

4 National Land Planning

Distributing Populations for the Wartime Nation-State-Empire

For the bureaucrats and experts working on population problems in the metropole, total war (1937–45), triggered by the outbreak of war with China in 1937, marked a watershed moment. The Konoe Fumimaro cabinet’s call for general mobilization to construct a “new order” in East Asia changed the official treatment of population issues in a number of ways. First, officials now redefined a large population as an asset and thus adopted a population growth policy.¹ Second, the government’s demand for a “high-quality” population during the war emphasized the significance of applying eugenics and racial hygiene to the official mobilization scheme.² Third, the government established the Ministry of Health and Welfare (MHW) in 1938 and made it the administrative office in charge of “regulating and utilizing” the population as a valuable “resource” for the nation at war.³ Finally, in 1939, the government founded the Institute of Population Problems (IPP) within the MHW as an official institute dedicated to population studies.⁴ The official effort to tackle the population issues in connection with the war culminated in the cabinet approval of the General Plan to Establish the National Population Policy (*Jinkō Seisaku Kakuritsu Yōkō*) on January 22, 1941. Toward the end of the war, the Japanese government had established what Ogino

¹ Hiroyuki Takaoka, “Senji no jinkō seisaku,” in *Kazoku kenkyū no saizensen jinkō seisaku no hikakushi: Semegiau kazoku to gyōsei*, ed. Hiroshi Kojima and Kiyoshi Hiroshima (Nihon Keizai Hyoronsha, 2019), 101.

² Matsubara, “The Enactment of Japan’s Sterilization Laws”; Christiana A. E. Norgren, *Abortion before Birth Control: The Politics of Reproduction in Postwar Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 52–59; Yutaka Fujino, *Nihon fashizumu to yūsei shisō*; Fujime, *Sei no rekishigaku*; Oguma, “Tsumazuita junketsu shugi”; Kiyoshi Hiroshima, “Gendai nihon jinkō seisaku shi shōron: 2- kokumin yūseiho ni okeru jinkō no shitsu seisaku to ryō seisaku,” *Jinkō mondai kenkyū*, no. 160 (October 1981): 61–77.

³ Ogino, “*Kazoku keikaku’ eno michi*,” 113; Fujino, “*Kōseishō no tanjō*”.

⁴ *Kōseishō Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūsho*, ed., *Jinkō mondai kenkyūsho no ayumi: 40-shūnen wo kinen shite* (Kōseishō Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūsho, 1979).

Miho once called the “system of managing the population under the war,” in which population bureaucrats and experts played a pivotal role.⁵

With the emphasis on population increase and the improvement in population quality, the General Plan to Establish the National Population Policy was instituted in tandem with the eugenic and social policies established during the war, which aimed to primarily promote the health and welfare of women and children. Partly corroborating the Foucauldian theory of biopolitics, and partly the portrayal of wartime Japan as a “fascist welfare state,” the wartime population policy significantly reified the Japanese effort to enhance the reproductive capacity of the “population of Japan Proper” (*naichi jinkō*) and the colonial subjects, now called *gaichi jinkō* (“population of the outer territories”), for the eternal existence of Japan as a nation-state-empire.⁶ Yet, the “system of managing the population under the war” was far more pervasive, generating various ways in which the population was articulated and controlled in relation to mass mobilization. One of these ways, which has hitherto enjoyed less attention in historical inquiries, was to regard the population as a *composition* and to manage the population’s quantity and quality by pursuing a balance in its composition through the population movement.⁷ In the late 1930s and early 1940s, this way of discerning the population and population management manifested in the debate over a “comprehensive population distribution planning” policy, which surfaced as a mass mobilization measure accountable for one of the most important national policies in the total war: “national land planning” (*kokudo keikaku*).⁸

⁵ Ogino, “*Kazoku keikaku*” *eno michi*, 112.

⁶ For a study that draws from Foucauldian theory, see the introduction. For a representative study on fascist welfare, see Takaoka, *Sōryokusen taisei to “fukushi kokka”*; Gregory J. Kasza, “War and Welfare Policy in Japan,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 61, no. 2 (May 2002): 417–35; Fujino, *Nihon fashizumu to yūsei shisō*. For selected case studies, see Sunho Ko, “Managing Colonial Diets: Wartime Nutritional Science on the Korean Population, 1937–1945,” *Social History of Medicine* vol. 34, no. 2 (2021): 592–610; Yoneyuki Sugita, “Toward a National Mobilization: The Establishment of National Health Insurance,” in *Japan’s Shifting Status in the World and the Development of Japan’s Medical Insurance Systems*, ed. Yoneyuki Sugita (Singapore: Springer, 2019), 93–125.

⁷ The exception was the works of Hiroyuki Takaoka and Kiyoshi Hiroshima, which this chapter is highly indebted to. Takaoka, “Senji no jinkō seisaku”; Takaoka, *Sōryokusen taisei to “fukushi kokka”*; Hiroshima, “Gendai nihon jinkō seisaku shi shōron.”

⁸ Today, the term *kokudo keikaku* is primarily associated with the postwar “national comprehensive development planning” project (*zenkoku sōgō kaihatsu keikaku*). However, as this chapter will show, it had roots in wartime state planning. For works that depict continuities between the wartime *kokudo keikaku* and postwar comprehensive development, see Eric G. Dinmore, “‘Mountain Dream’ or the ‘Submergence of Fine Scenery’? Japanese Contestations over the Kurobe Number Four Dam, 1920–1970,”

This chapter is about the policy discussions and research on “population distribution” that emerged in the process of establishing a “national land plan” as a state policy. The population work for “national land planning” effectively illustrates the mode of interaction between science and state-led population management during the war in the context of fascist imperialism.⁹ First, it shows the ways population experts imagined the population as a distributable “ethnic group/race” (*minzokul/jinshu*) and “resource” (*shigen*) and how they directly interacted with the Japanese state’s attempts to manage its population for the sake of fascist imperialism.¹⁰ Second, it illustrates that population science under a dictatorship was, to borrow the words of Sang-hyun Kim, “actively mobilized by the state ... to materialize the vision of a self-reliant political economy.”¹¹ Under a fascist regime, Japan invested in population research because demographic calculation was perceived to be fundamental for the construction of an economically and politically contained imperium, the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.¹²

One outcome of the state mobilization of population research was the formalization of population studies as an officially endorsed field of inquiry. Another was the expanding role of technical and research bureaucrats in policy-oriented population research. For the most part, these bureaucrats, employed to undertake the state-sanctioned population research, diligently completed the tasks assigned to them. However, a closer look at their research practices also suggests that the knowledge

Water History 6, no. 4 (December 2014): 315–40; Eric G. Dinmore, “Concrete Results?: The TVA and the Appeal of Large Dams in Occupation-Era Japan,” *The Journal of Japanese Studies* 39, no. 1 (January 2013): 10–12; Takashi Mikuriya, *Seisaku no sōgō to kenryōku: Nihon seiji no senzen to sengo* (Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1996).

⁹ Fascist imperialism, according to historian Louise Young, describes the “synergy and interdependence between imperial expansion and the development of the fascist programmes throughout the nation-state-empire,” “When Fascism Met Empire in Japanese-Occupied Manchuria,” *Journal of Global History* 12, no. 2 (July 2017): 280.

¹⁰ Shigeo Kato, “Senjiki nihon no kagaku to shokuminchi, teikoku,” *Rekishi hyōron* 832 (August 2019): 36–46. For this argument, see Jean-Guy Prévost, *Total Science: Statistics in Liberal and Fascist Italy* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2009), 11–14.

¹¹ Sang-Hyun Kim, “Science and Technology: National Identity, Self-Reliance, Technocracy and Biopolitics,” *The Palgrave Handbook of Mass Dictatorship*, eds. P. Corner and J. H. Lim (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 82.

¹² Therefore, state mobilization of population research took place in the same discursive space that gave rise to the “New Order for Science and Technology” (*kagaku kijutsushintaisei*), formulated by the Konoe cabinet in 1941 to establish state coordination of scientific and technological activities for rational resource management in Japan Proper and its colonies. Moore, *Constructing East Asia*; Mizuno, *Science for the Empire*; Oyodo, *Gijutu kanryō no seiji sankaku*, 142–86.

created by population studies was founded upon unstable epistemological grounds, despite the assertion of certainties demanded by the political regime.

From Burden to Valuable Resource: The Population Phenomena in the 1930s

When government officials and population experts raised the issue of “population problems” during policy discussion in the early 1930s, the message they projected had changed little from that of the late 1920s. Their perspective was firmly locked onto the problem of “overpopulation.” The only difference: Policymakers were now wearily tracing the rising discourse of unemployment triggered by the Wall Street Crash of 1929.¹³ Attributing the unstable economic situation that had been in place since the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923 to the intensification of the leftist labor movements, these policymakers were worried that mass unemployment, in conjunction with the ever-growing population, might ultimately result in a political crisis. Population experts described this official concern using a blanket term: “unemployment problem” (*shitsugyō mondai*).¹⁴

Though not so obvious at first, the issue of overpopulation implicit within the “unemployment problem” was very much a rural economy issue – one specifically linked to the rural community’s inability to absorb a surplus population.¹⁵ Well before the early 1930s, the population growth rate in “the countryside” (*gunbu*) was already high, far exceeding that of “the urban area” (*shibu*).¹⁶ This trend continued throughout the 1920s, with the rates gradually increasing: from 17.33 per 1,000 population in 1925 to 18.09 in 1930 in the countryside and from 5.60 to 6.92

¹³ Michiya Kato, “Hidden from View?: The Measurement of Japanese Interwar Unemployment,” *Annual Research Bulletin of Osaka Sangyo University*, no. 1 (December 2008): 77–103.

¹⁴ Tōru Nagai, *Nihon Jinkōron*, 58–59.

¹⁵ Penelope Francks, *Rural Economic Development in Japan: From the Nineteenth Century to the Pacific War* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006); Ann Waswo and Yoshiaki Nishida, *Farmers and Village Life in Twentieth-Century Japan* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003); Ann Waswo, “Japan’s Rural Economy in Crisis,” in *The Economies of Africa and Asia in the Inter-War Depression*, ed. Ian Brown (London: Routledge, 1989), 115–36.

¹⁶ In population studies at the time, the “urban area” conventionally included the major cities of Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya, Kyoto, Kobe, and Yokohama, as well as cities with populations of 100,000 and over. See, e.g., Minoru Tachi and Masao Ueda, “Taisho 9-nen, taisho 14-nen, showa 5-nen, showan 10-nen dōfuken betsu oyobi shibunbetsu hyōjūka shushhōritsu, shibōritsu oyobi shizen zōkaritsu,” *Jinkō mondai kenkyū* 1, no. 1 (April 1940): 21–28.

in cities.¹⁷ In turn, the rural economy was enduring enormous hardships due to the post–World War I (WWI) depression and the destabilization of economy after the Great Kanto Earthquake. It was also crushed by the volatile prices of rice and silk cocoons, the two major profit-making agricultural products for farmers.¹⁸ Throughout the 1920s, the countryside was increasingly feeling the pressure of a growing population.

This was the backdrop when the worldwide depression of the early 1930s struck the rural economy in Japan.¹⁹ From the Malthusian point of view, the economic depression brought a tangible population crisis to the countryside, obliterating the already precarious balance between population growth and subsistence growth. The effect of the collapse of the population-subsistence ratio was felt the harshest in the northern region of Aomori, Iwate, Miyagi, Akita, Yamagata, and Fukushima. The region additionally suffered from severe crop failures caused by cold summers in 1931 and 1934. Yet, in the face of this, the population kept expanding.²⁰ A scholar studying the diet in a village in Aomori Prefecture in 1934 lamented that villagers were so desperate that they were subsisting on rotten potatoes and sake lees.²¹ In part to solve this dire situation, throughout the first half of the 1930s, families in the region sent more sons out to work in diversified industries and more daughters off to places, both in and outside of the region, in search of jobs as factory workers, entertainers, waitresses, and prostitutes than ever before.²²

In this context, experts raised concerns that the “unemployment problem” might further deepen the population crisis in the already debilitated rural community. They feared that the countryside, thus far a major supplier of labor force in cities, might lose an outlet for its “surplus population” due to the economic depression and that the surplus population would disrupt the political order. Official concerns

¹⁷ Ibid., 21–22; Minoru Tachi, “Wagakuni chihōbetsu jinkō zōshokuryoku ni kansuru jinkō tōkeigakuteki ichikōsatsu’ (ge),” *Jinkō mondai* 2, no. 1 (June 1937): 217–38. Also see Minoru Tachi, “Showa 12 nen zenkoku, toshibu, gunbu oyobi rokudai toshi jinkō dōtai hikaku,” 1937, PDFY090803054, Tachi Bunko.

¹⁸ Yoshio Ando, ed., *Showa keizaishi* (Nihon Keizai Shinbunsha, 1994).

¹⁹ Dietmar Rothermund, *The Global Impact of the Great Depression 1929–1939* (London: Taylor and Francis, 1996), 115–19.

²⁰ Tachi and Ueda, “Taisho 9-nen, Taisho 14-nen,” 24–25.

²¹ Shiro Aoshika, “Tohoku chihō no kyōsaku nituite,” *Tokyo-shi nōkaihō*, no. 21 (December 10, 1934): 7–8.

²² “Miyagi-ken dekasegi ni kansuru chōsa,” n.d., PDFY09110678, Tachi Bunko. The document was a carbon copy of the meticulously handwritten chart showing the figures of migrant workers from Miyagi Prefecture between 1933 and 1935. The author is unknown, but it was written on official manuscript paper produced by Miyagi Prefecture.

peaked after the attempted military *coup d'état* by junior army officers on February 26, 1936. High-ranking government officials considered overpopulation, particularly in the farming villages, to be behind the incident, acting as a factor in the political radicalization that caused the attempted coup.²³ From the perspective of government officials, it seemed obvious that the post–Depression countryside had turned into a problem region due to the growing pressure caused by the expanding “surplus population.”

The government responded to the crisis by further promoting overseas migration.²⁴ However, in the early 1930s, Latin America, which by then had become a major destination for the officially endorsed migration project, was becoming less attractive to Japanese emigrants.²⁵ During this period, Brazil, the major recipient country in the region, became less welcoming to the Japanese because Getúlio Vargas’s nationalist government, which came into power in 1930, imposed assimilation and exclusion policies on the quickly expanding Japanese migrant communities.²⁶ Under these circumstances, Manchuria loomed on the horizon as a new promised land.²⁷ The formation of Manchukuo as Japan’s puppet state in 1932 additionally gave the government hope that it could mobilize rural populations to turn Manchuria into an important site of colonial development.²⁸ After the Hirota cabinet approved a program

²³ Takaoka, “Senji no jinkō seisaku,” 102.

²⁴ Another official measure linked with overseas migration was regional development, and Tohoku was the target region. The Tohoku Development and Promotion program, launched in response to the famine caused by 1934 crop failure, was approved by the Imperial Diet in 1936. Atsushi Kawauchi, “Jinkō to Tohoku: Senjiki kara sengo ni okeru Tohoku ‘kaihatsu’ tonon kanren de,” in *Tohoku chihō “kaihatsu” no keifu: Kindai no sangyō seisaku kara higashi nihon daishinsai made*, ed. Takenori Yamamoto (Akashi Shoten, 2015), 1–17; Makoto Okumura, “Tōhoku chihō kaihatsu no rekishi,” *Toshi keikaku* 61, no. 2 (April 2012): 5–10.

²⁵ Lu, *The Making of Japanese Settler Colonialism*, 222–29.

²⁶ Shiode, *Ekkyōsha no seijishi*, 336–38; Toake Endoh, *Exporting Japan: Politics of Emigration toward Latin America* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 32–34.

²⁷ Shinichi Yamamuro, *Manchuria under Japanese Dominion* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006); Prasenjit Duara, *Sovereignty and Authenticity: Manchukuo and the East Asian Modern* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2004), 41–86; Louise Young, *Japan’s Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1998), 3–52; Sandra Wilson, “The ‘New Paradise’: Japanese Emigration to Manchuria in the 1930s and 1940s,” *International History Review* 17, no. 2 (1995): 121–40. In tandem with this, Mongolia – which often appeared in association with Manchuria, as in the expression *manmō* – was imagined as *terra incognita*.

