexes. The ideal of “angel in the family” would not have been formed if a house had been the place of production as before the Industrial Revolution. As house and workplace were separated with the advance of industrialization by the Industrial Revolution: men occupied the workplace, while the house became to be the private place of women’s territory. Consideration belonged to men as emotion belonged to women, and men were thought strong mentally and physically, but women were weak. So outside the home, public places, were thought men’s territory, and the house which meant a private place was thought women’s territory. The home was consecrated as a place for rest and refuge from work, and the vigorous struggle for existence, and women were angels who controlled this area.

After the Industrial Revolution, women in middle class didn't have to engage in the labor for production, so they were put down as being lazy and without economic value. As the later nineteenth century progressed, more women became free from complex domesticities by entrusting much of this to servants, and being their supervisor. The only social role that middle class women had was to be a visible proof of their husbands' economical and social status. A family in middle class needed various physical and intangible arrangements as a symbol of its financial power and respectable state. "It meant a luxurious residence and carriage regardless of expense, a drawing room filled with much furniture, servants who served for each task, and human resources such as a governess to educate girls. In addition to these, such a life style as the practice of enjoying vacations overseas, sending their son from a public school to Oxbridge, and frequent luncheon parties."⁷ It was the "idleness" of women that made the family ideal of the middle class perfect. Women became the embodiment of a wealthy leisured life as one of the tools to show off man's social status. The dress they wore, playing the piano or harp, learning foreign languages, the way to treat guests, colloquial expressions and their manners symbolized the respectability of the family. As to their dress in the early and middle Victorian, it is said, their choice depended on not her taste but social success and possessions of their fathers or husbands, the heads of a family.⁸

As the nineteenth century went on, people in the middle class had developed an obvious division of labor between the sexes. In addition to this, a great deal of conventional courtesy represented in manners at table gave tacitly a message to children regarding order based on gender, class, age, and who should be given priority. To say nothing of differences of clothes and toys, if there was a family which had children both boys and girls, the girl undoubtedly would have experienced different treatment, that made them aware of their parents' different expectations for them. Girls were expected to help their mothers with the housework from an early life in a family that hired few servants. Parents put the responsibility for young brothers on elder daughters. Above all, boys used to leave their houses to enter boarding public schools, while most girls used to receive education from their mothers or governesses at home, not from teachers at school. This continued until the time of the First World War.

Looking over the girl's process in growing up to be ladylike, the person who played the most important part by showing the first model of the ladylike deportment was her mother. The mother undoubtedly gave an image of future life to her daughter. Men worked outside of the house, women didn't. There was a clear difference in treatment between boys and girls, and girls easily accepted that the world of men lay in the distance from the world of women and that they had authority. The relation between mother and daughter was very important. Daughters in the middle class learned the social expectation that a wife must make an effort to

satisfy her husband's needs first of all. The most important lesson they would learn was that a family was organized around men, who supported the family, and that all the routine was carried out to suit them. Mothers taught daughters that obedience to brothers was the natural order, so they ought to serve them.

Mothers were close to daughters when they grew enough to get the study room. They received lessons in fashion, behavior, manners and extremely complex secrets from their eager mothers. Most mothers of all the classes handed down their "femininity". A daughter was taught that service and self-sacrifice always had to be together. From her young age, she was made to feel selfish if she was absorbed in her own interest, and was required to suppress it. For it was thought that such a habit was incompatible with economic dependence on others whom they should service.

It seems due to this fact that there were few images of women except as an ideal of "angel in the family", that daughters didn't feel antipathy toward this image.

