

女性性の再構築と国民国家  
—— ニュージーランドの近代化過程を事例に ——  
(Re-) Constructing 'Womanhood' and the Nation State  
in Modernization Era of New Zealand

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## 1. Introduction

### 1-1. Focus Point

In this paper, I explore the elasticity of the concept of womanhood, which had been constantly constructed and re-constructed under every stage of the nation-state, through historical analysis of the modernization era of New Zealand. I would also argue the meaning of women as citizens with the framework of the nation and discuss the paradox of feminism.

I would suggest 'the womanhood' was a strategy of the nation-state formation. Women's activities as citizens including feminisms must have been limited to the framework the nation-state designed. I *doubt* that feminism had been radical and autonomous against existing social norms, power, and structure. They had often played an important role the nation-state provided for.

New Zealand had experienced an urgent forming of the nation-state since the period of colonization in 19C. Construction of the family and womanhood was a target as an indispensable element for a stable nation-state. Characteristics of family, womanhood and feminism in New Zealand were slightly different from Britain.

I would focus on three points:

- (1) Reconstruction of the colonial womanhood in relation to emerging of the modern family
- (2) Elasticity of the womanhood between the suffrage and the war era
- (2) Women as citizens and paradox of feminism

### 1-2. Analysis of the ladies column: 'For the Ladies' in Auckland Weekly News

I use the ladies columns of a newspaper, 'For the Ladies' of the Auckland Weekly News, of 1870-1905<sup>1</sup> in order to approach a range of reality. Newspapers often reflect people's interest, social trend and social expectation on everyday lives. I divided articles into 14 categories according to contents, and counted them by each year between 1891 and 1905 [Table]. This era was the most important for investigating the changing concept of womanhood in modernization. And also I'll take up some articles in discussions.

## 2. Modern Family and Colonial Womanhood

From a viewpoint of family history studies, the modern family that is characterized by emotional ties between family members and privatization emerged and prevailed from 17 century to 19

century in Britain as capitalism and industrialization had been developing. [Shorter 1976, Stone].

In New Zealand, unlike Britain, capitalism and industrialism were not directly related to emergence of modern families although the pervasion of modern families was based on them<sup>ii</sup>. The purpose of social reformation created a new family pattern and ideology under the nation-state strategies.

It is noteworthy that the new family and womanhood in New Zealand was emerged, emphasized and systematized in the context of the family policy in the end of 19 century and the beginning of 20 century. A series of social changes pushed forward reformation of a social mechanism for a social stability urgently, made recognition of importance of family responsibility and led to creation of the modern families. Women became 'a figure of purity and chaste love' and the home became a refuge from the outside. This process reconstructed the colonial womanhood.

## 2-1. The emergence of the modern family of New Zealand

The most of immigrants of New Zealand came from Britain or countries British origin; therefore British norms and family patterns in early New Zealand were directly brought from Britain. But the reality of family patterns and norms seemed to be slightly different from Britain under the influence of colonial condition. In the beginning of colonial period marriages were more egalitarian partnerships than in Britain. Women and men had to work together and the role of wife and mother were wider and more important than in Britain. Women's role was necessary and useful, in a word, 'helpmeet' [Dalziel 1986, 1977, 112]. Such a reality of somewhat egalitarian family pattern began to change in the end of 19 century.

The emphasis of domesticity emerged around the 1880 in New Zealand. It represents a significant change in the area of families and womanhood. Women became 'a figure of purity and chaste love' and home became a refuge or shelter from the stressful world [Olssen and Levesque 1978:6-7]

Until the 1880s the ideology of laissez-faire was prevailed, and the policy that represented the government's family-reliance strategy had been established. The laws of Destitute Persons Ordinance of 1846 and Destitute Persons Act of 1877 legally posed responsibilities for the elderly, the destitute, the dependent and the indigent on families and closest kin [Olssen and Levesque 1978].

Facing the tide of immigrants of 1860s and 1870s, the depression of 1880s and the early 1890s and a series of social fluctuations made the previous social control dysfunction. Reformation of the social mechanisms and a new ideology for social stability began to be needed. The cult of domesticity, which was a new ideology of families, was created in such a series of social crises as unemployment, urbanization, poverty, delinquency and desertion of families.