²⁸ Azuma, “Pioneers of Overseas Japanese Development”; Yoshihisa Tak Matsusaka, *The Making of Japanese Manchuria, 1904–1932* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003); Young, *Japan’s Total Empire*, 53.

for the mass colonization of Manchuria in 1937, local and prefectural organizations arranged a systematic emigration of farmers to Manchuria to establish “branch villages” (*bunson*).²⁹ Posters, travel journals, and historical writings stressed the image of Manchuria as a vast and empty frontier, urging many Japanese to dream of migration as an opportunity to materialize a vision of the future that they thought would be impossible to achieve at home.³⁰ For Japanese officials, the emigration of Japanese farmers to Manchuria would buttress what historian Louise Young once called “social imperialism.”³¹ They were convinced that migration was an effective social policy that would relocate a myriad of domestic problems associated with “overpopulation” to Manchuria while also fostering Japan’s colonial development.³²

Population experts, especially social scientists working on the rural community, were behind the official migration program to Manchuria.³³ One of the most prominent was the agrarian economist Nasu Shiroshi (1888–1984). Nasu was affiliated with the agrarian movement led by Katō Kanji, a right-wing activist who, in the 1920s, ran schools for rural youth in Ibaraki and Yamagata to realize a farm colonization in Korea and Manchuria.³⁴ In the early 1930s, Nasu argued in front of government officials that agricultural migration to Manchuria was an effective way to relieve the population pressure of the resource-poor metropole and simultaneously give hope to the farming villages hardest hit by the depression.³⁵ Using his status as a well-reputed academic, in February 1932, Nasu and his colleague Hashimoto Denzaemon consulted with the Guangdong Army (or Kwantung Army, in Japanese *Kantōgun*), additionally justifying migration on the grounds of security.³⁶ Going along with

²⁹ Young, *Japan’s Total Empire*, 336.

³⁰ Duara, *Sovereignty and Authenticity*, 62.

³¹ Young, *Japan’s Total Empire*, 12–13.

³² Matsusaka, *The Making of Japanese Manchuria*.

³³ Lu, *The Making of Japanese Settler Colonialism*, 187–90; Young, *Japan’s Total Empire*, 352–98.

³⁴ For a more recent work referring to Kanji Katō and Japanese migration to Manchuria, see Yasumasa Ishibashi, “Mobilizing Structures in Manchuria Agricultural Emigration in Imperial Era: Idea and Practice of Kanji Kato as a ‘Mediator’” [in Japanese]. *Korokiumu*, no. 6 (June 2011): 111–34.

³⁵ Lee, “Problematising Population,” 148–58, 171–78; Takaoka, *Sōryokusen taisei to “fukushi kokka,”* 108–10.

³⁶ Shinnosuke Tama, *Sōsenryoku taiseika no manshū nōgyō imin* (Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2016); Sandra Wilson, “Securing Prosperity and Serving the Nation: Japanese Farmers and Manchuria, 1931–33,” in *Farmers and Village Life in Twentieth-Century Japan*, eds. Ann Waswo and Yoshiaki Nishida (New York: Routledge, 2003), 156–74; Kyōji Asada, “Manshū nōgyō imin seisaku no ritsuan katei,” in *Nihon teikokushugika no manshū imin*, ed. Manshū Iminshi Kenkyūkai (Ryukei Shosha, 1976), 7–8.

government officials, agrarian population experts stressed that migration was simultaneously a panacea for the domestic problem of “overpopulation” and a tool for the imperial project to turn Manchukuo into Japan’s “life line.”³⁷

While the migration program continued into the late 1930s, the official discourse on population problems changed dramatically after the outbreak of war with China in 1937. With the rising demand for labor in the war industry, the narrative of an “unemployment problem” dissipated and was replaced by an argument that stressed the problem of labor shortage. Linked to this, the problem of declining fertility surged as a policy agenda, as mass conscription had a tangible effect on birth rates starting in the latter half of 1938.³⁸ The changing political situation in 1938 further exhorted government officials to reconsider population in a different light. In that year, the first Konoe Fumimaro cabinet (est. June 1937) redefined the war with China as a prolonged conflict, and on April 1, 1938, issued the National General Mobilization Law to mobilize the population for the construction of a “national defense state” (*kokubō kokka*). The demand for total mobilization intensified even more when Konoe issued a communiqué about the Chinese government in November 1938, which stated that the new goal of the current conflict was world peace realized through the “construction of a new order” for “eternal stability in East Asia.” This was immediately followed by another, issued a month later, which stated that the friendship, military collaboration, and economic cooperation of Japan, Manchuria, and China would be ideal for the construction of a “new order” in East Asia. In this political context, a large population size supported by high birth rates, which hitherto had been seen as a socioeconomic menace, was quickly redefined to represent “national power” (*kokuryoku*).³⁹

Also behind the change in the official discourse was an additional understanding of population that had gradually become dominant in policymaking since the interwar period: Population was a valuable national resource. This idea emerged shortly after WWI, when the term “resource” (*shigen*) entered the official lexicon.⁴⁰ WWI exposed Japan’s shortcomings as a small island nation that was poor in resources. This fostered the consensus, especially within the Army, that the government

³⁷ Matsusaka, *The Making of Japanese Manchuria*, 214–23.

³⁸ Takaoka, “Senji no jinkō seisaku,” 103.

³⁹ Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūsho, “Kokudo keikaku toshitenō jinkō haichi (yohō) shōwa 15 nen 8 gatsu,” August 1940, PDFY09111754, Tachi Bunko.

⁴⁰ Jin Sato, “*Motazaru kuni*” no *shigenron: Jizoku kanō na kokudo wo meguru mouhitotsu no chi* (Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 2011), 66–68; Dinmore, “A Small Island Nation Poor in Resources.”

should invest in resource management to prepare the country for future conflicts.⁴¹ This view led to the launch of the Cabinet Bureau of Resources in 1927 as the official organization charged with the investigation, management, and mobilization of resources.⁴²

The bureau defined resources broadly. According to Bureau Chief Matsui Haruo, “every kind of source contributing to the existence and prosperity of an organization” fell into the category of “resource.”⁴³ However, partly because of the army’s involvement in the bureau, Matsui’s seemingly neutral take on the term was full of political overtones.⁴⁴ Indeed, “resource,” as defined by Matsui, referred to materials that could be utilized for the expansion of military power and war industries, and the “organization” was not just any institution, it was the Japanese state preparing for a future war. This interpretation of resource simultaneously gave rise to the idea that the population, too, could be a type of resource. This articulated what Matsui called *jinteki shigen* (“human resource”), and he insisted that a population, like any other type of resource, could be mobilized for national prosperity. The notion of population as “human resource” was an aggregate of people whose capability was defined not only by size but also by its qualitative values, such as spirit, morality, and physical strength.⁴⁵ In effect, “human resource” for Matsui was human power that directly enhanced the nation’s economic and military capabilities.

In the late 1920s and early 1930s, this formulation of population failed to become a mainstream narrative within the policy-oriented population debate, which was overly focused on the problem of “overpopulation.” However, the situation changed in the wake of total war. The concept of population as “human resource” gained currency in a political environment in favor of mass mobilization.⁴⁶ The tendency became prominent, especially after October 1937, when the government merged the existing Cabinet Bureau of Resources and the Planning Agency to create the

⁴¹ Yasuo Mori, *“Kokka sōdōin” no jidai: hikaku no shiza kara* (Nagoya: Nagoya Daigaku Shuppankai, 2020); Michael A. Barnhart, *Japan Prepares for Total War: The Search for Economic Security, 1919–1941* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013), 64–76.

⁴² For the establishment of the Cabinet Bureau of Resources, see Sato, “*Motazaru kuni*” no *shigenron*, 68–77; Mikuriya, *Seisaku no sōgō to kenryoku*; Toshiaki Yamaguchi, “Kokka sōdōin kenkyū josetsu: Dai ichiji sekai taisen kara shigenkyoku no seiritsu made,” *Kokka gakkai zasshi* 92, no. 3–4 (1979): 266–85.

⁴³ Cited in Sato, “*Motazaru kuni*” no *shigenron*, 73.

⁴⁴ Yamaguchi, “Kokka sōdōin kenkyū josetsu.”

⁴⁵ Sato, “*Motazaru kuni*” no *shigenron*, 73.

⁴⁶ Tsukada Ippo, *Kokka sōdōinhō no kaisetsu* (Shūhōen shuppanbu, 1938), 22–23. Also see Aiko Kurasawa, *Shigen no sensō: “Daitōa kyōeiken” no jinryū, butsurū* (Iwanami Shoten, 2012).

Cabinet Planning Board (CPB) as the government office charged with resource management and total mobilization. The CPB explicitly understood “human resource” as manpower, a determining factor for the military and labor force being able to sustain the wartime economy and national defense.⁴⁷ This idea of population directly shaped the National General Mobilization Law drafted by the CPB. The law stipulated that “human resource,” juxtaposed with “material resource” (*butteki shigen*), would be subject to “controlled management” (*tōsei unyō*) in times of emergency so that the state could fully take advantage of its capabilities for national defense. For the rest of the war, this conceptualization buttressed the central government’s mobilization schemes, such as conscription, the migration of workers, and mass evacuation.⁴⁸

Alongside the rise of “human resource” in the official discourse, the meanings assigned to the growing rural population changed. The surplus population in the countryside, hitherto perceived suspiciously as a seed of political unrest, was now seen positively, as an asset directly assisting the Japanese state’s struggle to win the battle. In parallel, the farming community became described as the primary supplier of a healthy and morally sound “human resource” appropriate for serving the Japanese nation-state-empire. Needless to say, this view did not simply emerge out of a vacuum but was strongly informed by the antimodern, anti-western agrarianism endorsed by activists such as Katō that came to hold currency under the wartime fascist regime.⁴⁹ The ideology denounced cities for fostering western values of decadence, individualism, and liberalism, while romanticizing the farming community as a source of Japan’s national identity and power. When applied to the wartime population debate, the ideology manifested itself in criticism that blamed cities for causing the decline in people’s physical and mental constitutions and blamed the urban lifestyle for the fertility decline. At the same time, the ideology lent itself to the argument in favor of protecting the farming population by means of social policy.⁵⁰ The wartime demand for “human resource,” compounded with agrarianism, invited policymakers to revise their views on farmers. At the same time, the positive view reinforced the existing tendency to regard farmers as a primary target for policy interventions.

⁴⁷ Aiko Kurasawa, *Shigen no sensō*; Paul H. Kratoska, “Labor Mobilization in Japan and the Japanese Empire,” in *Asian Labor in the Wartime Japanese Empire: Unknown Histories*, ed. Paul H. Kratoska (London: Routledge, 2005), 3–21.

⁴⁸ Takaoka, “Senji no jinkō seisaku,” 117–18.

⁴⁹ Thomas R. H. Havens, “Kato Kanji (1884–1965) and the Spirit of Agriculture in Modern Japan,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 25, no. 3/4 (1970): 295–322.

⁵⁰ Takaoka, *Sōryokusen taisei to “fukushi kokka,”* 205.

Wartime Population Policies: Creating a Large and Robust Population for the Nation at War

The concept of “human resource” amid war highlighted the significance of certain demographic phenomena in the policy discussion.⁵¹ As already suggested above, fertility decline was attracting the most attention. In fact, even prior to the war, population experts were warning that the birth rate – falling after it peaked in 1920 at 36.19 per 1,000 population – heralded a contracting and aging population in the future.⁵² But, a significant dip in the rates in 1938, from 30.61 the previous year to 26.70 per 1,000 population, was a significant blow to government officials.⁵³ They were now worried that Japan would have a less mobilizable “human resource” in the near future. As a MHW document succinctly summarized, the “lack of a population is a lack of military force and workforce,” and the country at war would certainly suffer from the consequences.⁵⁴ Due to this logic, government officials singled out fertility decline as a policy agenda.

In addition to declining fertility, the “lowering” of the Japanese people’s physical strength caused concern among government officials. The problem of compromised physical strength had been addressed by military health officers since the 1910s (see Chapter 2). In the 1930s, Army Ministry Medical Affairs Director Koizumi Chikahiko (1884–1945) brought the argument to the frontlines of policy discussions.⁵⁵ Pointing to the rising number of men failing the physical examination for conscription due to tuberculosis and substandard muscle and bone strength, Koizumi warned that “physical aptitude” (*tai’i*) in Japan was in crisis.⁵⁶ He then pointed out that some countries in western Europe, confronted by a similar challenge after WWI, tried to rectify the situation by setting up a government office specialized in nurturing “people’s power” (*minryoku*) by means of public health and suggested Japan should follow a similar path.⁵⁷ Based on this logic, he urged his seniors at the Ministry of Arms to lobby the government to found what he called the “Hygiene Ministry” (*Eiseishō*).⁵⁸

⁵¹ Yuriko Sakurada, “Senji ni itaru ‘jinteki shigen’ wo meguru mondai jōtai: Kenpei kenmin seisaku tōjō no haikai,” *Nagano daigaku kiyō*, no. 9 (March 1979): 41–55.

⁵² Teruoka, “Waga kuni shushōritsu.”

⁵³ Kōseishō Jinkōkyoku, “Shushōritsu yori mitaru genka no jinkō mondai,” 5–6, March 1942, PDFY090212123, Tachi Bunko.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁵⁵ Takaoka, *Sōryokusen taisai to “fukushi kokka,”* 26–56.

⁵⁶ Hiroyuki Takaoka examined the data related to the military physical examination and concluded that the “fact” about the lowering level of national physical strength Koizumi presented was “clearly a fiction” that he “intentionally” came up with by manipulating the data; Takaoka, *Sōryokusen taisai to “fukushi kokka,”* 43.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 26.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 26–27.

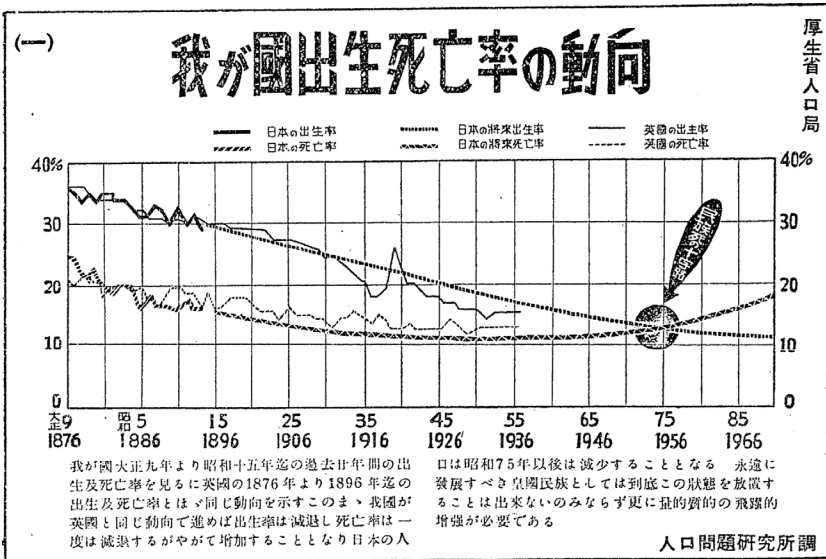


Figure 4.1 The trend of birth and death rates in our country. A poster published by the IPP in 1942. The caption states how Japan following England’s path, and if the trend continued, the Japanese population would start shrinking in 1956. Toward the end, the text below the graph states: “Not only can our imperial race not ignore this situation for our eternal development, but also it needs drastic and further strengthening of population quality and quantity.”

Source: *Jinkō mondai kenkyū*, 3, no. 6 (June 1942): 31.

What fueled official anxiety even more was the dire state of maternal and infant health in the countryside. This became apparent in the investigation into the demographics and health in approximately 134 villages that the Home Ministry Sanitary Bureau had conducted since 1918 as a follow-up to the HHSB (see Chapter 2). The study, published in 1929, clearly pointed out high stillbirth and child mortality rates in the countryside.⁵⁹ It pointed out that the ten-year average rate of stillbirth in the 7 and 77 villages studied by the bureau and local authorities, respectively, were 2.35 and 2.66 per 1,000 population, which exceeded the national average (2.18) and the average in cities (1.85).⁶⁰ The ten-year average rate of child mortality in all villages in the study was 16.2 per 100

⁵⁹ Naimushō Eiseikyoku, *Nōson hoken eisei jicchi chōsa seiseki* (1929).