At that time the only natural calling of woman approved without reflection by society was "marriage". A respectable lady had to be always supported as an encumbrance of men. As for a lady it was misfortune and disgrace if she worked for payment. The ideal of "angel in the family" had driven daughters into the situation that they had no choice but marriage. "If ladies, who were brought up without preparation for work to make money, would not succeed in getting married, they would have to be supported by their kin. If their fathers or relatives died, she would helplessly become governesses with only a small salary. So marriage meant a matter of life or death for them."⁹ "Marriage meant a fate fixed by society for women and the end of education for girls."¹⁰ The important purpose of education for the governesses who took care of girls was to make girls excellent in the competition to be married. Victorian girls brought up in that situation would delightfully depend on men, prefer to stay at home quietly, and would be faithful, filled with self-sacrificial platonic love like an angel and would feel happy to render good service to their husbands or fathers who were exhausted by their work.

What sort of ideal of the good wife and wise mother was made in such background?

Women began to be focused on the house and childcare by "books on child-rearing" in the late seventeenth century.¹¹ More available "guide books" continued to cage women in the house during the Victorian Era.¹² Especially the guidebooks on marriage, housekeeping, or etiquette made clear, in detail what a lady should be. The authors of these preached the separation of men's and women's territory based on the difference between men and women's natures. The house was referred to as the original place to show women's ability in every book. Women who were driven into houses were obliged to be educators in the home and "the model of the mother

as a teacher” was clearly proposed in representative Victorian books on child-rearing.¹³

The ideal of “an angel in the home” in those guidebooks had the common sense of value. First, the duty of women was thought to have three parts: to be daughter, be wife and be mother. Second, women were certainly thought inferior to men just because they were woman.¹⁴ Above all the most expected role was “to love”, and it was the true nature of women as well as their duty. Although the message in such guidebooks seemed to give women an aim for life, it was the fact of driving them into the home which forced them to live only as “an angel in the home”. The ideal of the “obedient woman playing her part in home” was supported by social recognition: namely women were so inferior to men, and weak so they needed to be supported by men economically and mentally.

(2) J. S. Mill’s view of woman

It was John Stuart Mill who regarded the reality of women as subordination, and sounded an alarm bell against this attitude. He urged women to be aware of their state of subordination and clamored for women’s liberation.

In his “The Subjection of Women” published in 1869, he showed how women, especially married women, were subordinated to men and restricted in their way of life. Anyone’s wife should be perfectly subordinate to her husband. Her privilege and pleasure were given by her husband or were easily influenced by his intention. She could do nothing without permission from her husband. She couldn’t even own her property.¹⁵ All the privilege and property and freedom of her conduct was completely taken away from her by her husband. Mill said that the situation of the wives was the only slavery which remained in that era and “meanwhile the wife is the actual bond-servant as slaves are commonly called.”¹⁶

“The subjection of women to men was a universal custom.”¹⁷ There were tremendous disadvantages to women under the law in connection with such an unwholesome view of women. The system of the law that reflected the attitude toward women was generally widespread in the society since the last century. The principle of “husband and wife as one body” denied the legal personality of married women.¹⁸ Single women could own their income and possessions though women suffered a heavy loss at the time of inheritance. Yet all income and possessions including her real estate were passed into the hands of her husband when a woman married. Once she married, all her property, including herself and her children and even her own income after marriage became her husband’s property under the principle of “husband and wife as one body”.¹⁹ In addition, wives didn’t have the right to request a divorce. Although complaints about abuse from husbands were omnipresent, abuse became more severe instead of less so. If women “are induced to do so (to avail themselves of the laws made for their protection), their whole

effort afterwards is to disclose as little as they can, and to beg off their tyrant from his merited chastisement."²⁰ Sometimes a husband even thought of his wife as a gift from the law so that he could treat her as he liked.²¹

Women didn't have the right to raise children, the right as a mother in the law. Children were legally children, so only the father had the legal right toward their children. The mothers could do nothing about them or for them unless they were entrusted to do so by the fathers.²²

Women were expected to serve others, especially men: that was regarded as "natural". "Femininity" was socially defined as dependence, service and self-sacrifice.²³ "All the moralities told them that it is the duty of women, and all the current sentimentalities that it is their nature to live for others, to make complete abnegation of themselves, and to have no life but in their affections."²⁴ However, it was the Boer War that brought a conversion in the ideal of women.