Under this social instability, the new ideology of domestic cult was strongly introduced and prevailed in New Zealand for forming a stable social mechanism since the 1880s. The evangelical churches had taken the initiative in seeking to impose new social functions on women and families. The symbolic and the key issue was 'larrikinism' which exploited to advocate the cult of domesticity in 1880s [Olssen and Levesque 1978:6-7].

## 2-2. Womanhood in the beginning of modern era

Under the family (re-) formation and the cult of domesticity, the womanhood was characterized by the 'figure of purity and chaste love' at home. Domesticity as homemaker and child bearer had been increasingly given weight in femininity, while excess social demands for a stable society in 1880s and 1890s made the womanhood beyond home. The colonial womanhood in the second-stage was charged with maintaining the moral of society, which took the place of 'helpmeet'. It was expected their job to restrain and refine the instincts of men. 'Female influence' and 'female attraction' was admired as the 'great cement' of society. Women's mission upon earth was 'to drag the men up to haven'. [Dalziel 1986, 64] The women's role gradually had been enhanced to the 'moral guardian' and 'purity'.

It was asserted women's nature of purity, piety and virtues were essential to relieve men, family and society from the 'moral evils'. Good quality homes were looked on as a panacea to social disorder of the colony, and more directly speaking, women's purity and morality were looked on as a panacea to problems of larrikinism, family-desertion and general immorality. [Tennant 1986, Olssen and Levesque 1978]

There had been a assumption that women intrinsically posses purity which is a power to tame the male's destructive force. Purity was a means to build an identity of uniquely female values and a proof of 'respectful', not only 'useful'. Women had gotten their status and identity as purity and a moral guardian in the society; in other words, they were incorporated into the specific sphere and role, which is symbolized by the purity and morality, in the process of the modern nation-state formation.

Emphasizing domesticity was reflected in the column 'for the Ladies' of the Auckland Weekly News of 1870s-1880s.

In the early days of this column it was mostly occupied with articles of fashion. The theme of articles of the fashion was how to make women attractive to men. Domestic articles irregularly appeared in the latter half of 1870s. The regular article of 'The Useful Household Hints' appeared (on 27<sup>th</sup> Jan) in 1877. This article was about practical advice for whole domestic tasks including recipes, households' hints, and so on. The column changed clearly from the 'fashion-column' to the 'fashion and the domestic column' in the early 1880s. It certainly represented the womanhood as the attraction and the domesticity. The womanhood as far as the column hadn't gone beyond home until 1880s.

## 3-1. Feminism and Franchise in NZ

The lately woman's history movement from the 1970s constructed women as historical subjects. It is to make women a focus of inquiry, subject of the story, and an agent of the narrative [Scott 1988]. Ironically this struggle revealed the woman to be an active agent for their subordination, not victims. That is, women also involved the process to establish the definition of women, as a figure of characteristics, traits, and roles in contrast to men.

This trend of 'woman-centered' [Grimshaw 1994, 31] analysis of history in 1970s in New Zealand opened up to the new perspectives for reinterpretation of the women's history and the suffrage.

### 3-2. Women's Suffrage and WCTM in New Zealand

The winning of the franchise in 1893 symbolizes the credible right to citizenship but 'it was citizenship within a male polity' [Brookes 1993, 140]. Boundaries who are entitled to citizenship have not been confined to the political border of nationality, but internal border of 'the full citizen' or 'the second-class one', have been included; [Jenson & Phillips 1996, 114].

The movement of franchise, which symbolized the first wave feminism in New Zealand, indicates the intrinsic character of the feminism. Feminists were not against the existing womanhood the state provided for even during the franchise movements, that is, their movements occurred and developed in the context of the state-setting womanhood. The first article on movements and politics in the columns typically represented the relation of the movements and the women's role (domesticity and home).

#### WOMEN AND POLITICS

Social purity and the Seventh Commandment have come to bulk so largely in the new or forward movements, partly because they are, among religious bodies, "non-contentious" topics, and partly because British women are acquiring much importance and consideration in public affairs nowadays. The social puritan agitation, like the temperance agitation, utilizes existing socialites, habits of association, and class-ship among members. The vitality and popularity of both depends upon an appeal to home interests; upon certain obvious relation to the everyday concerns of families....