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 33.

live births, which was more than the national average of 13.7.⁶¹ This trend alarmed population bureaucrats and experts because these figures revealed that the countryside, supposedly the source of strong, youthful, and high-quality “human resource,” was actually inundated with issues, which could easily lead to fertility decline *and* falling physical strength, the two biggest demographic problems of the day. They were concerned that high child mortality in rural areas symbolized the imminent future loss of Japan’s “national power.”⁶²

The wartime government came up with specific measures in response to these concerns. To accommodate the request from the Army Ministry, the Konoe cabinet authorized the establishment of the MHW, which materialized on January 11, 1938.⁶³ The MHW stated that its missions included the improvement of physical strength and maternal and child health to address issues related to fertility decline. In 1939, the MHW assigned the newly established Bureau of Society’s Life Section (*Shakai-kyoku Seikatsuka*) to look into matters concerning population problems, and on August 1, 1941, it launched the Population Bureau.⁶⁴ In 1939, the government also set up the Institute of Population Problems (IPP) within the MHW as a permanently based official institution dedicated to population studies and policymaking.⁶⁵ As historian Fujino Yutaka once suggested, the “policy of cultivating and mobilizing ‘human resource’” under the “fascist regime” urged the wartime government to institutionalize the health and welfare administration and research dedicated to population matters.⁶⁶

Between 1940 and 1941, the IPP was involved in drafting a proposal for population policies, which culminated in the cabinet’s approval of the key wartime population policy, the General Plan to Establish the National Population Policy (*Jinkō Seisaku Kakuritsu Yōkō*, hereafter General Plan for Population, GPP) on January 22, 1941. The GPP was a direct response to the Outline of a Basic National Policy issued on July 26, 1940 by the second Konoe cabinet (est. July 22, 1940). The outline confirmed the Konoe cabinet’s commitment to the total mobilization for

⁶¹ Ibid., 40–42.

⁶² See, e.g., the poster “Shusshōritsu no teika suru kuni wa horobiru,” n.d., in PDFY09121667, Tachi Bunko. In response to the report, the HHSG set up the Special Committee Regarding the State of Hygiene in Farming Villages in 1930 and examined policy measures intended to promote rural health. Hoken Eisei Chōsakai, “Hoken eisei chōsakai dai 15 kai hōkokusho” (April 1931).

⁶³ Takaoka, *Sōryokusen taisei to “fukushi kokka,”* 63–70; Fujino, *Kōseishō no tanjō*, 55; Fujino, *Nihon fashizumu to yūsei shisō*, 266–67.

⁶⁴ Takaoka, “Senji no jinkō seisaku,” 104.

⁶⁵ *Kōseishō Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūsho*, ed., *Jinkō mondai kenkyūsho no ayumi*, 1–2.

⁶⁶ Fujino, *Kōseishō no tanjō*, 9.

establishing a “new order in Greater East Asia.” It also exhorted Minister of Foreign Affairs Matsuoka Yūsuke to pronounce that Japan’s political goal was to establish a “Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere” – the term he coined to refer to an economically and politically integrated area in Asia under Japanese leadership – to fend off western imperial intervention and materialize world peace.⁶⁷ On the topic of population, the outline characterized a large and high-quality population as “a driving force for the execution of the national policy” and stated that the government should strive to “establish a permanent policy for population increase, for the improvement in the quality, and for the physical strength of the nation’s people.” Following the outline, on August 1, the cabinet decided that the MHW, CPB, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, and Ministry of Colonial Affairs would draw up a proposal to establish the population policy, while the Home Ministry, Army Ministry, Navy Ministry, and Ministry of Commerce and Industry would act as the main ministries involved in deliberations on the policy.⁶⁸

The GPP, which was made as a result of the interministerial collaboration, stated that it should act as a guide to establish a “fundamental and perpetual population policy” for the “construction and eternal and healthy development of a Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.”⁶⁹ It further explained that the population policy should achieve the following four objectives: (1) “to ensure our population’s eternal development,” (2) “to surpass other countries in terms of the population’s growth power and population quality,” (3) “to acquire the required military and labor force for a high national defense state,” and (4) “to appropriately deploy populations to secure Japanese leadership vis-à-vis other East Asian races.” The GPP further presented the following four categories for policy measures: (a) “measures for population growth,” (b) “measures for strengthening population quality,” (c) “the preparation of relevant materials,” and (d) “the establishment of organizations.”⁷⁰

Responding to the outline, the GPP endorsed pronatalism.⁷¹ It stated that a tangible goal of the current policy should be to increase the

⁶⁷ Jeremy A. Yellen, *The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere: When Total Empire Met Total War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2019); Kousuke Kawanishi, *Daitōa kyōwaken: Teikoku nihon no nanpō taiken* (Kodansha, 2016).

⁶⁸ Japan Center for Asian Historical Records (JACAR) Ref. B02030544800, Shinajihen kankei ikkei dai 15-kan (A-1-1-0-30_015) (Gaimushō Gaikō Shiryōkan).

⁶⁹ Takaoka, “Senji jinkō seisaku no saikentou,” 160–73.

⁷⁰ Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūsho, “Jinkō seisaku kakuritsuyōkō,” March 1941, PDFY091105017, Tachi Bunko.

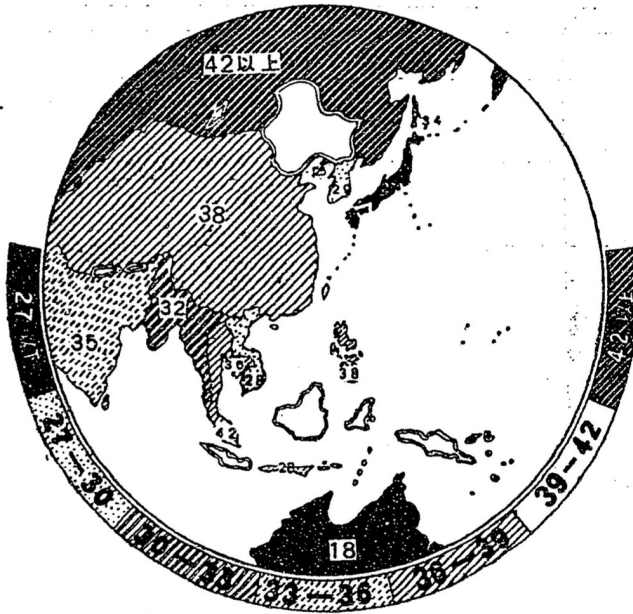
⁷¹ For how pronatalism dominated fascist rhetoric in another national context, see Carl Ipsen, *Dictating Demography the Problem of Population in Fascist Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 173–84.

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東亞共榮圏の出生率

人口1000=付

厚生省人口局



内地の出生率は東亞共榮圏の同胞の出生率中一番低い。

増殖力及資質に於て他國を凌駕しなければならない。

人口問題研究所調

Figure 4.2 Birth rates within the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. A propaganda poster published by the IPP. The caption states: "The birth rate in Japan Proper is the lowest among the fellows in the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. We need to supersede other countries in terms of population growth power and quality."

Source: *Jinkō mondai kenkyū* 3, no. 6 (June 1942): 35.

“population of Japan Proper” (*naichijin jinkō*) to 100 million by 1960.⁷² To realize this objective, the GPP proposed the government strive to lower the average age of marriage down by approximately three years and to raise the average number of children per married couple up to five. It further stipulated that these pronatalist measures should be accompanied by others that aimed to lower general mortality by approximately 35 percent over the next two decades. Together, these measures would ensure the growth and perpetual development of the “population of Japan Proper,” thus enabling the population to perform at its full capacity as a “driving force” behind the national mission – so the outline stated.

In addition to pronatalism, eugenics also acted as a backbone for the GPP.⁷³ The GPP recommended that the government should “strengthen the physical and mental traits required for national defense and labor” and recommended the “diffusion of eugenic thought” and a thorough implementation of the National Eugenic Law (*Kokumin Yūsei Hō*), which was issued in May 1940. This eugenic clause in the GPP came in tandem with the MHW’s efforts to popularize eugenics.⁷⁴ From its inception, the MHW had an independent Section of Eugenics within the Division of Prevention. After the government issued the National Eugenic Law and the National Physical Strength Law (*Kokumin Tairyoku Hō*) in 1940, the MHW instigated the “healthy soldiers, healthy citizens” (*kenpei kenmin*) movement. This campaign, organized under Koizumi, the new minister of health and welfare, promoted eugenic health and educational initiatives as well as medical research in the metropole and the colonies on topics such as the eradication of tuberculosis, venereal disease control, sterilization, and psychosomatic disorders in order to produce a “physical robust, intellectually sharp, and determined ... imperial Japanese population (*kōkoku jinkō*).”⁷⁵ The GPP placed these measures at the center of wartime population policy.

Though initially only a guideline, the GPP’s status was elevated when Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941 turned into a full-blown war involving the Allied Forces. Discourses on race and racism dominated the war, and the government leaders portrayed the

⁷² Takaoka, “Senji jinkō seisaku no saikentou,” 161–65.

⁷³ Rihito Yasuda, “Kindai nihon ni okeru jinkō seisaku kōsō no ichi danmen (II),” *Kokusai bunkagaku*, no. 32 (March 2019): 155–79; Yoko Matsubara, “Nihon ni okeru yūsei seisaku no keisei” (PhD diss., Ochanomizu University, 1998).

⁷⁴ Yokoyama, *Nihon ga yūsei shakai ni naru made*, 198–201, 253–71; Mitsuko Chuman, “Nagai Hisomu saikō.”

⁷⁵ Takaoka, *Sōryokusen taisei to “fukushi kokka,”* 228; Fujino, *Nihon fashizumu to yūsei shisō*, 343–69.

population problem even more explicitly as a matter of Japanese leadership in the colored people's racial struggle against white, western imperialism, which, in the specific context of Japan's effort to construct a "new order" in East Asia, entailed a struggle that could be overcome through cooperation among the five races in the region (Koreans, Manchurians, Mongolians, Han Chinese, and Japanese).⁷⁶ Under these circumstances, in February 1942, the Konoe cabinet requested the newly founded Advisory Council for the Construction of Greater East Asia (*Dai Tōa Kensetsu Shingikai*) come up with "population and race policies to accompany the construction of Greater East Asia." The advisory council's response, a policy proposal titled "The Population and Race Policy Accompanying the Construction of the Greater East Asia," stated the main goals of the population policy were to "expand and strengthen the Yamato race" and recommended the government implement the measures introduced in the GPP.⁷⁷ Following the proposal, in November 1942, the government founded the Ministry of Health and Welfare Research Institute (MHW-RI) Department of Population and Race and ordered the new institute to examine the GPP in light of the new policy.⁷⁸ After this, official activities for population and race policies converged more than ever before.

This characterization of population policy – as synonymous with the policy aiming to strengthen the physical and mental capabilities of the Japanese race – was widely shared among high-rank government officials during the war.⁷⁹ It focused on the corporeal aspect of a population and therefore endorsed eugenic, health, and reproductive measures as solutions to the problems of both population quantity and quality. Yet, this was not the only rationale that buttressed wartime population policy.⁸⁰ Another important rationale was summed up in the expression "population distribution," which allowed contemporaries to expand the scope of their definition of the "population of Japan Proper": in the context of Japan's struggles to develop a multiethnic empire with a highly controlled economic system. It also exhorted wartime policy intellectuals and policymakers to ask how the "population of Japan Proper," as "human resource," could be best deployed across the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere to

⁷⁶ John W. Dower, *War without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific* (London: Faber, 1986), 262–90. For a more recent work on the racial assimilation in Japanese empire, see Hanscom and Washburn eds., *The Affect of Difference*.

⁷⁷ Takaoka, "Senji no jinkō seisaku," 116–17.

⁷⁸ With the establishment of the MHW-RI, the IPP ceased to exist. It was revived after the war.

⁷⁹ "Jinkō seisaku kakuritsu yōkō no kettei," *Jinkō mondai kenkyū* 2, no. 2 (1941): 56–57.

⁸⁰ Takaoka, *Sōryōkusen taisēi to "fukushi kokka,"* 178–80.

maximize Japan's imperial power. Questions surrounding "population distribution" surged when the government pondered over the population problem in relation to its grand wartime state planning scheme: "national land planning."

Distributing Populations for the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere

As MHW IPP staff were writing drafts of the GPP, their colleagues in the Cabinet Planning Board (CPB) – another office assigned to draw up population policy – were also engaged in population issues. Reflecting the CPB's role as the cabinet's war planning and mobilization body, the CPB staff contextualized population problems in terms of the wartime state's ultimate planning scheme: "national land planning."

"National land planning" (*kokudo keikaku*) was conceived sometime in the fall of 1939 as a comprehensive state planning scheme designed for Konoe's "new order" movement.⁸¹ It was first discussed in the National Land Planning Study Group, which Konoe's close advisor Gotō Ryūnosuke created within the Showa Research Association (*Showa Kenkyūkai*).⁸² Representing the voice of pro-fascist, anti-capitalist "new order" supporters, Gotō claimed the top-down comprehensive state planning ensured by technocratic management was an ideal foundation for the self-sufficiency of the Japan-Manchuria-China Bloc. Responding to Gotō's call, in January 1940, the association submitted the "Memorandum on National Land Planning," which triggered policy deliberations within the CPB. The appointment of Hoshino Naoki as the head of the CPB at the inauguration of the second Konoe cabinet in July 1940 gave the policy initiative a boost, since Hoshino had already headed a similar project in Manchuria. The government proclaimed that the "establishment of a national land development plan aimed to expand a comprehensive national power throughout Japan, Manchuria, and China" would be a core policy item in the aforementioned Outline of

⁸¹ Recent works on *kokudo keikaku* in the total war include Janis Mimura, *Planning for Empire: Reform Bureaucrats and the Japanese Wartime State* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011); Janis Mimura, "Japan's New Order and Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere: Planning for Empire," *The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus* 9, no. 3 (2011): 1–12; Shinichi Yamamuro, "Kokumin teikoku, nihon no keisei to kukanchi," in *Kukan keisei to sekai ninshiki*, ed. Shinichi Yamamuro (Iwanami Shoten, 2006), 19–76; Mikuriya, *Seisaku no sōgō to kenryoku*; Takashi Mikuriya, "The National Land Planning and the Politics of Development," *The Annals of Japanese Political Science Association* 46 (1995): 57–76.

⁸² Yamamuro, "Kokumin teikoku," 65; Saburo Sakai, *Showa kenkyukai: Aru chishikijin shūdan no kiseki* (Chuooron-sha, 1992).

a Basic National Policy. On September 24, 1940, the cabinet approved the General Plan to Establish National Land Planning (*Kokudo Keikaku Settei Yōkō*, hereafter the General Plan for Land, GPL), which was drafted by the CPB and based on the Outline of a Basic National Policy.

In a narrow sense, the national land planning delineated by the GPL was an economic policy endorsing self-sufficiency, a means to enhance national productive power via a careful planning of what Ramon H. Myers once called the “enclave economy” of the Japan-Manchuria-China Bloc.⁸³ Yet, it was not just a narrowly conceived and managed economic scheme.⁸⁴ “National land planning” was as much a policy of resource economics and national defense as a political technology for constructing a “new order” in East Asia. It involved state bureaucrats’ active participation in the comprehensive development and management of resources in relation to “national land” (*kokudo*), an ideologically laden, emotive concept denoting the topographical landmass, the geopolitical concept of space, and the source of Japan’s spiritual identity.