(3) Attention to the role as mother

The Boer War had broken out continually since 1880. Worry about the English future and about decline of the British Empire occurred from the disclosure of the physical weakness of soldiers and the increase of the death rate of babies during the war. Women came to be thought as "mothers of the Empire" in order to have and bring up children for "the future of the British Empire". Mothers were thought to be the cause of the increase of the death rate of babies, so "education for mother" was required to help them bring up their children with proper care. Women were forced to play the role of supporting the character formation of children and taking proper care of them from babyhood. More consciousness of obligation and responsibility for domestic affairs, baby, nursing and food were emphasized in the ideal of women.²⁵ These, however, were practiced only among the working class.

Among women in the expanding middle class, sports became popular in the late nineteenth century.²⁶ They even took part in severe exercise events by the end of the nineteenth century. As more women played actively, the view toward women changed. The image of the ideal women in the latter part of the century was formed by absorbing a favorable point of both the old and new model. Women were required not to obey men blindly but to have self-respect. The ideal of women by the end of the nineteenth century changed. This ideal was a woman who had taken progressive education, cultivated her pride in a job and "being like the sun" having both ladylike sweetness and able to enjoy tennis and cycling.²⁷ The ideal defined of the small-sized and delicate women in the early and middle Victorian age was replaced by the image of a tall, slender, and dignified, grown-up woman with energy and confidence.²⁸

As the image of women changed, campaigns were expanded which urged women to be independent. The campaigns for women's suffrage, and for equal

opportunity for higher education were great events that moved forward the liberation of women. The main working forces of those movements were intelligent women in the upper and middle classes.

The campaign for woman's suffrage in England started in parallel with the campaign for the second revision of election law in 1867, after the first petition for women's suffrage had been presented to the House of Commons in the previous year. After that, organizations for women's suffrage were formed and preceded various performances of the campaign. Women's suffrage finally came into effect in 1918. When the center of the campaign was the one for women's suffrage, Pankhurstes, who pushed forward with it positively attracted a great deal of public attention by their extreme means.²⁹ At the same time, another movement requested education for women by women themselves. Intelligent women in the upper and middle classes moved into action as in the previous movement. They tried to take the opportunity of reeducating governesses to find a way of developing higher education for women.³⁰ For example, Emily Davis demanded equal opportunity for education.³¹

There were many women who made a great contribution to women's liberation by socially meaningful activities at that time. Florence Nightingale was far the most legendary woman among them.³² The nurse was indeed in quite a low position with a lower salary than the average.³³ What made Nightingale's contribution legendary in the Crimean War was that she was a woman from the upper class in addition to her ability. Women who were disgusted at weariness and idleness in their lives showed interest in nursing as an occupation. The image of nursing had been improved by Florence Nightingale, a lady in the upper class.³⁴ She returned from the war in 1856, set up a training school for nurses in 1860 and sent many excellent nurses out into the world. Nursing was built up as a fine occupation for women between the 80's to the 90's, though there was a friction between the old system, which required the nurse's obedience to doctors, and the new system, which required her own positive responsibility for nursing based on her medical knowledge.³⁵

The most important reason for making nursing so popular as an occupation was that nursing provided an outlet for the energy of women living an idle life, when there were few other jobs which could keep up their appearances. If the force that had made women live a closed life in their homes was the general idea formed by men, it must have been "a part of women's liberation" that women had changed at least a part of the idea, getting nursing into women's hands by struggling against the haughtiness of doctors who were men. Tamae Mizuta said, "The contribution to women's liberation was an important aspect of the history of nursing."³⁶

With such movements women opened their way into the society which had been controlled by men for many years. I think the new image of women must have strongly stimulated the independence of women in England. Intelligent women in the middle class promoted their self-reliance and realized women's liberation

supported by liberation movements, as Mill once advocated.