(04, Apr, 1891 in For the Ladies, the Auckland Weekly News)

The number of topics about women's participation in society and social activities increased from 1893 to 1895 [TABLE: Category 'SOCIAL(DISCUSSION)']. There had been no articles about 'women and politics' until 1891. They, however, didn't necessarily keep the standpoint for women's movements and their social activities. I could say any discussions were mostly argued in the context of family and home.

The colonial condition must be taken under consideration, which valued women's familial role, gave women emotional rewards to the role and enhanced women's social status. The vote of women was argued in the context of contribution to founding of the colonial state by their purity as homemakers and social charitable providers. The win of suffrage certainly symbolized the recognition of women's role of the purity and moral guardian beyond home, but it didn't mean breaking out of women's role [Dalziel 1986, 67].

First wave feminism in New Zealand was symbolized by the purity campaign by the WCTU. Bunkle [1980] focused on the rhetoric which Women's Christian Temperance Movement (WCTM)<sup>iii</sup> used in the campaign for the vote. The crusade for Social Purity was the heart of the temperance movement. And the woman as the purity incarnate corresponded to the government's purpose. The WCTM used the purity as a powerful means in the franchise campaign. Women won the vote not because they entitled to full rights as citizen, as it were, the 'full citizen', but because they are moral exercise as a sort of 'second class citizen'<sup>iv</sup> [Jenson & Phillips 1996, 114]

In advanced arguments of the suffrage, it is pointed out that WCTU 'designed and promoted a

new and radical vision of the role of women in politics and society that *put security, not rights, first* [Grimshaw 1994, 36].

### 3-3. The Contrary Case: NCW

Thus in order to get women's franchise, feminism adopted the strategy of using and emphasizing the womanhood the state provided for. In a sense their movements was limited to the framework the state designed. In submitting to the state's setting womanhood, feminisms could survive and were be permitted to develop. If they were against or ignored the framework of the womanhood, they would have been doomed to collapse, like the early National Council of the Women of New Zealand (NCW).

The NCW was organized in 1896 and lasted for only a decade. The NCW was active in promoting the extension of women's influence in the decade. There are several reasons this council was short-lived, but in short words, its demands were too radical and got out of the role the state allowed women. It came to be perceived by many as a threat to family life and, ultimately, to social order and security.

The council's strong demands for women's equal opportunity and economic independence were criticized and raised fears. Its stance on the women's right was doomed to break down. Above all, the strategy of its opposition to the South African War was definitive to its collapse (1899-1902).

The council had the campaign for the extension of women's rights by emphasizing the role of mother. Its movement for peace and arbitration was strongly connected with the motherhood at first. But their strategy slightly shifted to adopting the wider and general view of universal one. They began to assert the universal peace beyond the mother's intention and call for the influential positions over men or the society. This strategy moved to take on humanity aspects beyond the womanhood that the male polity permitted. It aroused antagonism and fears in public and facilitated the council's early collapse[Nichols 1993].

## 4. Feminism Framework

Series of feminism's movements indicated that their success or failure, survival or collapse, depended on whether their strategies which they adopted were within or beyond the framework the state provided for. That means that feminism couldn't go beyond and stand against the state. Even if the first wave feminism fought to extend the state's boundaries of the definition of the citizenship and in fact their struggle succeeded in the extension of the boundaries, they couldn't go over the definitions of womanhood the state designed, or rather, feminism reinforced the state-setting definition of womanhood; purity, domesticity and motherhood. If their movements were beyond the state-setting framework, they would have been oppressed. This is a dilemma as a social movement. In fact they used those characters of womanhood as a strong means to enhance women's rights. As a result women's movement led to set themselves in the specific framework of the womanhood, not universal citizens.

Feminism also functioned to support and expand the state's control and power to people and society. In the 1890s and 1900s many feminists joined the crusade. In the WCTU campaign the state



was looked on 'the protection for women and children from abuse' [Brookes 1993, 154]. It symbolized the partnership between the feminism and the state. The partnership between feminisms and the state was represented during wartime remarkably.