A key mandate of national land planning was to adopt a rational approach for seeking an optimal geographical relationship between the “national land” and resources to reach a higher level of efficiency.⁸⁵ To attain this goal, the GPL stressed that the resources acquired within the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere should be distributed “in a controlled manner” and “in relation to the national land,” and assigned the CPB to administer the controlled coordination of resources.⁸⁶

To fulfill the mandate, the GPL adopted the expansive definition of resources expressed by the CPB since the 1920s. They included natural resources (e.g., ore, trees, and water), energy, humanmade institutions, systems such as the industrial system, transportation, cultural and welfare facilities, and, finally, the population. Among these different kinds

⁸³ Ramon H. Myers, “Creating a Modern Enclave Economy: The Economic Integration of Japan, Manchuria, and North China, 1932–1945,” in *The Japanese Wartime Empire, 1931–1945*, eds. Peter Duus, Ramon H. Myers, and Mark R. Peattie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 136–70. Also see Janis Mimura, “Economic Control and Consent in Wartime Japan,” in *The Palgrave Handbook of Mass Dictatorship*, eds. Paul Corner and Jie-Hyun Lim (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 157–69; Yasuyuki Hikita, “Daitoakyōeiken ni okeru tōsei keizai,” in *“Teikoku” nihon no gakuchi dai 2 kan “teikoku” no keizaigaku*, ed. Shin’ya Sugiyama (Iwanami Shoten, 2006), 2: 257–302.

⁸⁴ For different interpretations of “national land planning,” see Mikuriya, “The National Land Planning and the Politics of Development,” 58; Dinmore, “A Small Island Nation Poor in Resources,” 59; Mimura, *Planning for Empire*, 11–12.

⁸⁵ Janis Mimura, “Technocratic Visions of Empire: Technology Bureaucrats and the ‘New Order’ for Science-Technology,” in *The Japanese Empire in East Asia and Its Postwar Legacy*, ed. Harald Fuess (Munich: Indicum Verlag GmbH, 1998), 97–118.

⁸⁶ Yamamuro, “Kokumin teikoku,” 65.

of resources, the GPL regarded population as particularly critical, thus spending a substantial amount of space elaborating on what it called “population planning,” or the designs for population policies.⁸⁷

As part of national land planning, the primary objective of “population planning” was to raise efficiency through a rational coordination of population and the “national land.” The GPL based on this principle stressed “population distribution” as the chief means for attaining the goal. It stipulated “population planning” should aim for “an appropriate distribution of the population according to regions and professional abilities” and included “comprehensive population distribution planning” (*sōgōteki jinkō haibun keikaku*) in the list of the nine most important policy items for national land planning. “Comprehensive population distribution planning,” according to the GPL, consisted of the following four interlinked measures: (1) coordination of urban populations, (2) distribution of populations divided by occupational categories, (3) distribution of populations divided by regions, and finally, (4) “comprehensive migration.” In practical term, this entailed the movement of primarily Japanese people within the Japan-Manchuria-China Bloc, or more broadly, the amorphous sphere of imperial Japan’s reach. However, it was not simply an extension of the existing state-endorsed migration scheme. The aim of the existing migration program was to solve the domestic problem of overpopulation by “relieving” the population pressure in the metropole. The “comprehensive population distribution planning” in the GPL was a population *growth* policy realized through a careful coordination of populations vis-à-vis Japan’s military strategy and the industrial adjustment within the Bloc.⁸⁸ These two migration schemes had different fundamental premises for the “population problem” that necessitated migration.

Having said this, the argument for the “comprehensive population distribution planning” had roots in a number of overlapping discursive sites that thrived in the 1920s as Japan was struggling to build its international reputation as the only nonwestern, industrial colonial power. Among these, two stood out. One was the field of social sciences and social policy that engaged with the population problem as an economic – specifically labor – issue, and the other was geopolitics. As for the first,

⁸⁷ Kyoko Kondo, “Kokudo keikaku to jinkō no shiten no hensen,” *Tōkei* 62, no. 12 (December 2011): 17–26.

⁸⁸ Minoru Tachi, “Jinkō seisaku no tachiba yori mitaru kokudo keikaku ni kansuru jakkan no kihonteki mondai shiken,” *Shōkō keizai* 11, no. 1 (January 1941): 81–114. While the GPL’s primary focus was on the redistribution of the Japanese population, the idea of “population distribution” at times was expansive, including the labor migration of other ethnic subjects within the Japan-Manchuria-China Bloc.

social scientists serving the IC-PFP Population Section recommended migration in the name of “labor adjustment” (see Chapter 3). Nearly a decade later, social scientists discussed migration again, but this time to tackle the problem of labor shortage and the declining quality of the workforce arising from the rapid expansion of the munitions industry.⁸⁹ The renowned economist Ōkouchi Kazuo argued that these labor problems were inhibiting the expansion of industrial productivity and suggested the government establish social policies aimed at controlling the supply of the workforce as “human resource.”⁹⁰ Partly in response to this kind of argument, between 1938 and 1939, the government issued a number of legislations to manage the labor market, including the amended Work Placement Law (*Shokugyō Shōkai Hō*) in April 1938 that nationalized the work placement scheme. In this context, government officials redefined work placement as a government initiative to “deploy labor appropriately.”⁹¹

Corresponding to this trend, social policy specialists examined population distribution as a wartime labor policy, calling it a “deployment of the workforce.” The Labor Problem Study Group, established in February 1939 and consisting mainly of CPB bureaucrats, put forward the “quantitative deployment of labor force” as a specific measure for the wartime economy.⁹² Taking up Ōkouchi’s idea that the wartime labor policy should be a “production policy that seizes workers as its object,” the study group argued that the policy should address the question of “how to distribute the labor force effectively ... in relation to the maintenance and expansion of productivity as well as national defense.”⁹³ The GPL took up this idea. It explained that one of the policy’s objectives should be “an appropriate distribution of the population according to ... professional abilities.” The “population distribution” in the GPL resonated with the narrative of the “deployment of the workforce” that prevailed in the policy discussions on wartime economy.⁹⁴

Another field endorsing “population distribution” for the GPL was geopolitics.⁹⁵ Geopolitics, originally formulated by Friedrich Ratzel,

⁸⁹ Takaoka, *Sōryokusen taisei to “fukushi kokka,”* 133–34.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 133–37.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 132.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 137.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 137.

⁹⁴ The scope for the “deployment of the workforce” in the GPL was directly tied to the labor issues in Manchuria, including recruitment, skills, and high turnover. Paul H. Kratoska ed., *Asian Labor in the Wartime Japanese Empire: Unknown Histories* (London: Routledge, 2005).

⁹⁵ For geopolitical thinkers’ engagement in national land planning, see Yamamuro, “Kokumin teikoku,” 60–69.

Rudolf Kjellén, and Karl Haushofer, was popularized in Japan in the latter half of the 1920s by figures such as the geographer Iimoto Nobuyuki.⁹⁶ Envisioned at a time when Japan's international standing was becoming increasingly precarious, geopolitics was depicted in Japan as a theory that justified Japanese imperialism as a colored race's struggle against western domination in global politics.⁹⁷ After Japan withdrew from the League of Nations in 1933 and began to explore an alternative way to ensure world peace through Pan-Asianism, the academic field called Greater East Asian Geopolitics (*Daitōa Chiseigaku*) gained political power.⁹⁸ Scholars in the field claimed that Japan, as a country endowed with a special relationship between land and people due to its unique geographical location, was in a fortunate position from which to overhaul the world order currently predicated upon the white-centric Westphalian system. The proponents of Greater East Asian Geopolitics also argued for a construction of a borderless and inclusive *Lebensraum* in East Asia, united by moral values arguably specific to Eastern philosophies, including altruism and filial piety.⁹⁹ Beginning around 1940, geographers striving to establish the field of Japanese Geopolitics (*Nihon Chiseigaku*) also promoted the view.¹⁰⁰ Under the Konoe government, their arguments legitimated the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, as well as the national land planning that aimed to materialize it.

In national land planning, the geopolitical idea of “race/ethnicity/people,” encapsulated in the term *minzoku*, buttressed the population distribution policy.¹⁰¹ Applying the metaphor of “blood and soil” that had been originally presented by Haushofer, Japanese geopolitical thinkers claimed a race (= “blood”) to be a crucial geopolitical actor that maintained a mutually exclusive relationship with the land (= “soil”). Geopolitical thinker Ezawa Jōji equated the “land” with *kokudo*.¹⁰² According to Ezawa, people would become *minzoku* by living in the *kokudo*. However, *kokudo* for *minzoku* did not represent a mere physical space but

⁹⁶ Atsuko Watanabe, *Japanese Geopolitics and the Western Imagination* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 154.

⁹⁷ Haruna, *Jinkō, shigen, ryōdo*, 177–94, 215–61.

⁹⁸ Yamamuro, “Kokumin teikoku.” For the works explaining how Pan-Asianism legitimated the imperial order in East Asia, see Cemil Aydin, “Japan’s Pan-Asianism and the Legitimacy of Imperial World Order, 1931–1945,” *The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus* 6, no. 3 (March 2008): 1–33; Eri Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan’s War 1931–1945* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

⁹⁹ Watanabe, *Japanese Geopolitics*, 187–218.

¹⁰⁰ Yoichi Shibata, *Teikoku nihon to chiseigaku: Ajia taiheiyō sensōki ni okeru chiri gakusha no shisō to jissen* (Osaka: Seibunsha, 2016).

¹⁰¹ Morris-Suzuki, *Re-Inventing Japan*, 32.

¹⁰² Watanabe, *Japanese Geopolitics*, 199–214.

the “basis of communal affects,” the “externalization of the *minzoku*’s worldview and ... collective experiences.”¹⁰³ Ezawa claimed the relationship between *kokudo* and *minzoku* therefore was intimate and powerful precisely because the power to expand the *Lebensraum*’s boundary resided in the mutually affective interactions occurring within the relationship.¹⁰⁴ It was this geopolitical formulation of *minzoku* and *kokudo* that made “population distribution” an urgent matter for national land planning. Geographer Iwata Kōzō emphasized national land planning should be a plan to attain an “appropriate” (*tekisetsuna*) relationship between the people and *kokudo*.¹⁰⁵ The GPL incorporated this argument when it depicted population distribution. It suggested, with the “population distribution ... according to regions,” that the state would guarantee an “appropriate” relationship between the population and *kokudo* and fuel the limitless expansion of the self-sufficient Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere as *Lebensraum*.¹⁰⁶

The geopolitical concerns over race addressed by the GPL made it apparent that the GPL’s policy was indeed part and parcel of the general wartime population policy embodied in the GPP.¹⁰⁷ Both were premised on the idea that the population policy should facilitate the expansion and perpetuation of the Japanese population as the leading race in Asia. Both incorporated the logic ingrained in the Outline of a Basic National Policy, in particular, that the farming population as the source of Japan’s “national/ethnic/racial power” (*minzokuryoku*) should be protected through governmental policies.¹⁰⁸ The GPL’s and GPP’s population policies were synonymous in so far as they both aimed to enhance Japan’s “racial power.”

At the same time, the GPL approached the subject matter differently from the GPP. In contrast to the GPP, whose population measures were informed primarily by the biological model of population-as-race, an economic and geopolitical rationale buttressed the GPL. Furthermore, in part because the GPL concentrated on resource distribution, the GPL population measures endorsed a much more structural understanding of population. Population seen in this light was built on the axis of quality

¹⁰³ Cited in *Ibid.*, 201.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 200–201.

¹⁰⁵ Kōzō Iwata, “Kokka sōryokusen to sōgō kokudo keikaku,” *Chiri kyōiku* 33, no. 5 (February 1941): 1–13.

¹⁰⁶ Yamamuro, “Kokumin teikoku,” 60–69.

¹⁰⁷ Strictly speaking, the population policy delineated in the GPL was a constitutive element of the GPP, as the former was supposed to contribute to the general wartime population policy summarized in the GPP.

¹⁰⁸ Masayasu Kusunoki, “Jinkō mondai to kokudo keikaku,” *Ikai jihō*, no. 2365 (January 1940): 12.

and quantity and made up of individuals with multiple social attributes. This notion of population further consolidated perspective on population quality and quantity that was different from the one that prevailed in the GPP. In contrast to the majority of the population quality measures in the GPP that focused on people's genetic, physical, and mental constitutions, the population quality described by the GPL was shaped by a balance in the composition of social segments that defined the population. Similarly, while population quantity applied to the eugenic and health measures in the GPP exhorted pronatalism as a strategy for population expansion, population quantity in the GPL, focusing on the ratio of the population numbers in relation to the places of domicile and work, implied that a rational coordination of people's location according to "regions" and "occupations" was the most effective means to increase a population's size.

This distinctive approach was most visible in the specific measures the MHW and CPB came up with to tackle the issue of declining fertility among the farming population. While both recognized that the fertility decline among the farmers could weaken the "racial power" of the Japanese, the countermeasures they came up with were different. The MHW, which was involved in drafting the GPP, recommended health and welfare measures (e.g., the prevention of infant diarrhea and the expansion of maternity facilities). In turn, the CPB policymakers, when drafting the GPL, endorsed a controlled migration of farmers between the countryside and cities as well as between the metropole and colonies. To support this measure, the CPB applied the theory established in the early 1930s by the renowned social scientist Ueda Teijirō, who showed a correlation between fertility decline and the movement of people from the countryside to the cities.¹⁰⁹ In concrete terms, this meant the CPB policymakers deliberated on the migration and work deployment measures to "secure a certain percentage of the population of [Japanese] farmers in farming," which should be based on the sum of the farmers in "Japan Proper" and those in the Japan-Manchuria-China Bloc.¹¹⁰ After much discussion, they settled on 40 percent as the necessary figure.¹¹¹ The different solutions presented by the CPB and MHW in part mirrored the different perspectives of the GPP and GPL, and the different

¹⁰⁹ Takaoka, *Sōryokusen taisei to "fukushi kokka,"* 108–9; Kingo Tamai and Naho Sugita, "Nihon ni okeru jinkō no 'ryō' 'shitsu' gainen to shakai seisaku no shiteki tenkai: Ueda Teijirō kara Minoguchi Tokijirō e," *Keizai-gaku zasshi* 3, no. 1 (September 2015): 25–40.

¹¹⁰ Dai Yonkai Jinkō Mondai Zenkoku Kyōgikai, "Kigen nisen roppyakunen kinen dai yonkai jinkō mondai zenkoku kyōgikai ni kafu seraretaru seifu shimon ni taisuru tōshin," November 15, 1940, PDFY09111747, Tachi Bunko.

¹¹¹ For the details about how the number was ascertained through the policy discussion, see Takaoka, *Sōryokusen taisei to "fukushi kokka,"* 210–15.

perspectives within the emerging fields of policy-oriented health and the social sciences specializing in population matters.

As a policy initiative, wartime national land planning was a failure.¹¹² While the plan was initially moving ahead quickly, in the end, the CPB went only as far as to produce the Proposal for the Outline of the Yellow Sea and Bo Hai National Land Planning in March 1943 and to distribute the Rough Draft of the Proposal and the Proposal for the Outline of Central Planning to various government offices in October 1943 as a policy guideline. The CPB ceased to exist in November 1943, when it was absorbed by the new Ministry of Munitions. Reasons for the policy failure were multifaceted, but internal politics was among the most conspicuous. The struggle for leadership over the wartime economy led to the accusation that communism had infiltrated the CPB, which ultimately led to the arrest of three CPB research bureaucrats for violating the Peace Preservation Law.¹¹³ National land planning was directly influenced by the dissolution of the CPB after this incident.

In contrast, the “population distribution” policy, originally presented in the GPL, survived in the GPP. The GPP depicted “population distribution” measures as an effective means of achieving one of its stated objectives, namely, “to appropriately deploy populations to secure Japanese leadership vis-à-vis other East Asian races.” It then presented the following two as part of “measures for strengthening population quality”:

- (1) [The government should] plan for the rationalization of the population composition and distribution based on national land planning, in particular, [it should] plan for the dispersal of urban populations by means of evacuation. To achieve this, [the government should] do its utmost to disperse factories, schools, and other institutions in provinces.
- (2) In view of the fact that the farming village is the most superior provider of military and work force, [the government should] do its utmost to maintain the population of farming communities of Japan Proper at a certain level and to keep 40% of the population of Japan Proper across Japan, Manchuria, and China for farming.