2. The Ideal of Good Wife and Wise Mother in Japan

(1) Modernization and the image of good wife and wise mother

What was the modern period in Japan like? According to Chizuko Ueno, “the division between public and private was the distinguishing feature of the modern period”³⁷ and “from the point of view of the history of the family. *Family system* was an invention out of civil law by the government in the Meiji period, though it had been thought to be the legacy of feudalism for a long time.”³⁸ Japan tried to organize a modern nation modeled after nations in Europe. Japan needed to unify the people in order to compose a nation-state. The government tried to establish the principle of a “nation as a family” with loyalty and filial piety for the purpose of the establishment of nation-state. The idea of *family* we thought was “traditional” was actually formed by the government in the modern period.³⁹ The government having formed the idea of family by the government in modern period in Japan, the public sphere of paid work and the private domain of home of domestic affairs were divided and allotted to each sex: women were shut out from the workplace and shut in the house. The meaning of “house” for women was different from the one for men under such circumstances. Housework meant a sort of job for women who provided men with love and consolation though the house meant a place of refuge for men. “It can be said that the principle of good wife and wise mother based on the theory of the division of labor role between the sexes, compelled their duty in the context of the principle of family nation.”⁴⁰ The idea of good wife and wise mother in Japan was established as a determined “ideology” required for the formation of a modern society. It was the idea used in order to integrate men and women into one as a “nation” for the purpose of the construction of a modern nation and a modern society based on separation between the territory of production and of reproduction. “The main purpose of the national idea of good wife and wise mother was to implant awareness of the nation in women’s mind in order to link the women’s part of wife and mother to nation.”⁴¹ The idea of good wife and wise mother was the most universal view of women in modern Japan and promoted the educational idea for girls which had been controlled by the public education system from the late Meiji period until the Second World War.

(2) Some specific features of the image of good wife and wise mother

In what position were Japanese women situated? As to the modern division of labor role between the sexes it deserves special mention that the Japanese housewife had higher autonomy in housekeeping than the European housewife.⁴² However the legal rights of Japanese women “had been denied from the Meiji Restoration to the end of the Second World War”.⁴³ Women’s position was placed lower than that of

men; women worked with half the payment of men's on the pretext that this was to help the family finances and women were thus deprived of a fundamental human right. People were divided into the head of a household and dependants in family law. Women ought to obey men's rights in civil law established in 1908 (Meiji 41).⁴⁴ The name of mistresses were done away with and monogamy was built up in 1880 (Meiji 13).⁴⁵ The husband had the right of property management of their wives property and of the conduct of their wives.⁴⁶ "The right of managing belonged to a husband and a wife could not manage property unless her husband could not do it legally, even if a wife earned living expenses as the householder and had her profit in her husband's property."⁴⁷

As to the wife's rights, a claim for divorce from a wife was admitted as "the human right of freedom" in 1873. Thus a door of freedom was opened to a wife who could not bear her husband's unreasonable treatment and abuse.⁴⁸ But there was no regulation for the right of getting property for wives on the occasion of divorce. In the situation of rejecting the right of a head of a household, a wife could not have the right of claim for divorce.⁴⁹ Parental authority belonged to the father. Children belonged to their "house" on occasion of divorce although the mother could take care of them when he left the house. Seiko Aoyama said the most important effect that marriage had was "to make a wife incompetent."⁵⁰ Although the autonomy of Japanese wives was higher than European because most of families were involved in agriculture, their position was inferior to men's and people thought women were inferior to men by nature because they were female. This showed the qualities of patriarchy and of Confucianism in Japan. "The idea of three obediences" was the typical example. As the word that "hired belly represented, one of the most important role of wives was to have children who would become inheritors. Shoji Fukaya described some features of the image of good wife and wise mother and emphasized Japanese particular features as follows: Confucianism in Japan valued ladylike morality and manners which influenced the image of good wife and wise mother. The image had been triggered by a view of women in Edo times. What was expected of women in that time was the role of "good wife". The role of "mother" was hardly considered. Wives were required to be obedient to their fathers and mother-in-laws and husbands. It was thought that women were so foolish and inferior by nature, that they could not do anything but obey others based on the idea of domination of men over women.⁵¹ In Edo times, there were two views of women: the image in the samurai class which insisted that women were inferior to men and had to be controlled by them and obey them, and the image among the common people that women were in a high position taking an important part in their houses as homemaker.