## 5. Wartime and the amendment of the Womanhood

Between 1895 and 1900 many women's organizations came out in favor of teaching young girls and domestic science so that they would be better equipped to create sound and attractive homes<sup>v</sup>. In the period of wartime, from the Boer War (of 1899-1902) to the World War 1, the womanhood was slightly transformed again. Like other countries, the war made motherhood emphasized in New Zealand, too.

On the other hand, in the beginning of 20 century, the ideology of the motherhood, in addition to the cult of domesticity had been systematized officially; for example, systematization of the subject of Home Science of 1909, the formation of Plunket society of 1907 and the Midwives Act of 1905. All symbolized emphasis of the motherhood. Modern science, medical profession and even feminisms supported and pushed forward this new cult.

### 5-1. War and Motherhood

The Boer War caused a lot of attention to racial fitness, a fear of the survival of the Anglo Saxon race, and concerns on the maternal body [Fry 1988]. These concerns and fears were exaggerated by a decrease in the birth rate. The mother's role became enhanced to a social role, that is, women were not only mothers of new citizens, but mothers of *the white race* which would populate and dominate these new lands. Stress on the motherhood was directly reflected on girl's education.

In the early 1900s the purpose and direction of women's education began to be questioned and argued. The curriculum of girls' had not differed from that of boys except for the study of Greek since the starting point of education in 1870s. A big turning point was the 1900s, in which differentiation of the curriculum between sexes was clearly made [Tennant 1986].

Girls' education focusing on the motherhood and wifehood had been regulated by the Free Place regulations of 1903. Mathematics and the strain of girls' education were looked on being useless and harmful to give damaging on potential maternal bodies. Social concern had gradually gone away from the social stability and the war inspired a sense of the survival of the Anglo-Saxon race in Pakeha<sup>vi</sup>. In the same way, it seemed the womanhood shifted its stress from the moral guardian to motherhood. Tennant [1986] pointed out that girls' courses of study had more interference than boys': That means the womanhood had been more directed than boys.

The emphasis of motherhood was reflected on the changing of meaning of the child. According to McDonald's categorization [McDonald 1978], the meaning of children changed from 'a chattel' during pioneer era of 1840 to 1899, to 'social capital' during war era of 1900 to 1944 in New Zealand. The survival infants and the health of *the nation's children* were seen to lie in mother's hands.

## 5-2. Scientific motherhood'

Such a systematization of domestic subjects was largely attributed to directions by scientific and medical professions. Especially Turby King was undoubtedly a key person to the nation's motherhood in New Zealand. He linked the child-rearing to the health of the family, the nation, and the Empire. It is said that if the history of New Zealand is perceived in terms of modernization then King, who established the Plunket Society<sup>vii</sup>, was an important actor in the New Zealand [Olssen 1981]. He swept off the informal explanation form of female moral supremacy which had been prevailed until the end of 1890s and transformed it into scientific and formal instruction. King's ideology emerged in 1890s. His influence began to increase in 1900s. He established the Plunket Society in 1907. King introduced 'home science', articulated a new philosophy of 'scientific motherhood' and defined a new concept of the motherhood backed by a scientific certainty [Olssen 1981].

In the column, 'For the Ladies', the symbolic title of 'DOMESTIC SCIENCE' emerged in 1902.

### A PLEA FOR DOMESTIC SCIENCE

The theory and practice of domestic science would afford experience both for mind and body, for the arts must not be taught empirically, but comprehension of principles must accompany their practice. Even small girls could be taught to dust, understanding why and how.... '(Jun, 12, 1902)

'Scientific motherhood' was supported on the grounds of the ideology of the colonial mother; embodiment of the Empire's physical and moral health. The imperial and racial patriotism demanded healthy boys and mothers were assigned to bear and rear healthy boys. Womanhood became almost equal to the nation's motherhood and the nation's embodiment. The conflation of the stamina of future mothers related to the strength of the nation was central to early 20C debates around the size, composition and health. The column of 'For the Ladies' often took up topics of women's stout body and health after the Boer War, like "A woman must be made to feel physically good if she is to be *the ideal national mother*." [3, August 1905].