Later, population distribution comprised a core principle in the Population and Race Policy Accompanying the Construction of the Greater

¹¹² Bureaucrats were not very effective in coordinating economic activities despite the overbearing presence of bureaucratic rationality in rhetoric. Mimura, *Planning for Empire*, 138–69.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

East Asia. The proposal contained two clauses, which reiterated the items in the GPP.¹¹⁴ Following the proposal, the agricultural policy established on June 24, 1942 by the Advisory Council for the Construction of Greater East Asia stated explicitly that at least 40% of the population of Japan Proper should be comprised of a farming population at all times. In the same month, the government issued a general plan for war mobilization, which in effect banned the building of new factories in the four major industrial areas within Japan Proper. As the war intensified, the population policy initially designed for national land planning became integrated into general war mobilization policies.¹¹⁵

The process of making a population policy for national land planning not only highlighted the centrality of the notion of population distribution in the wartime national policy, but it also underlined the increasingly important role scientific investigations played in policymaking: They were conducted by technical and research bureaucrats who specialized in population issues.

Research Bureaucrats for National Land Planning

Albeit a failure as a policy, national land planning highlighted a critical aspect of wartime statecraft: It relied on the brainpower and footwork of bureaucrats. At the top were elite bureaucrats such as Kishi Nobusuke (1896–1987), who drew up national land planning as the ultimate wartime mobilization scheme. They were “reform bureaucrats,” a new generation of state administrators who were defined by their proactive and managerial function and engaged in coordinating work within production and strategic planning.¹¹⁶ They belonged to a line of what historian Laura Hein called “reasonable men” with “powerful words,” many of whom spent their formative years at the University of Tokyo where they were exposed to the Marxist social sciences and social movements of the 1910s and 1920s.¹¹⁷ These reform bureaucrats thrived in the post-WWI industrial capitalist society, in which the technological advances engendering complex and expensive systems and the perceived decline in liberal capitalism led to an increased demand for a controlled economy and a strong state. During the war, they tried to materialize their technocratic vision of state organization through national land planning. To implement national land planning, they applied the political power derived from the close network

¹¹⁴ Takaoka, “Senji no jinkō seisaku,” 116–17.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 117–18.

¹¹⁶ Mimura, *Planning for Empire*, 12.

¹¹⁷ Hein, *Reasonable Men, Powerful Words*.

of politicians, officers in the Army and Navy, and industrialists and used the state's power to manage and coordinate industries both in the metropole and for the Japan–Manchuria–China Bloc.

Working side by side with these elite managerial technocrats were the technical bureaucrats called *gijutsu kanryō*, also known as *gikan*,¹¹⁸ the title given to career bureaucrats who served the government through their medical, scientific or technical expertise. The category was established in the Meiji period, when the new government's commitment to building a modern nation-state with a technologically enhanced industry and military instigated the training of technically competent bureaucrats. However, technical bureaucrats remained a minority within the state bureaucracy. The demand for them increased in the 1930s, after a report by the Cabinet Bureau of Resources on the poor state of scientific research triggered the move to establish governmental and semigovernmental institutions dedicated to the promotion of science.¹¹⁹ After the National General Mobilization Law, technical bureaucrats were sought after even more. Specifically, the Konoe cabinet mobilized them for its "New Order for Science and Technology" (*kagaku gijutsushintaisei*), formulated in 1941 to establish the state coordination of scientific and technological activities for rational resource management in both the metropole and its colonies.¹²⁰ In the first half of the 1940s, technical bureaucrats strove to consolidate their status in state bureaucracy by stressing their role as the vanguards of cutting-edge techno-science and by promising Japanese Empire's self-sufficiency through their involvement in the scientific distribution of natural resources, labor, and capital.

Overlapping with technical bureaucrats was the category of bureaucrats specializing in fundamental research. Known by various titles, such as "research staff" (*kenkyūin*), "fieldworker" (*chōsain*), or "research bureaucrat" (*kenkyūkan* or *chōsakan*), these research bureaucrats, like technical bureaucrats, were civil servants with scientific expertise and often with a technocratic worldview. However, in contrast to technical bureaucrats, whose expertise was concentrated in highly technical and applied fields such as engineering and medicine, many research bureaucrats had backgrounds in social science.¹²¹ Moreover, while technical bureaucrats were expected to stay in the same ministry

¹¹⁸ Kashihara, *Meiji no gijutsu kanryō*; Moore, *Constructing East Asia*; Mizuno, *Science for the Empire*, 19–68; Oyodo, *Gijutsu kanryō no seiji sankaku*.

¹¹⁹ Oyodo, *Gijutsu kanryō no seiji sankaku*, 142–44.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 142–86.

¹²¹ For economists mobilized for the war effort as research bureaucrats, see Makino, *Senjika no keizagakusha*; Hein, *Reasonable Men, Powerful Words*, 77–82.

for their entire career, research bureaucrats tended to be hired on a fixed-term basis for a specific project. Thus, many research bureaucrats moved between projects within the same ministry or worked on secondment for a fixed-term technical project organized by another ministry. Depending on the project, public intellectuals and scholars would also be recruited as temporary researchers serving for specific government ministries or other government organizations. In turn, some research bureaucrats, who were affiliated with external organizations accountable for official inquiries, were involved in drafting policy recommendations. In a nutshell, research bureaucrats contributed to state affairs by investigating issues specific to their areas of expertise, mainly for policymaking.¹²²

In the national land planning population policy, Tachi Minoru (1906–72) took central stage as a research bureaucrat.¹²³ Tachi was a product of the University of Tokyo's social sciences that generated the "powerful men" mentioned above. He studied economics at the university between 1926 and 1929 and learned about population problems there.¹²⁴ Upon graduation, for over a year he continued his studies with Hijikata Seibi (1890–1975), the soon to be chair of the Department of Economics at the university. After serving as a commissioned editor for Nihon Hyōronsha publishing house for a little over three years, in 1933 Tachi was appointed by the recently founded Foundation-Institute for Research of Population Problems (IRPP) to serve as visiting staff. He then became a permanently based "research bureaucrat" (*kenkyūkan*) at the IPP when it was established in 1939. In 1942, he became the director of the Division of Population Policy Research of the MHW-RI Department of Population and Race. Shortly after the war, in May 1946, he became the director of the Department of General Affairs at the revived IPP, while still serving as a statistician for the MHW from 1947 on. From the time he assumed the directorship at the IPP in 1959 until his death in 1972, Tachi led population studies in Japan.

Prior to full-scale war with China, Tachi undertook research that became relevant to national land planning in later years. In the mid-1930s, he studied the Tohoku population as a member of the IRPP

¹²² What has been described was a general tendency. Many research technocrats, in fact, shared the qualities ascribed to the *gikan*.

¹²³ Another important figure was Tokijirō Minoguchi (1905–83). For Minoguchi, see Tamai and Sugita, "Nihon niokeru jinkō no 'ryō' 'shitsu' gainen," 25–40.

¹²⁴ "Ko Tachi Minoru shochō no ryakureki to gyōseki," *Jinkō mondai kenkyū* 123 (July 1972): 44–62.

research staff, engaging with the question of population distribution.¹²⁵ During the war, Tachi collated and compared vital statistics in cities and rural areas, drawing on Mizushima Haruo's demographic work on six major cities (Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya, Kyoto, Kobe, and Yokohama).¹²⁶ At the IPP, along with his colleague Ueda Masao, Tachi compiled standardized birth, death, and population growth rates in every prefecture.¹²⁷ These studies became vital for engaging with the most pressing question for wartime population distribution policy: What percentage of the "population of Japan Proper," especially the farmers, should be relocated without eroding the population's ability to expand?

Tachi began to express his opinions on population problems and policies publicly from the mid-1930s onward. He argued that the "population problem" had changed significantly in recent years. Amid the rise of racial struggles, it changed from being an "economic problem" (*keizai mondai*) to a "racial problem" (*minzoku mondai*).¹²⁸ Tachi then defined population as something that "organically composes a race or a nation, just like cells compose a biological body."¹²⁹ In the early 1940s, he suggested the Japanese "race population problem" (*minzoku jinkō mondai*), related to the construction of "new East Asia," was a problem of population quantity *and* quality, and policymakers should take into account the following elements of population: (1) as "military power," (2) as "members required for the industry," and (3) as "required for racial [growth]."¹³⁰ Tachi's understanding of population problems was eclectic, predicated on the idea of population as an organic body and a sociological entity. This multifarious formulation of population informed his engagement with population studies and policies in the late 1930s and early 1940s.

Through national land planning, research bureaucrats such as Tachi became a critical cog in the machine driving the Japanese state's effort to expand the boundary of its nation-state-empire. At the same time,

¹²⁵ Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūkai, "Tōhoku chihō jinkō nikansuru chōsa kōmoku," n.d., PDFY09110655, Tachi Bunko; Toshimichi Odauchi, Shigeki Masuda, and Minoru Tachi, "Tōhoku chihō jinkō nikansuru chōsa taiyō," March 7, 1935, PDFY09110671, Tachi Bunko; "Tōhoku chihō no jinkō nikansuru chōsa," March 1935, PDFY09110675, Tachi Bunko.

¹²⁶ Tachi, "Shōwa 12 nen zenkoku." For Mizushima Haruo's statistical activities during this period, see Kenichi Ohmi, "Mizushima Haruo ra no shokuminchi seimeihyō kenkyū ni miru dainiji sekai taisen zen, senchū no igaku kenkyū saikō," *Nihon kenkō gakkai zasshi* 86, no. 5 (September 2020): 209–223.

¹²⁷ Tachi and Ueda, "Taisho 9-nen, taisho 14-nen," 21–28.

¹²⁸ Tachi, "Wagakuni chihōbetsu jinkō zōshokuryoku."

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 6.

their research helped to establish population studies as a policy science, despite the policy itself failing to materialize.¹³¹

Population Studies for National Land Planning

Since the 1910s, official investigation into demographic trends and problems was gradually becoming more important in policymaking. After the war with China broke out, the government invested in population research more directly and created the IPP in 1939. In parallel, the Japan Society for the Promotion of Scientific Research (*Nihon Gakujutsu Shinkōkai*) launched the Eleventh Special Committee in October 1939, which additionally promoted population research as a branch of the committee's specialization, "racial science" (*minzoku kagaku*).¹³² On June 19, 1941, experts in racial and population sciences founded the Japan National Racial Policy Study Group (*Nihon Minzoku Koku-saku Kenkyūkai*) as officially a nonofficial organization studying racial and population policies. The group acted as a policy think tank working alongside the MHW Population Bureau.¹³³ By the time the Konoe cabinet approved the GPL, population organizations both in and outside the government had long been fostering policy-oriented population research, creating foundations for population studies to thrive as a policy science.

Under these circumstances, population studies accountable for national land planning took place in three overlapping sites. The first was the CPB, charged with national land planning. Within the CPB, high-rank officials widely shared the idea that fundamental research, including demographic research, was a prerequisite for the government to actualize the vision of total state planning predicated upon a rational management of resources.¹³⁴ However, they also judged the existing research was organized haphazardly by different ministries, and this was preventing efficient planning.¹³⁵ Thus, in the wake of total war, the CPB

¹³¹ For the idea of demography as a policy science, see, e.g., Dennis Hodgson, "Demography as Social Science and Policy Science," *Population and Development Review* 9, no. 1 (1983): 1–34.

¹³² Takaoka, *Sōryokusen taisei to "fukushi kokka,"* 184–87. The English translation of Nihon Gakujutsu Shinkōkai today is "Japan Society for the Promotion of Science," but I use the translation adopted at that time.

¹³³ Takaoka, *Sōryokusen taisei to "fukushi kokka,"* 224.

¹³⁴ "Chōsa kenkyū renmei setsuritsu yōkō (Showa 17-nen 8-gatsu 28-nichi kakugi kettei)" in Kokudo Keikaku Kenkyūsho, *Kokudo keikaku kenkyūsho tsūshin*, no. 2, December 20, 1942, PDFY09111729, Tachi Bunko.

¹³⁵ Kikakuin Dai Ichibu, "Kokudo keikaku honkakuteki settei no hōhō ni suite (dai ichibunsatsu) hi (fu dai go jun gunjiteki kenchi ni motozuku kenkyū mondai)," n.d., PDFY09111768, Tachi Bunko.

decided to coordinate the research by making it in-house. It requested the government approve the employment of additional research staff, which was realized in 1937 with the CPB hiring fourteen new personnel members.¹³⁶ Along with this, specifically for population research, the CPB created an independent Population Group within the First Department Third Section and recruited six research bureaucrats.¹³⁷ After the approval of the GPL, the CPB officially made scientific research a part of its administrative work for national land planning.¹³⁸

The MHW IPP was the second site where national land planning population research was conducted. The research began in 1940, after the government published the Outline of a Basic National Policy. While drafting the GPP, IPP research staff collected data and examined subjects they saw as relevant to national land planning.¹³⁹ In October 1940, the IPP made a confidential report, the “General Plan for the Population Deployment as National Land Planning.”¹⁴⁰ The content of the report fed into the policymaking process and was reflected in the GPP and Rough Draft of the Proposal Outlining Central Planning of 1943.

Finally, the abovementioned research organizations were where population studies related to national land planning thrived during this period. Among them, the IRPP occupied central stage. It hosted the Fourth National Conference on Population Problems between November 14 and 15, 1940 in response to the official inquiry made by Minister of Health and Welfare Kanemitsu Tsuneo.¹⁴¹ Following the conference, on December 18, 1940, the IRPP set up the National Land

¹³⁶ JACAR, Ref.A14100539800 Kōbunruishū, dai 61-pen, Showa 12-nen, dai 4-kan, shokkan-2, kansei-2 (naikaku 2), Cabinet Privy Council Bureau of Law-making, Hiranuma Kiichiro, 1937, “Dajōruiten dai 2-hen, Meiji 4-nen k Meiji 10-nen, dai 85-kan, 1937,” “Kikakuin chōsakan no tokubetsu nin’yō ni kansuru ken wo sadame,” accessed July 29, 2019, www.digital.archives.go.jp/das/image/M0000000000001764902.

¹³⁷ Naikaku Kikakuin, “Kokudo keikaku jimu buntan ni kansuru ken,” March 27, 1942, PDFY090226027, Tachi Bunko.

¹³⁸ Kikakuin Dai Ichibu, “Kokudo keikaku honkakuteki settei no hōhō ni tsuite.”

¹³⁹ See Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūsho, “Kokudo keikaku ni kanshi jinkō seisakujo kōryo subeki shutaru jikō sankō shiryō (gokuhi 6-bu nouchi dai 2-gō),” June 24, 1942, PDFY090212096, Tachi Bunko; “Daitōa kensetsu shingikai daisanbukai tōshin’an setsumei shiryō no uchi sangyōbetsu oyobi chiikibetsu haichi ni okeru jinkō baransu (shi’an) (gokuhi 100-bu no uchi dai 12-gō),” April 13, 1942, PDFY090212097, Tachi Bunko; “Daitōa kensetsu shingikai daisanbukai tōshin’an setsumei shiryō no uchi wagakuni jinkō no toshi shūchū to tohi zōshokuryoku (hi),” April 11, 1942, PDFY090212098, Tachi Bunko.

¹⁴⁰ Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūsho, “Kokudo keikaku toshiteno jinkō haichi keikaku yōkō’an Showa 15-nen 10-gatsu hi,” October 1940, PDFY09111757, Tachi Bunko.

¹⁴¹ Tsuneo Kanemitsu, “(Shimon) Kigen nisen roppyakunen kinen daiyonkai jinkō mondai zenkoku kyōgikai. Kokudo keikakujo jinkō seisaku no kenchi yori kōryo

Planning Section Group within its National Population Policy Committee to make the national land planning population research more permanently based in the organization.¹⁴² Comprised of members from the military, academia, and government offices, and headed by Director of the IRPP Sasaki Yukiada, the section group was a high priority within the IRPP.¹⁴³

Population studies conducted in these sites was integral to policy-making.¹⁴⁴ The research design drawn up by the CPB for its Population Group, for instance, confirmed population studies' utility for national land planning. The topics the CPB assigned to the group included "relationship between supply and demand in populations," "regional distribution of physical strengths according to racial groups," and "the effect of population concentration and movement (organized by the place of origin and the destination)," which clearly resonated with the demographic goals of national land planning. In turn, these goals directly shaped the objectives of the population research conducted under the aegis of the CPB.¹⁴⁵ For instance, to correspond with national land planning's goal for "the optimal location of the Japanese race vis-à-vis other races across the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere," the CPB stated that its population research, "from the perspective of population expansion and welfare," aimed to "adequately deploy the population of Japan Proper according to occupations and from the viewpoint of national missions, such as guiding various races in East Asia, promoting industries, development of resources, and the defense of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere."¹⁴⁶ Population research clearly interacted with the CPB's administrative and policymaking activities in the state planning scheme.