(3) The rise of nationalism

According to Fukaya, “the ideal of good wife and wise mother can be regarded as a historical compound that was founded on Confucianism, having absorbed the image of women in Europe, and also on being regulated by the idea of women in the people.”⁵² To put it concretely, society regarded the difference of role between the sexes as natural, and emphasized it so as to insist that a woman’s duty was to keep her family and assist her husband with her knowledge as a housewife, and that she should raise children to be excellent members of the nation. Such a woman was the model of the wise mother.

This was the Meiji period of enlightenment. The most important subject of Japan in those days was to achieve the independence of Japan as a modern nation and to train people to have appropriate ideas as modern people. The view of women began to change when the society came to recognize the value of women’s role as mothers who brought up children for the development of Japan as a modern nation.

Women recognized their own value from the national point of view and involved themselves in the nation. Their role changed “from hired belly to a mother as an educator.”⁵³ Women were evaluated as mothers. It was in modern times that women came to think for the first time that they were deeply connected with home education. The idea of wise mother appeared. It should be noted, however, that women were evaluated only through the role of mother. From the appearance of the idea of wise mother, the positive idea of girl’s education appeared: people must educate girls to make use of their knowledge in their future, although the purpose of education was, as before, for instructing obedience. The wise mother who educated children to be good citizens was required in the girl’s education for wise mother in the 30’s of the Meiji period. Then the idea of ‘good wife’ was added to the idea of ‘wise mother’.

There were three factors for the formation of the idea of good wife and wise mother. The definition of “good wife” had changed between the Edo and Meiji periods. The Nissin War was one of the factors related to the formation of the idea. “War, an experience which determined the rise or fall of the country would require allegiance to the nation.”⁵⁴ Allegiance to the country by women of their own accord was now required instead of required by obedience by the head of the family. The indifference of women would weaken the power of a nation. Society needed education which implanted national consciousness in women’s mind. Women were expected to become educated and to assist their husband with their acquired knowledge and not to remain inefficient. The requirements for “good wife” were not only to be obedient to husbands and father-and-mother-in-laws simply but also to perform domestic duties and to manage the family’s financial situation”.⁵⁵ A faithful helping of their family with knowledge and a demonstration of high-level morality were expected.⁵⁶ The ideal women, the model of good wife and wise mother, were

those who keep house and keep the Japanese family system for the nation, even if they send had to their husbands and sons to battlefields. This meant that women actually became the members of the nation who could contribute to the country through their housework and child-care. That point of view formed the idea of the equality of the sexes by advocating that men and women were equal and that both could contribute to the country in different roles. The role of mother was paid attention to for the first time; therefore women improved their position. As a result of the Nissin War, not only the thought of "good wife" but also the thought of "good wife and wise mother" was taken into girls-education. Sizuko Koyama said, "the thought of good wife and wise mother clearly theorized that girls-education was connected with the development of the country."⁵⁷

The second factor for the formation of the idea of good wife and good mother was a fear of "living together inland" by the revision of the treaty. Tariff autonomy and abolition of extraterritorial rights came into effect in 1899. It was thought that to cope with the immigration of foreigners into Japan (living together inland) allowed by the revision of the treaty, education for women to be responsible as Japanese was needed. The thought of the education for "good wife and wise mother" was to emphasize the consciousness of the people as being Japanese.

The third factor was a qualitative change in the demand for women's labor force. A women's labor force was indispensable for the development of capitalism. But if it was provided according to the demand of capitalists, there was a possibility that it would restrict the women's sphere within their house, could not be the ideal of girl- education any longer. Moreover, it was feared that the family system would weaken due to women in the labor force. So the idea of good wife and wise mother had been formed as an ideology that covered all women in all social classes to keep the family system, though people accepted the role difference between women-laborers in the lower classes, answering the demand for a women's labor force and women houseworkers in the upper class.⁵⁸ This idea played a part for upper-class women by implanting a sense of shame about taking a job if there was no financial need. Such a woman must maintain the house as a good wife and as a leader of the country and must bring up her children as a wise mother. At the same time, the idea played a part in keepng lower-class women within the role of "good wife and wise mother" by insisting that their job if there was no inconsistent with their nature because they worked to support the family. However the thought of "good wife and wise mother" mainly set its sights on women in the upper class.⁵⁹

For the above reasons, nationalism required women who supported the country with consciousness of the nation and could not help breaking down the Confucian view of the obedient women. But from the point of view of the family-system, the obedience of women was needed and had to prevent women from claiming real equality as it had with women liberationists in the West at the end of the Victorian

Age. Therefore the new image of women, which would deny the image of both a Confucian woman and the Western liberated woman, was required. The image was different from the Confucian view of women because it gave them equal value with men.⁶⁰ It was the ideal that women should not only perform their duty at home but also understand national policy as members of nation. The good wife and wise mother became the ideal of education for girls to cultivate consciousness and patriotism in order to strengthen the country. This thought owed its origin to the image of wise mother in the enlightenment period and built up the position as the officially recognized ideology concerning education for girls in the prosperous years after the Nissin War.⁶¹ When women were integrated into members of the modern nation, they were incorporated indirectly into the country as mothers unlike men who could directly contribute to the country. Thus the idea of good wife and wise mother was built up in the Meiji 30's.

(4) The movement of women's liberation and importation of scientific study

However the idea began to change in the Taisho period (1910~1925) due to criticism which arose in the late Meiji 30's. Prosperity after the First World War and Taisho democracy could not help having an effect on the idea. After the war, which broke out in 1914, a new image of women responding to the times began to be required. The fact that women's activities showed their latent capacity outside the house in Western countries during the war drew Japan's attention. The war proved that women could work outside the house. A woman's existence was not only as wife and mother and thus needed to be elevated. It was recognized that the conventional idea of good wife and wise mother began to be inadequate. A new idea of women that kept the traditional division of labor role between the sexes on the one hand, while preventing women from becoming active like men on the other hand, developed. Women who could apply scientific knowledge to domestic affairs, who had a logical way of thinking and who were engaged in various social activities became the model of good wife and wise mother who could be compared with the Western women after the war.⁶² The ways of child-care and domestic affairs were required to be more rationalized and scientific by introducing the Western way of life.

Many assertions of women's liberationists were introduced in the Taisho period and people began to pay attention to feminism. Women who had judgment and an awareness of independence began to increase due to the spread of secondary education. The increase of working women made society accept working as one way for women to live. Women began to be able to contribute to country directly. The word of "full-time housewife" appeared in some magazines in the Meiji 20's but people didn't get used to it. The increase of the nuclear family in cities due to industrialization changed the traditional family style and the "housewife", who was

free from the labor of production and could concentrate on domestic affairs and child-care, appeared. Modern division of labor between the sexes was rooted more thoroughly as a new idea of good wife as “housewife” was formed.

As to the role of mother, when the idea of good wife and wise mother was formed in the Meiji 30's, women and child-care were connected with a mother's affection. Moreover women were regarded to play the role of mother by instinct in the Taisho period because of the introduction of the word “motherhood”. The idea that regarded the relation between mother and child as one was strengthened even more by saying it was a “natural, reasonable and a self-evident truth”.⁶³ In addition to that, physical education was encouraged for a good mother who was to have children and raise them as well as who was to be good worker.