Behind this research arrangement was a trust in population studies within the government administration. The CPB valued the demographic

subeki ten ni tsuki sono kai no iken wo tou" November 14, 1940, PDFY09111748, Tachi Bunko; Tachi Minoru, "Dai yonkai jinkō mondai zenkoku kyōgikai ni kafu seraretaru seifu shimon ni taisuru tōshin'an yōkō (an) oyobi koreni taisuru kisō iin ikensho," October 10, 1940, PDFY09111739, Tachi Bunko; Dai Yonkai Jinkō Mondai Zenkoku Kyōgikai, "Kigen nisen roppyakunen kinen dai yonkai jinkō mondai zenkoku kyōgikai ni."

¹⁴² Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūkai Jinkō Kokusaku Iinkai Kokudo Keikaku Bunkakai, "Jinkō kokusaku iinkai kokudo keikaku bunkakai (dai ikkai kaigō)."

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ "Chōsa kenkyū renmei setsuritsu yōkō." n.d. c.1940, PDFY090226030, 1.

¹⁴⁵ Naikaku Kikakuin, "Kokudo keikaku jimu buntan ni kansuru ken," March 27, 1942, PDFY090226027, Tachi Bunko.

¹⁴⁶ Kikakuin Daiichibu, "Kokudo keikaku honkakuteki settei no hōhō ni tsuite," n.d. c. 1940, PDFY09111769.

work because it firmly believed that current population research was fully equipped to provide what Sheila Jasanoff once called the “serviceable truth,” the knowledge that “satisfies tests of scientific acceptability and supports reasoned decision making.”¹⁴⁷ Concretely speaking, the CPB officers were convinced that the demographic knowledge about the population composition produced by population research would effectively assist the government’s decisions regarding a coordinated distribution of the population of Japan Proper, because the idea that mathematical calculation and analysis would reveal the objective truth about the nation had by then reached a firm consensus in the scientific and policy fields. They further believed that population distribution based on this demographic knowledge would help the Japanese to assume the leading role in the construction of a “new order” in East Asia, first by fostering a rational arrangement of economic activities in the Japan–Manchuria–China Bloc and second by ensuring the construction of a hierarchical power structure between the Japanese and other races within the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.¹⁴⁸ For the CPB officers, demographic knowledge was key to the political maneuverings of the Japanese state and empire at war.

It was in this environment that Tachi thrived as a research bureaucrat engaged in national land planning population studies. Quickly building his reputation within the government and among his colleagues in the 1930s, Tachi was involved in national land planning population work in the CPB, IPP, and IRPP. At the CPB, Tachi was employed on a temporary basis to work in the Population Group and to assume a supervisory role for research on “the form of the decentralization of manufacturing industries and the limits of the urban population.”¹⁴⁹ At the IPP, he was involved in drafting the “General Plan for the Population Deployment as National Land Planning.” While there, he was also a member of the IRPP National Land Planning Section Group and drafted a policy recommendation document for the Fourth National Conference on Population Problems.¹⁵⁰ In the early 1940s, Tachi established his name as an

¹⁴⁷ Sheila Jasanoff, *The Fifth Branch: Science Advisors as Policymakers* (London and Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), 250.

¹⁴⁸ Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūsho, “Kokudo keikaku toshite no jinkō haichi (yohō) showa 15-nen 8-gatsu”; Kōseishō, “Rōmu dōtai chōsa teiyō,” December 1939, PDFY090226050, Tachi Bunko.

¹⁴⁹ Naikaku Kikakuin, “Kokudo keikaku jimu buntan.”

¹⁵⁰ See Tachi, “Dai yonkai jinkō mondai zenkoku kyōgikai ni”; Mondai Kenkyūkai Jinkō Kokusaku Iinkai Kokudo Keikaku Bunkakai, “Jinkō kokusaku iinkai kokudo keikaku bunkakai (dai ikkai kaigō),” December 18, 1940, PDFY09111751, Tachi Bunko.

expert in national land planning population research by moving agilely between the three institutions and between his roles as bureaucrat, population expert, and policy advisor.

Tachi's population research for national land planning was motivated by his desire to come up with new planning schemes in alignment with the demands of the "new order" movement and therefore entirely different from the planning work of earlier eras. First, he claimed "comprehensive migration" in the GPL was not the same as the existing migration scheme, arguing that the latter, aiming to relieve population pressure, was based on a Malthusian, "liberalist concept."¹⁵¹ In contrast, "comprehensive migration" was combined with a controlled economy and a migration program that engaged with geopolitical concerns. Second, the government should consider forming "blocs" in the process of implementing population deployment "by regions." However, unlike an earlier idea, the "blocs" in national land planning should not "foster a mechanical formation of a population group." Instead, they should form "*Lebensraum*."¹⁵² Third, the "distribution of populations divided by occupational categories" should not be equated with a preexisting work placement scheme.¹⁵³ It should raise "industrial productivity," but it should not be done at the cost of "consuming the human resource." For this reason, it should be complemented with welfare measures.¹⁵⁴ Fourth, the "dispersal of industries" – "dispersing" factories around the nation to "adjust" the population ratio between cities and the countryside – should be conducted with caution.¹⁵⁵ Fifth and finally, policymakers should factor in the "human aspect," which had been neglected in the existing planning schemes from which national land planning evolved. For this reason, they should consider building cultural and welfare institutions as a population measure for national land planning. This was important from the viewpoint of racial prosperity.¹⁵⁶ As Tachi saw it, population measures for national land planning were a "new order" planning policy because they addressed geopolitical and economic concerns as combined factors and maximized the population's potential in the three domains he elaborated on above – military power, labor force, and the source of "racial power." This was the reason why they were in no way the same as prewar liberalist population measures.

¹⁵¹ Tachi, "Jinkō seisaku no tachiba yori mitaru kokudo keikaku", 94.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 101.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 102–7.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 102.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 107–8.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 108–12.

Tachi's population work based on this philosophy was wide ranging. He compiled vital statistics and analyzed the patterns of child mortality, age, and gender composition.¹⁵⁷ He also compiled materials indicating the numbers for the "working populations of Japan Proper" in commerce, heavy industries, ore industries, fisheries, transportation, civil service, freelance work, and housemaid and butler work.¹⁵⁸ Furthermore, reflecting the centrality of the metropole's farming population for wartime population policy, he also engaged with the question of how the countryside could act as, what he called, the "imaginary hinterland," a land supplying populations to cities without destroying its own population's capacity to grow.¹⁵⁹ At the same time, Tachi tried to collect demographic materials concerning other strategically important population groups (e.g., Manchurians, Koreans, and the Taiwanese).¹⁶⁰

Tachi's work directly contributed to national land planning. The results from the research on the distribution of people in the countryside versus cities were directly useful for the government when trying to decide to what extent it should work toward "dispersing populations of overextended cities ... in relation to the dispersion of industries into regions" and "develop the city in a way that it can retain reproductive and growth power" and "prevent industrialization from lowering the population's power in regional small- to mid-size cities."¹⁶¹ He also used vital statistics to calculate the "excess labor" among the women of Japan Proper and the maximum number of the women mobilizable for war industries.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁷ Jinkō Mondai Kenyūsho, "Showa 15-nen kokusei chōsa kekka ni motozuku danjō-kakusaibetsu jinkō no suikei," n.d. c.1940, PDFB5041EST40A, Tachi Bunko.

¹⁵⁸ Jinkō Mondai Kenyūsho, "Kokudo keikaku toshite no jinkō haichi (yohō) Shōwa 15-nen 8-gatsu." Also see Kōseishō, "Rōmu dōtai chōsa teiyō"; "Tōhoku rokken sangyō daibunrui betsu yūgyō jinkō senbunhi saikō chiiki," n.d. PDFY09110679, Tachi Bunko.

¹⁵⁹ Minoru Tachi and Masao Ueda, "Toshi jinkō hokyūgen toshite no 'kasōteki haichi' no kettei ni kansuru ichi kōsatsu," *Jinkō mondai kenkyū* 2, no. 2 (February 1941): 33–43; Minoru Tachi, "Jinkō saibunpai keikaku no kiso toshite mitaru jinkō zōshokuryoku no chiikiteki tokusei," *Jinkō mondai kenkyū* 3, no. 2 (February 1942): 1–40.

¹⁶⁰ "1. Manshū teikoku kokusekibetsu jinkō shirabe [hoka]," 1937, PDFY090803051, Tachi Bunko; "[1] 'Dainiji taisen shuyō kōsenkoku jinkō kōseizu' setsume," n.d. c.1942, PDFY090803053, Tachi Bunko; Minoru Tachi, "Sorenpō jinkō ni kansuru shuyō tōkei tekiyō [gokuhi]," May 1, 1945 PDFY09110621, Tachi Bunko; "1. Manshū teikoku kokusekibetsu jinkō shirabe (Shōwa 11-nen matsu)," 1937, PDFY09111703, Tachi Bunko; Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūkai, "Waga kuni jinkō ni kansuru shuyō tōkei bassui," August 1938, PDFY090803056, Tachi Bunko.

¹⁶¹ Tachi, "Shōwa 12-nen zenkoku"; "Dai yonkai jinkō mondai zenkoku kyōgikai ni."

¹⁶² Minoru Tachi, "Joshi dōin ni kansuru shiryō," April 27, 1944, PDFY09110638, Tachi Bunko.

Vital statistics was also used to ascertain how many people within “Japan Proper” should be relocated between 1943 and 1960 (in the two periods divided by the year 1950).¹⁶³ The data calculated from these works was used to produce the “General Plan for the Population Deployment as National Land Planning.” The document estimated that 85,579,000 should be the minimum population required for Japan Proper in 1950 “for the development of the Japanese race.” Of these, 49,074,000 should be of a “productive age” and at least 35,269,000 workers should be strategically deployed to various industries within Japan Proper. In addition, a minimum of 19,686,000 Japanese people should be based in the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, of which 8,111,000 should be in “China Proper” (*shina hondo*), 6,885,000 in Manchuria, 2,200,000 in Korea, and 2,390,000 in the area covering French Indochina, Thailand, Dutch East India, and the Philippines.¹⁶⁴ Later, in 1942, for the work the IPP conducted in response to the inquiry made by the Third Section of the Advisory Council for the Construction of Greater East Asia, Tachi recalculated figures for a strategic distribution of the population of Japan Proper. The document concluded that a minimum of 9,410,000 additional people in “Japan Proper” would need to be relocated between 1940 and 1950 to the area covering Korea, Taiwan, Manchuria, “China Proper,” French Indochina, Thailand, Burma, the Philippines, the Dutch East Indies, Australia, and New Zealand, and of those, 6,330,000 should be dedicated to agriculture.¹⁶⁵ The documents became the basis for the recommendations made in the aforementioned Rough Draft of the Proposal Outlining Central Planning of 1943.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶³ Tachi, “Toshi haichi nikansuru jinkō shisakuteki mokuhyō’ hōkoku shiryō,” June 19, 1943, PDFY090226036, Tachi Bunko.

¹⁶⁴ Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūsho, “Kokudo keikaku toshite no jinkō haichi keikaku yōkō’an Showa 15-nen 10-gatsu hi,” October 1940, PDFY09111757, Tachi Bunko. For context, see Satoshi Nakano, *Japan’s Colonial Moment in Southeast Asia 1942–1945: The Occupiers’ Experience* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019).

¹⁶⁵ Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūsho, “Daitōa kensetsu shingikai daisanbukai tōshin’an setsumei shiryō no uchi sangyōbetsu oyobi chiikibetsu haichi ni okeru jinkō baransu (shi’an) (gokuhi 100-bu no uchi dai 12-gō) April 13, 1942, PDFY090212097, Tachi Bunko.” As Mariko Tamanoi has pointed out, this type of source should be read bearing in mind the politics and human agency engrained in the practice of classifying the ethnonational categories. Mariko Tamanoi, “Knowledge, Power, and Racial Classifications: The ‘Japanese’ in ‘Manchuria,’” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 59 (May 2000): 248–76.

¹⁶⁶ Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūsho, “Kokudo keikaku toshite no jinkō haichi keikaku yōkō’an Showa 15-nen 10-gatsu hi.”

As such, population studies conducted by research bureaucrats quickly became institutionalized as the war progressed. Reflecting the government's trust in population research, the government employed population experts for national land planning and assigned them to provide data on population distribution, which was strategically important for the execution of the wartime national policy. Tachi, as one of the most prominent research bureaucrats in this context, duly responded to the role ascribed to him and produced demographic knowledge that policymakers could utilize readily. The total war fostered a specific form of population studies conducted by research bureaucrats.

However, the political influence on population studies did not end there. National policy also shaped the studies profoundly by exhorting researchers to focus on certain demographic subjects that were particularly pertinent to Japan's political struggles. In turn, by orienting itself to the policy debate, demographic studies crystallized the racial and gender stereotyping within the characterization of the target population groups in the debate. Consequently, the demographic subjects appearing in the population research were depicted in gendered and racialized terms.

Gendered and Racialized Demographic Subjects

The population research Tachi was involved in was significant, not only because it provided applicable demographic data for policymaking, but also because it elaborated on the demographic subjects who were perceived as threats to the Konoe cabinet's "sacred mission" to construct a "new order" in East Asia. In the context of national land planning, in which the "sacred mission" was depicted in terms of ethnopolitical struggles, the identified demographic subjects were also depicted as racialized national groups.¹⁶⁷

Among them were the populations of western countries vying for power in Asia, in particular the Soviet Union (USSR). Caricaturing the population as "a basis of national power," population experts showed interest in the Soviet population, especially after the Nomonhan Incident of 1939, in which the devastating defeat in the military confrontation with the USSR dealt the Japanese Army a serious blow. They were particularly concerned that the Soviets would prevent Japan from

¹⁶⁷ Dower, *War without Mercy*, 263–65. A more recent work sheds light on the experience of mixed-race people, which has hitherto been hidden due to the focus on the narrative of "race war." W. Puck Brecher, "Eurasians and Racial Capital in a 'Race War,'" in *Defamiliarizing Japan's Asia-Pacific War*, eds. W. Puck Brecher and Michael W. Myers (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2019), 207–26.

completing the “sacred mission” with USSR’s expansive landmass and population. Koya Yoshio, Tachi’s colleague at the MHW-RI and one of the most influential technical bureaucrats specializing in racial science (see Chapter 6), claimed the USSR was formidable not only because of its vast landmass but also because of its demographic composition, which was biased toward children and youth thanks to high fertility. In contrast, the Japanese population was meager in size and getting old due to the fertility decline. Comparing the demographic trend of the two countries, Koya warned that the “racially young” Soviets would soon take over Japan’s position as the ruler of Asia.¹⁶⁸ As Koya saw it, fecundity represented racial vitality and political force, thus the “racially younger” and larger populations of the neighboring countries in Asia, enabled by fecundity, necessarily jeopardized the Japanese influence in Asia.

Population research internalized this logic as it collected the Soviet demographic data in the early 1940s. The MHW-RI Department of Population and Race compiled data about Soviet statistics on birth, death, and natural population growth rates and on the population composition by class, age, and occupation, along with those of other western countries participating in the current war (the United States, England, Germany, and Italy).¹⁶⁹ In 1943, Tachi, as a member of the department’s research staff, prepared confidential notes showing estimates of the recent population trends in the USSR. For the work, he used the census data from 1897 – since the time of Imperial Russia – population estimates calculated by the USSR and the South Manchurian Railway, and vital statistics produced by the scholar Tachi called “Kuczynski.”¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁸ Yoshio Koya, *Kokudo, jinkō, ketsueki* (Asahi Shinbunsha, 1941), 218; “Kokudo keikaku to jinteki shigen,” *Ishi kōron bessatsu*, no. 1475 (November 2, 1940), PDFY09111808, Tachi Bunko.

¹⁶⁹ Kōsei-shō Kenkyūsho Jinkō Minzokubu, “Shuyō kōsenkoku jinkō tōkei tekiyō,” Jinkō mondai kenkyū shiryō (Kōsei-shō Kenkyūsho Jinkō Minzokubu, May 10, 1943), PDFY090212071, Tachi Bunko.