The ideology of good wife and wise mother needed studies substantiated by principles. The ground of the ideology was divided roughly into the theory, which insisted on the division of labor role between the sexes as a natural social system, and the study which insisted on the absolute natural difference between the sexes.⁶⁴ Women's function of giving birth was thought as the “absolute order ruled by nature”⁶⁵ by the introduction of biology at the end of the Taisho period. So the division of role between men and women became intensified as the natural system. The thought that insisted on women's duty of good wife and wise mother became firmer because of the difference between the sexes based on studies introduced from the West. It became a strong thought that men and women were on even ground because no human was worthless to others although they didn't have equal rights because of the difference in their natures.

Thus at the new idea of good wife and wise mother was formed putting a strong emphasis on the different roles between men and women. The new image came to play the part of “inviolable established truth”⁶⁶ at that time. It was part of the ideology of “full-time housewife” that controlled Japanese till the end of the Second World War. Furthermore, it can be said that these ideas are still in effect even now.

Conclusion

After the First World War, the role of housewife was emphasized in Japan, while the role of mother was paid attention to in England. Although the nineteenth century has ended and now the twentieth century is coming to an end, the ideal of “good wife and wise mother” is still rooted deeply in the Japanese mind.

The word “full-time housewife” was established as a status in the 1970's in Japan. The role of “housewife” since the 1880's was completely recognized as the status of woman. Although the role of wife had been regarded very high till then, it was socially accepted as a status by the use of the word of “housewife”. Looking at the Human Development Index (HDI) that shows how much fundamental human

ability developed, and the Gender Empowerment Measure(GEM) shows how many chances women get with their ability to participate in the economic and political world. Japan occupies a high rank in HDI but extremely lower rank in GEM among other highly ranked countries in HDI. That means the “housewife” is accepted as a uniquely proper status in Japan. The emphasis on the role of wife remains in the ideal of women even now and includes the idea of good wife and wise mother. That is, “housewife” was accepted as a status by society in Japan, but women’s liberation came true in early times in England. The model of good wife and wise mother has existed in women’s mind changing only the name to full-time housewife.

Why have Japanese wives been kept in this high position, and been protected in this position? In England, the new image of women that was presented by women’s liberationists of the middle class promoted the independence of women. The image of good wife and wise mother had been already established as a strong ideology before women’s liberation rose in Japan. Japan once imported Western ideas and the style of their cultures but not to help the independence of women. Those thoughts and styles were used for restraint on women’s liberation; studies substantiated by science theorized the difference between the sexes, and the model of the Western-style division of labor role between the sexes made the ideal of good wife and wise mother more solid. This was the reason why the image of good wife and wise mother was established as “a full-time housewife”, which dominated Japanese women as a solid ideology through the process mentioned above. Then, who were the protectors to emphasize the position of housewife? It seems they were the desires of men. When feminists invaded the system of good wife and wise mother, most of those who expressed perplexity and anger were men who they benefited in common from the maintenance of the sexist family system as it was.

Although the ideology restricted women’s life, conversely, it also gave an important social role and an aim to women. I think the reason why the women’s liberation movement was not widespread among Japanese women is that the position of full-time housewife was attractive to them and the women themselves hoped to live in comfortable lives as good wives and wise mothers. This seems to have been so strongly rooted in the mind of the average Japanese that the liberation of Japanese women has not yet been achieved.