¹⁷⁰ Minoru Tachi, “Sovietto [*sic*] renpō saikin no jinkō nikansuru suikei shiryō (miteikō) (ichi) (hi),” November 16, 1943, PDFY09110603, Tachi Bunko; Minoru Tachi, “Sovietto [*sic*] renpō saikin no jinkō nikansuru suikei shiryō (miteikō) (ni no tsuika) danjo nenreibetsu jinkō kōsei oyobi nenreibetsu zettai shōmō heiryoku no suikei (ni) (hi),” November 25, 1943, PDFY09110604, Tachi Bunko; Minoru Tachi, “Sovietto [*sic*] renpō saikin no jinkō nikansuru suikei shiryō (miteikō) (ni) danjo nenreibetsu jinkō kōsei oyobi nenreibetsu zettai shōmō heiryoku no suikei (hi),” November 20, 1943, PDFY09110605, Tachi Bunko; Minoru Tachi, “Sovietto [*sic*] renpō saikin no jinkō nikansuru suikei shiryō (miteikō) (san) 1939-nen hatsu niokeru danjo shakai kaikyūbetsu sangyūbetsu jinkō no suikei (hi),” November 26, 1943, PDFY09110606, Tachi Bunko; Minoru Tachi, “Sovietto [*sic*] renpō saikin no jinkō nikansuru suikei shiryō (miteikō) (san no kaitei) 1939-nen hatsu niokeru danjo shakai kaikyūbetsu

Tachi's findings about the current state of the Soviet demography were more modest than the alarmist view presented by Koya and other colleagues earlier in the decade. He estimated that the Soviet population had actually decreased from 173,549,000 in 1940 to 171,812,000 in 1943, and would even further decrease to 162,898,000 if soldiers' deaths from the current war were counted.¹⁷¹ He attributed the population contraction to the drastic fertility decline in the 1930s, which occurred despite pronatalist policies.¹⁷² Tachi also carried out a covert study on the population capable of engaging in (re)productive activities and concluded that "the capacity of the USSR to mobilize human resources has reached a limitation. [Yet] it would not be impossible to expand military mobilization [therefore] we should not see this as a considerable obstacle for [the Soviets] securing a production force."¹⁷³ Compared to the rhetoric of racial scientists that magnified the racial power of the Soviets, Tachi's evaluation of the Soviet demography was soberer. However, Tachi's study also implied that the Soviets were still capable of undermining Japan's "sacred mission." In this way, Tachi's population research consolidated the image of the Soviets as a potential threat to Japan's political project in Asia.

If the Soviets were perceived as an external threat, Koreans were depicted as a demographic subject destabilizing the Japanese endeavor from within. From the onset of the Japanese annexation of Korea, Japanese-language literary and medical writings pathologized Koreans as prone to crime and depicted this "proclivity" as a factor that would undermine Japanese colonial rule in Korea.¹⁷⁴ This view, informed by racism, continued into the 1920s within the discussion of "overpopulation." Confronted with an independent movement, Japanese colonial

sangyōbetsu jinkō no suikei (hi)," December 18, 1943, PDFY09110607, Tachi Bunko; Minoru Tachi, "Sovietto [sic] renpō saikin no jinkō nikansuru suikei shiryō (miteikō) (san no kaitei) no tsuiho (hi)," December 19, 1943, PDFY09110608, Tachi Bunko; Minoru Tachi, "Sorenpō genzai niokeru jinteki dōin jōkyō no hantei nikansuru shiryō (miteikō) (Tachi kenkyūkan shaken) (gokuhi)," December 10, 1943, PDFY09110609, Tachi Bunko. Due to the lack of materials, I was unable to confirm who exactly Kuczynski was, but it was most likely Robert René Kuczynski (1876–1947), who was a renowned demographer at the time.

¹⁷¹ See appendix in Tachi, "Sovietto renpō saikin no jinkō nikansuru suikei shiryō (miteikō) (ichi) (hi)."

¹⁷² Ibid., 10–13. David L. Hoffmann, "Mothers in the Motherland: Stalinist Pronatalism in Its Pan-European Context," *Journal of Social History* 34, no. 1 (September 2000): 44.

¹⁷³ Tachi, "Sorenpō genzai niokeru jinteki dōin jōkyō no hantei nikansuru shiryō (miteikō) (Tachi kenkyūkan shaken) (gokuhi)," 8.

¹⁷⁴ See Jin-kyung Park, "Husband Murder as the 'Sickness' of Korea: Carceral Gynecology, Race, and Tradition in Colonial Korea, 1926–1932," *Journal of Women's History* 25, no. 3 (2013): 116–40.

officers viewed “overpopulation” as a potential catalyst for further political tension that could jeopardize Japan’s colonial rule in the peninsula. At the same time, in the context of the 1920s, in which Japan itself had a growing population and was relying more and more on rice imported from Korea, the population growth in Korea heralded a future crisis in the relationship between the Government-General of Korea and the metropolitan government.¹⁷⁵ Japanese colonial officials thought the expanding Korean population would erode their effort to build a sustainable relationship between colonial Korea and the metropole.¹⁷⁶

However, in wartime, the official attitude toward Koreans changed slightly. The demand for “human resource” and the rhetoric of racial harmony among the five races that was propagated by the wartime Japanese government in support of Konoe’s “new order” movement served to shift Japanese views on Koreans from exclusionary racism to what historian Takashi Fujitani once called “polite racism,” a subtle form of discrimination that is tactfully cloaked in a narrative of equality and inclusion.¹⁷⁷ For instance, Korean males were now allowed to vote and conscripted to serve the Japanese state – as Japanese subjects – as soldiers in the name of *naisen ittai* (harmony between the Japanese and Koreans).¹⁷⁸ At the same time, in the *koseki*, they remained *gaichijin*, “people of outer Japan.”¹⁷⁹ As historian Oguma Eiji once argued, the kind of racism fostered by the imperative of the war turned Koreans into “a national resource as a ‘Japanese,’ but at the same time, not ‘Japanese.’”¹⁸⁰

Though part of the war mobilization effort, the policy debate and research on population that was accountable for national land planning was surprisingly mute when it came to polite racism’s inclusion or equality logic. First, reflecting the legal definition of Koreans as belonging to “outer Japan,” the population debate and research regarded the Korean population as a separate entity from the “population of Japan Proper.”¹⁸¹ Furthermore, the idea of a hierarchical difference between the Japanese

¹⁷⁵ Park, “Interrogating the ‘Population Problem’ of the Non-Western Empire.”

¹⁷⁶ On the Japanese colonial rulers based in Korea, see Jun Uchida, *Brokers of Empire: Japanese Settler Colonialism in Korea, 1876–1945* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011).

¹⁷⁷ Takashi Fujitani, *Race for Empire: Koreans as Japanese and Japanese as Americans during World War II* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 40.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 40–75; Oguma, “*Nihonjin*” no *kyōkai*, 417–57; Makiko Okamoto, “Aja taiheiyō sensō makki niokeru chōsenjin, taiwanjin sanseiken mondai,” *Nihonshi kenkyū*, no. 401 (January 1996): 53–67.

¹⁷⁹ Endo, *Koseki to kokuseki*, 188–215.

¹⁸⁰ Oguma, “*Nihonjin*” no *kyōkai*, 457.

¹⁸¹ Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūsho, “Daitōa kensetsu shingikai daisanbukai tōshin’an setsumei shiryō no uchi sangyōbetsu oyobi chiikibetsu haichi ni okeru jinkō baransu (shi’an) (gokuhi 100-bu no uchi dai 12-gō).”

and Koreans shaped the research agenda more strongly than the rhetoric of equality. The secretary of the CPB's First Division, Konuki Hiroshi, bluntly stated at the first meeting of the National Population Policy Committee on December 18, 1940 that the population problem under national land planning was a "problem of the Korean people" – specifically the question of how the Japanese could manage the uncontrollably fecund and "inferior" Koreans.¹⁸² Konuki argued that population research based on this point should assist the policy work that "reappraises *hakkō ichiu*," the political slogan propagated under the Konoe cabinet that endorsed Japanese rule rather than egalitarian brotherhood in Asia.¹⁸³ Following Konuki's comments, the CPB demanded that, from the viewpoint of military affairs, its population research should respond to concrete questions about how to allocate population groups for Japanese imperial rule and for the "new order" in East Asia, and Koreans featured prominently in these questions.¹⁸⁴ Taken together, population research was expected to recognize the line between the Koreans and the "population of Japan Proper" when estimating population distribution figures. This expectation was clearly premised on the idea of racial differences between the Japanese colonial ruler and its colonial subjects.

Significantly, the Koreans who appeared in these questions referred specifically to unassimilated Koreans.¹⁸⁵ In the official discussion, unassimilated Koreans were described in condescending ways, as uncivilized, antisocial, criminal, promiscuous, and, last but not least, fecund. So, when the CPB prepared a research agenda for its population studies, it also requested research staff to address these questions: "How should the government respond to the growing population of the unassimilated Koreans ... in the event that the population of 'Japan Proper' declined due to the effects of war?" "How much should the government allow the migration of Korean laborers in Japan, given that Koreans are known for their 'custom of antisociality and miscegenation,' 'criminality,' and 'the danger of their lowering the living standard'?" "How could the policy avoid racial frictions between Koreans and the local populations in the event of Korean migration to Manchuria and China?"¹⁸⁶ For the

¹⁸² Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūkai Jinkō Kokusaku Iinkai Kokudo Keikaku Bunkakai, "Jinkō kokusaku iinkai kokudo keikaku bunkakai (dai ikkai kaigō)."

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁴ Kikakuin Dai Ichibu, "Kokudo keikaku honkakuteki settei no hōhō ni tsuite," 23–25.

¹⁸⁵ Michael A. Weiner, *Race and Migration in Imperial Japan*, Sheffield Centre for Japanese Studies/Routledge Series (London: Routledge, 1994).

¹⁸⁶ Kikakuin Dai Ichibu, "Kokudo keikaku honkakuteki settei no hōhō ni tsuite," 23–25.

population research accountable for national land planning, the rhetoric of vulgar racism that prevailed in the earlier decades shaped the questions.

The CPB formed these questions in the specific context of the 1930s and early 1940s in which the intensified mobilization of Koreans for Japan–Manchuria–China Bloc fueled official anxiety over the allegedly indolent yet recalcitrant unassimilated Koreans. In the metropole, the civic effort to assimilate Koreans surged in the mid-1920s, when thousands of Koreans were massacred by the police following the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923.¹⁸⁷ Japanese officials provided support for the effort and during the mid-1930s nationalized it. In December 1940, as the Korean workers were recruited by coercion, the official assimilation effort was further systematized with the launch of the Central Harmonization Association (*Chuō Kyōwakai*).¹⁸⁸ However, the Korean community resisted this by protesting.¹⁸⁹ In turn, implicating the protests with labor and communist activism, Japanese officials understood that it could disrupt the controlled economy.¹⁹⁰ At the same time, for the officials who were cognizant of the declining fertility among the “population of Japan Proper,” the image of unassimilated yet fecund Koreans signified Japan’s weakened political leverage it could exploit to rule Asia. Under the circumstance, the “Korean problem” was translated in population research as a question of how to accurately calculate the ratio of the expanding Korean population to the Japanese in order to help diffuse political tensions.

Though himself not so central to the population research specifically tackling the “Korean problem,” Tachi was well positioned for such research. Before joining the IPP, between December 1938 and April 1939, Tachi had a four-month stint as a temporary editor at the Central Harmonization Association. Perhaps because of this work experience, he had access to confidential data about the distribution of Korean populations and crimes committed by Koreans from the metropole.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁷ Weiner, *Race and Migration*, 156.

¹⁸⁸ *Chuō Kyōwakai* promoted the cultural and racial assimilation of Koreans and policed dangerous ideologies among Koreans in the metropole. Weiner, *Race and Migration*, 154–65. For the response to the assimilation policy in Korea, see, e.g., Uchida, *Brokers of Empire*, 353–93.

¹⁸⁹ Weiner, *Race and Migration*, 165–86.

¹⁹⁰ Brandon Palmer, *Fighting for the Enemy: Koreans in Japan’s War, 1937–1945* (Washington: University of Washington Press, 2013), 4.

¹⁹¹ E.g., “Naichi zaijū chōsenjin mondai gaikyō hi,” April 28, 1939, PDFY100916017, Tachi Bunko; “Chōsenjin bunpu zu (Showa 13-nen matsu genzai 799.865 nin) hi,” n.d. c.1938–39, PDFY100916015, Tachi Bunko.

The documents Tachi gathered from the association consolidated the racist attitude toward Koreans that was dominant in the policy discussion on population. The demographic research on the “problem of Koreans living in Japan Proper” – which was submitted in April 1939 as a confidential document to a meeting called the Round-Table Meeting of the Board of Trustees for Population Problems – pointed out the surge in the number of Koreans in the metropole in the early Showa period (1926–89), in particular after 1932: from 143,000 in 1926 to 799,878 in 1938.¹⁹² It also stated that there was a “significantly higher crime rate” of Koreans compared to Japanese by showing the crime rate of 4.8% among the Koreans and 2.2% among the people of Japan Proper and by listing that 10,699, 6,290, 3,003, and 1,037 Koreans were arrested in 1938 for gambling, theft, assault, and fraud, respectively.¹⁹³ The document mentioned that the majority of Koreans were originally “illiterate” but “many have become educated and cultivated” in recent years. But, instead of interpreting this positively, the document warned that this trend, coupled with the decreasing number of Japanese workers in the metropole due to military conscription, might lead to a “serious antagonism between the Japanese and Koreans at work.”¹⁹⁴ Following the narrative in the policy discussion, the document Tachi collected also portrayed Koreans as fecund, criminal, and politically suspect.

However, for the IPP, with which Tachi was primarily affiliated, the data he collected from the Central Harmonization Association showing the criminality of the Koreans was less valuable than the data on the Japanese in Korea. In the study the IPP carried out in 1940, which became the basis for the aforementioned “General Plan for the Population Deployment as National Land Planning,” the IPP studied the deployment, composition, and physical quality of the population of Japan Proper in Korea.¹⁹⁵ Based on this study, it concluded that at least 10% of the total population on the Korean Peninsula should be colonist from the population of Japan Proper.¹⁹⁶ Yet, the fact that the IPP did not use the data from the Central Harmonization Association did not necessarily mean the IPP study was devoid of racism. In fact, to the contrary, the same condescending view on the Korean

¹⁹² “Naichi zaijū chōsenjin mondai gaikyō hi,” 1.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 5–6.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 3–4.

¹⁹⁵ Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūsho, “Kokudo keikaku toshite no jinkō haichi keikaku yōkō’an Showa 15-nen 10-gatsu hi.”

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 13.

people dominated the IPP policy document. To justify the 10% mark, the IPP contended that Koreans “grow expansively even though their quality is inferior,” thus a certain ratio of the Japanese was required to control the Korean population.¹⁹⁷ Though not as explicit as in the policy debate, the population research conducted for national land planning also incorporated the racist characterization of Koreans as a dangerous demographic subject in relation to the Japanese political endeavor.

While population research adopted a racial category to examine the level of threat certain demographic subjects posed to Japanese imperial rule, it used a gender classification to examine how the government could further strengthen national power. Gender classification – the analysis of demographic trends by categorizing a population by sex – was by then an established practice in population studies. Similar to age, population scholars thought the ratio of men to women would reveal fundamental qualities of a given society and simultaneously influence the population composition profoundly. With this premise in mind, the IPP readily sorted the population data of Japan Proper by sex to ascertain the most rational way to distribute the population.¹⁹⁸

Still, in the context of total war, in which mobilization was categorically a gendered affair, studying the population through the category of sex was more than simply routine work. It also embodied a gender ideology that shaped Japan’s war effort: the ideology that magnified men’s contribution to the warring state through their productive and military prowess and women’s through their reproductive and assistive functions.¹⁹⁹ Thus, to analyze the male population, the IPP considered the men’s roles primarily as soldiers and workers (including farmers) and used the framework of the “population of productive age” (*seisan nenrei jinkō*) to calculate the balance between the men deployed in the military and others mobilized as workforce.²⁰⁰ Based on this perspective, the IPP claimed that 23,104,000 out of the aforementioned 35,269,000 workers to be distributed to industries in Japan Proper by 1950 should be men. It further concluded that 92% of the male workers – precisely 21,683,000 – should be “people of a productive age.”²⁰¹ For the number of Japanese expats in the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere,

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 16.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁹ Andrea Germer, Vera Mackie, and Ulrike Wöhr, *Gender, Nation and State in Modern Japan* (London: Taylor and Francis Group, 2014).