Notes

1. 青山誠子『ブロンテ姉妹—女性作家たちの19世紀』朝日新聞社、1995、p.11。
2. 上野千鶴子『近代家族の成立と終焉』岩波書店、1994、p.105。
3. *ibid*, p.75。
川本静子「清く正しく優しく—手引書の中の〈家庭の天使〉像」『英国文化の世紀3 女王陛下の時代』研究社、1996、p.54。
4. *ibid*, p.54。
G. Hughes, *IN COMPARISON: ESSAY ON ENGLAND AND JAPAN*. (Eihousha, 1992) pp.44~45. John Ruskin refers to “an angel in family” in his book. According to him, women should be stay in what he calls their “Queen’s Garden”.
5. 中村直人・小林久美・片岡美子「19世紀後半から20世紀イギリスにおける家庭科教育史に関する一試論—女子教育の発展との関係を中心として」『九州女子大学紀要』33巻1号p.95。
6. 井野瀬久美恵『女たちの大英帝国』講談社、1998、p.21。
7. 青山吉信『忍従より自由へ』評論社、1976、p.226。
8. 坂井妙子『ウェディングドレスはなぜ白いのか』勁草書房、1997、p.23。
9. *ibid*, p.29。
10. J. S. Mill, *The Subjection of Women* (訳：大内兵衛・大内節子『女性の解放』岩波書店、1957,) p.80。
11. 小山静子『良妻賢母という規範』勁草書房、1991、p.6。
12. 小山、1996、p.66。
13. 小山、1991、p.6。
14. 小山、1996、p.62。
15. 大内、1957、pp.58~59、p.83。
16. *ibid*, p.81。
17. *ibid*, p.54。
18. 青山、p.218。
19. *ibid*, p.219。
20. 大内、1957、p.57。
21. *ibid*, p.89。
22. *ibid*, p.84. Property rights of married women were completely recognized in 1925.
23. 河村貞枝「ヴィクトリア後期およびエドワード期の家族史の一考察—中流家庭の女子教育をめぐって」『富山大学人文学部紀要』33巻1号、p.59。
24. 大内、1957、p.58, see also p.155 and p.162。
25. 中村直人・小林久美・片岡美子「大英帝国下における家庭科教育に関する一理論—大英帝国連盟と家庭科教育」『九州女子大学紀要』33巻3号、p.51。
26. 坂井、1997、p.32。
27. *ibid*, p.35。
28. *ibid*, pp.35~36. However it was the fact that strong-minded women were not desirable. The decorative image of women still remained. Decorative dresses got more decorative, even sportswear was attached importance to its elegancy than its activity and comfort.
29. E.Kally, *WOMEN IN SOCIETY*. (北星堂書店 1986) p.7。
30. 水田珠枝『女性解放思想の歩み』岩波書店、1973、p.165。
31. J.Parvis, *A History of Women’s Education in England*. (訳：香川せつ子『ヴィクトリア偉大の女性と教育』ミネルヴァ書房、1999) 第4章、5章。

32. 水田, 1973, p.169。
33. *ibid*, p.163。
34. *ibid*, p.164。
35. *ibid*, p.168。
36. *ibid*, p.170。
37. 上野, 1994. p.75。
38. *ibid*, p.69. Strictly speaking, there was a family style of the paternal line in the samurai class before Meiji period though general public had other styles. Samurai in Edo period seemed to occupy only 3% of the population or 10% including their family and 90% of the population lived in various style such as matrilineal heritage and inheritance of the youngest child.
39. *ibid*, p.70, p.74。
40. 深谷, 1998, p.12。
41. 青山誠子『女のイメージ〈講座女性学〉』朝日新聞社、1984, p.192。
42. 上野, 1994. p118. It was thought that the Japanese wives' management of family budget and their high position came from the right of farming family-wives.
43. 青山, 1984, p.102。
44. *ibid*, p.108。
45. *ibid*, p.107. Mistress had been legally recognized to be a spouse as well as wives until then.
46. *ibid*, p.108。
47. *ibid*, p.108。
48. *ibid*, p.107。
49. *ibid*, p.108。
50. *ibid*, p.108。
51. 小山, 1991, p.19。
52. *ibid*, p.11。
53. *ibid*, p.34。
54. 青山, 1984, p.193。
55. 小山, 1991, p.46。
56. *ibid*, p.58。
57. *ibid*, p.48。
58. 青山, 1984, p.196。
60. *ibid*, p.196。
61. 深谷, 1998, p.146, 小山, 1991, p.57。
62. *ibid*, p.146。
63. *ibid*, p.166。
64. 青山, 1984, p.206。
65. *ibid*, p.207。
66. 深谷, 1998, p.259。

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