²⁰⁰ Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūsho, “Kokudo keikaku toshite no jinkō haichi keikaku yōkō’an Showa 15-nen 10-gatsu hi,” 19–22, 29–30.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 21–22.

one-third of the total population should be men of a “productive age, at least at the beginning.”²⁰²

In turn, the IPP was less concerned with applying the concept of “population of productive age” to analyze the female population. Instead, it was more preoccupied with women’s capacity to enhance the “reproductive power” (*seisanryoku*) of the population at large.²⁰³ However, it also recognized the importance of women in the metropole as workers filling the void created by conscripted men.²⁰⁴ In the end, the IPP took a compromised stance: It defined women’s participation in work as primarily “harmful for the population growth” but also argued it could be encouraged insofar as it did not damage their reproductive capacity.²⁰⁵ Based on this position, the IPP calculated the maximum percentage of women permitted to work without “harming” their reproductive capacity. After the investigation, the IPP concluded that the ratio of female workers to the total workforce in the metropole should not exceed more than 17% in the manufacturing industry and 10% in mining.²⁰⁶

Parallel to this, the IPP also recommended that 12,165,000 Japanese women should migrate overseas by 1950 to support the Japanese rule of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. However, in contrast to their male counterparts, it did not recommend this by mobilizing the category of “population of productive age.” While we cannot entirely cross out the possibility that this was an error or oversight, at the very least, it resonated with the gendered image of female expats, who, as respectable daughters and wives, helped the men dispatched to colonies to engage in productive activities as farmers, workers, merchants, colonial officers, etc. Like “continental brides” who were systematically sent to Manchuria in the late 1930s, their primary function was defined less by productive work than by their “reproductive power.” Using this power, they were expected to maintain a balanced growth of the population of Japanese empire builders, as well as to maintain the expat community’s racial purity by giving birth to the next generation of pure-bred

²⁰² Kōseishō Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūsho, “Kokudo keikaku toshite no jinkō haichi keikaku yōkō,” 1940, PDFY09111756, 22.

²⁰³ Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūsho, “Kokudo keikaku toshite no jinkō haichi keikaku yōkō’an Showa 15-nen 10-gatsu hi.”

²⁰⁴ Yuri Horikawa, “Senji dōin seisaku to kikon josei rōdōsha: Senjiki ni okeru josei rōdōsha no kaisōsei wo meguru ichi kōsatsu,” *Shakai seisaku* 9, no. 3 (2018): 128–40; Regine Mathias, “Women and the War Economy in Japan,” in *Japan’s War Economy*, ed. Erich Pauer (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 65–84.

²⁰⁵ Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūsho, “Kokudo keikaku toshite no jinkō haichi keikaku yōkō’an Showa 15-nen 10-gatsu hi,” 20.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

Japanese.²⁰⁷ This assumption was inscribed in the way the IPP research depicted the category of sex.

The research based on this way of gendering the population was directly in lines with a number of social policy measures established in the 1930s, which aimed to promote health and welfare for women and children.²⁰⁸ These measures, integrating the logic of the gendered division of labor, portrayed wartime social reforms categorically as gendered work. According to these measures, men were leading the fight for the prosperity of the nation-state-empire at the *front* – at the war front and at the colonial frontier – as productive workers and robust soldiers. In contrast, women were supporting the men at *jūgo* – “the back of the gun” – by keeping themselves as healthy as possible and by serving Japanese imperialism through their domestic and reproductive capabilities.²⁰⁹ Women’s contributions should be done primarily through their role as wives and mothers, and secondarily as workers.²¹⁰ Population research mirrored this logic found in social policy. By perpetuating the logic, research solidified the gender norms that assigned leadership roles to men while confining women to the reproductive domain and an assistive position in productive labor. And this logic was behind the IPP research’s caricature of the “population of Japan Proper” as a gendered demographic subject.

²⁰⁷ Sidney Xu Lu, “Japanese American Migration and the Making of Model Women for Japanese Expansion in Brazil and Manchuria, 1871–1945,” *Journal of World History* 28, no. 3 (2017): 439–40; Sidney Xu Lu, “Good Women for Empire: Educating Overseas Female Emigrants in Imperial Japan, 1900–45,” *Journal of Global History* 8, no. 3 (November 2013): 436–60.

²⁰⁸ Sugita, “*Yūsei*,” “*yūkyō*,” 54–84; Sugita, *Jinkō, kazoku, seimei to shakai seisaku*, 108–60. Furthermore, outside the government, the Imperial Gift Foundation Aiiiku-kai, established in 1934 through an imperial gift to commemorate the birth of the crown prince Akihito in 1933, set up “model villages” and explored ways to improve conditions for mothers and children in rural areas. Osamu Saito, “Bosei eisei seisaku ni okeru chūkan soshiki no yakuwari: Aiiikukai no jigyo wo chūshin ni,” in *Senkanki nihon no shakai shūdan to nettowāku: Demokurashī to chūkan dantai*, ed. Takenori Inoki (NTT Shuppan, 2008), 359–79; Saito, “Senzen nihon ni okeru nyūyōji shibō mondai”; Naoko Yoshinaga, “The Modernization of Childbirth and the Indoctrination of Motherhood in Prewar Japan: The ‘Aiiiku-Son’ Project of Imperial Gift Foundation ‘Aiiiku-Kai’” [in Japanese], *Tokyo daigaku daigakuin kyoikugaku kenkyūka kiyo* 37 (1997): 21–29.

²⁰⁹ Mikiyo Kano, *Onna tachi no jūgo* (Chikuma Shobō, 1995). For a creative interpretation of women’s contributions at *jūgo*, see Annika A. Culver, “Battlefield Comforts of Home,” in *Defamiliarizing Japan’s Asia-Pacific War*, eds. W. Puck Brecher and Michael W. Myers (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2019), 85–103.

²¹⁰ At the flipside of the coin was what Janis Matsumura calls the “moral panic” among the officials toward overly sexualized female workers and soldiers’ wives who were suspected of disrupting social order due to their promiscuity and criminality. Janice Matsumura, “Unfaithful Wives and Dissolute Labourers: Moral Panic and the Mobilisation of Women into the Japanese Workforce, 1931–45,” *Gender & History* 19, no. 1 (2007): 78–100.

However, for research bureaucrats, population research was not simply an intellectual exercise. In the case of Tachi, it was also grounded in his day-to-day administrative activities and conditioned by the epistemological challenges posed by the research. What kinds of activities supported his research? What did the process that was shaping knowledge about the demographic subjects under study involve?

Precarious Research Practices

To start with, the population research conducted by Tachi involved much paperwork, in part due to the CPB's administrative demands. For instance, the CPB First Department ordered its research groups to compile lists of the relevant academic publications for each of the research subjects they were in charge of, mark the materials with a level of confidentiality (secret, top secret, confidential, military resource secret, military resource partially secret), and submit a report regularly so it could compile a monthly reference catalog.²¹¹ This meant Tachi, as a member of the staff at the CPB First Department's Population Group, must have been consumed with this laborious documentation work. The work could be particularly cumbersome for a subject such as population, which dovetailed with wide-ranging fields – from genetics, racial hygiene, and obstetrics-gynecology to statistics and macroeconomics.²¹²

However, for Tachi, as a population expert, compiling demographic data was a more central focus than the above activity. As previously mentioned, Tachi was engaged in work that transformed demographic data into knowledge directly useful for national land planning. However, the process to generate “useful” knowledge was not always smooth. To the contrary, Tachi stumbled over challenges along the way. In terms of deskwork, there were two issues. The first pertained to methodology. For instance, when Tachi collaborated with his colleagues, Ueda Masao and Kubota Yoshiaki, at IPP on the study of populations in the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, they ran into problems calculating population dynamics because the method of census taking was not standardized. Some countries within the area simply had no system of collecting population data, while others that did adopted vastly different methodologies. As Tachi saw it, there were roughly six different data collection methods: (1) “modern” census; (2) “unmodern” census; (3) the method combining 1 and 2 but taking corrective actions; (4) calculation of a total

²¹¹ See Kikakuin Daiichibu, *Kokudo keikaku shiryō mokuroku geppō* 2, no. 10, October 1942, PDFY090226029.

²¹² *Ibid.*, no. 4, April 1942, PDFY090226028.

population based on a partial census taking; (5) estimation; and (6) “a so-called simple guess.”²¹³ Tachi and his colleagues had to grapple with the essentially incomparable data collection methods before even beginning to attempt to tabulate the “population of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.” To tackle the issue, in the end, they decided to do their best while largely relying on the *Annual Report of the Statistics of the Greater Japanese Empire*, which was slow to reflect the quickly evolving political reality that determined the population boundaries in Asia.²¹⁴

The additional issue that troubled Tachi was linked to the slippery geographical definition of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. As suggested above, this sphere was indeed an ideological construct that justified the expansion of the Japanese Empire. Thus, by definition, its boundaries were kept elusive. However, population research aiming to determine the optimal ratio between the population and landmass required knowledge about the sphere’s clear-cut boundaries. Tachi and his colleagues were compelled to grapple with the tensions between the conditions created by Japan’s political goal and scientific demands. Their solution was to take a compromising approach. In the aforementioned study with Ueda and Kubota, Tachi first stressed the sphere’s amorphous, boundless, and expansive character, defining it as “the bounds toward which the power of the Japanese Empire reaches.”²¹⁵ At the same time, recognizing that the study needed a clear understanding of the size of the sphere in order to calculate population density, the researchers simply decided to make up a working definition. They proposed what they called “the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere and its adjacent area,” which referred to “the area between 60 and 180 degrees east longitudinally but also included the islands of Hawaii simply because 40 percent of its population was Japanese.”²¹⁶ Furthermore, they depicted it as excluding the USSR, British India, Afghanistan, Iran, Australia, New Zealand, and New Caledonia. However, they also mentioned that the areas of British India, Australia, New Zealand, and New Caledonia could be included depending on the context.²¹⁷ In other words, the researchers drew a flexible boundary, responding to the shifting understanding of what constituted the Japanese Empire and its population. As this case indicates, the process of making numerical facts for the Japanese empire-nation-state involved much tinkering along the way.

²¹³ Minoru Tachi, Masao Ueda, and Yoshiaki Kubota, “Tōakyōeiken jinkō ryakusetsu (zanteikō) (1),” *Jinkō mondai kenkyū* 3, no. 10 (October 1942): 3.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 4–9.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 20.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 4.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 20–21.

To make it more complex, population studies during the period had to reconcile the multiple understandings of population/race presented in its adjacent field of racial science.²¹⁸ Among these was, for instance, the idea that Japanese and Koreans were *konwa minzoku* (“a mixture of races,” literally translated), which served to blur the boundaries between the Japanese, colonial subjects, and other races in Asia.²¹⁹ Komai Taku (1886–1972), professor of genetics at Kyoto Imperial University, claimed in 1942 that the Japanese were a *konwa minzoku*, comprised of the Ainu, the Chinese, and Koreans, while Koreans were made up of two or three culturally similar but biologically different racial groups.²²⁰ By providing a creative interpretation of the link between race, culture, and history, which stressed the racial affinity between the Japanese and Koreans yet simultaneously insisted on the former’s cultural superiority, racial science justified Japanese leadership in the geopolitical project of, and for, the Greater East Asian race’s liberation from white dominance.²²¹ However, the emphasis on racial affinity led to tensions in Tachi’s demographic study, though it primarily relied on the legal definition of race and population that showed a clearer boundary between different racial groups.

Tachi believed a challenge of this kind could be overcome by technical means, by improving the methods for collecting population data. Thus, in the early 1940s, he participated in the movement within the government to reform the administrative infrastructure for the collection of vital statistics.²²² In the private draft proposal he authored on June 23, 1942, Tachi made a wish list for the “Greater Imperial Japanese Government” to act upon, which included compiling vital statistics for: “(1) the residents in Japan Proper grouped according to the categories in the civil registrations (*minseki*) and additionally nationwide, by prefectures or by cities with more than a population of 100,000,” and “(2) the population of Japan Proper in Japan’s colonies and in foreign countries classified by regions.”²²³ Additionally, the IPP proposal for national land planning, the drafting of which Tachi was involved in, stressed the

²¹⁸ Kingsberg Kadia, *Into the Field*; Hyun, “Racializing Chōsenjin”; Hoshino, “Racial Contacts across the Pacific”; Sakano, *Teikoku nihon to jinrui gakusha*; Morris-Suzuki, “Debating Racial Science.”

²¹⁹ Soyoung Suh, *Naming the Local: Medicine, Language, and Identity in Korea since the 15th Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center Publications Program, 2017), 71–104.

²²⁰ Hyun, “Racializing Chōsenjin,” 501.

²²¹ Hoshino, “Racial Contacts across the Pacific.”

²²² See Shakaiyoku Hokenbu, “Jinkō dōtai tōkei ni taisuru kibō jikō,” n.d. c.1942, PDFY090803214, Tachi Bunko.

²²³ Minoru Tachi, “Jinkō dōtai tōkei kaizen seibi ni kansuru kibō jikō (shi’an),” June 23, 1942, PDFY090803217, Tachi Bunko.

need to set up a system to comprehensively register every person of the metropole, which would facilitate the process of “deploying populations according to regions and of sending the population of Japan Proper out of the country.” Based on this claim, the proposal recommended that the government should set up a National Registration Bureau (*Kokumin Tōroku Kyoku*) within the central government and National Registration Offices across the country, which would be in charge of registering every individual’s “social status, skills, whereabouts, and other personal details” and, in case of immigration, would “train the migrants so that their activities could bring the best effect in their respective destinations.”²²⁴ Tachi believed the reform, promoting more methodical ways of collecting data about the “population of Japan Proper,” was at least a first step toward solving the challenges he was confronted with in his demographic studies.

The demographic work Tachi and other research bureaucrats undertook for national land planning was premised on the assumption that the geographic and racial boundaries of the research subjects were evidently clear. However, at times, they struggled in their research activities, precisely because they were confronted with uncertainties surrounding this very assumption. As a way to overcome these challenges, they made concessions. At the same time, they resorted to a technical fix. The everyday research practices of these population bureaucrats exhibited how precarity was woven into the ways in which demographic knowledge was created and stabilized. At the same time, they showed how population experts grappled with the problem of uncertain knowledge in the context of the wartime state’s policymaking, which persistently demanded clear-cut answers.

Conclusion

There was little doubt that research bureaucrats such as Tachi recognized that their work during the war made population studies into a policy science. They had many reasons to think this way. In the late 1930s, the status of population studies was raised within the government, as the political exigency of the war demanded the mobilization of people as “human resource.” The government founded the IPP as the official research institution dedicated to policy-oriented population studies. On a smaller scale, the CPB established the Population Group for a similar purpose. The IRPP evolved into a professional organization that

²²⁴ Jinkō Mondai Kenkyūsho, “Kokudo keikaku toshite no jinkō haichi keikaku yōkō’an Showa 15-nen 10-gatsu hi,” 34.

the government turned to for expert advice. The conditions under total war – the fascist welfare rationale, the drive to control the economy, and the aspiration for imperial expansion, as well as the geopolitical concerns that surfaced as a result of this – accelerated the development of population studies. They also promoted a specific form of policy-oriented population studies that was conducted by bureaucrat-experts.

In turn, population bureaucrats like Tachi responded to their ascribed roles by presenting demographic knowledge that directly aided the state goal. The demographic knowledge, based on a specific formulation of population – a deployable resource, synonymous with race, and the subject of biopolitical, economic, and geopolitical strategies – supported Japan's engagement with imperial fascism from within. However, everyday scientific work also indicated how the process to produce this demographic knowledge required layers of negotiations. Consequently, compromise was part of the knowledge production process.

The state mobilization of population studies in the late 1930s and early 1940s had implications far exceeding the context of total war. Despite the political change after Japan's surrender in 1945, the practice of policy-oriented population research by technical or research bureaucrats survived, strongly influencing the trajectory of the field of population studies in years to come.