This social concern represented on the policy. After the war a series of systematizations of domesticity and especially motherhood were introduced; the Midwives Act of 1904, St Helens Maternity Hospitals of 1905, Plunket Society of 1909, and the School of Home Science of 1911.

The war certainly changed the status of women. I would never say the war enhanced the women's status because the emancipation and enhancement was within the gender framework and structure of the male polity. On the contrary, the state definition of women's role was incorporated into a series of social security systems and policies and, some argues [Mcdonald1986, Tennant 1986], it remains integral to the present welfarism of New Zealand.

## 6. Conclusion

The modernization era constructed the foundation of our present social structure, policy, norms and ideology, which influence our everyday lives although it is usually hidden under invisible

realm. I've argued that the concept of womanhood was an important part of establishing the nation-state in New Zealand. Every concept of womanhood had been intricate with and played for the state. That is to say, there exists a potential of a variety of womanhood according to every types of the nation-state in our society.

Furthermore, the femininity was integrated into the basis of social system and remained to the admirable welfarism until the early 1990s of New Zealand<sup>vi</sup>. The new ideology following collapse of the welfarism, the Economic New Right liberalism, calls for the nation's qualities of rational self-interest, competitiveness, independence, self-reliance and individual responsibilities. Within this framework, 'mothers' have kept the self-sacrifice in order to provide the 'care for dependent members' that families have traditionally offered while it also looked on them to the self-serving market individual [Else 1992]. It seems the womanhood and mother (re-) turned to the old, traditional and ambivalent concept under the post-welfarism. Womanhood still has the potential for a variety of new and (re-) constructed meanings within and through the process of our (post) modernity.

| YEAR | WOMAN HOOD | MAN HOOD | LOVE & MARRIAGE | SOCIAL (DISCUSSION) | HEALTH & BEAUTY | HOUSEHOLD (HINTS) | DOMESTICITY (MORAL) | MOTHER | EDUCATION | FASHION | EVENTS (INFORMATION) | POEM    | MANNER | OTHERS |
|------|------------|----------|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|--------|-----------|---------|----------------------|---------|--------|--------|
| 1891 | 6(%)       | 1(%)     | 1(%)            | 2(%)                | 1.5(%)          | 29.6(%)           | 4(%)                | 0.5(%) | 0.5(%)    | 31.1(%) | 0.5(%)               | 25.5(%) | 0(%)   | 1.5(%) |
| 1892 | 6.8        | 1.7      | 4.3             | 2.6                 | 3.5             | 23.4              | 0.4                 | 0.9    | 0.9       | 31.9    | 0.4                  | 22.1    | 0.4    | 0.9    |
| 1893 | 8.5        | 0.4      | 2.3             | 5.4                 | 7               | 20.9              | 0.8                 | 0      | 0         | 33.3    | 0                    | 19.4    | 0.4    | 2.4    |
| 1894 | 10         | 1        | 5.5             | 3.5                 | 8.1             | 19.9              | 2.3                 | 2.1    | 1.7       | 23.8    | 1.7                  | 17.5    | 1      | 1      |
| 1895 | 11.9       | 0.7      | 4.5             | 4.8                 | 7.6             | 20.5              | 4.8                 | 0.3    | 0.3       | 25      | 0.7                  | 17.5    | 0.7    | 1.3    |
| 1896 | 7.9        | 1.1      | 8.6             | 1.8                 | 6.1             | 22.1              | 4.3                 | 1.4    | 0.8       | 24.2    | 1.1                  | 18.4    | 1.1    | 1.4    |
| 1897 | 12.9       | 1.6      | 9.3             | 2.8                 | 8.7             | 18                | 5.3                 | 3.7    | 0.9       | 21      | 1.8                  | 11.8    | 1.6    | 2.4    |
| 1898 | 11         | 0.5      | 12.5            | 2.6                 | 13.3            | 16.2              | 5.9                 | 2.1    | 0.5       | 17.4    | 1.3                  | 12.8    | 0.5    | 2.6    |
| 1899 | 8.3        | 4        | 5.5             | 1.5                 | 12.1            | 26.2              | 6.9                 | 6.9    | 0.6       | 15      | 1                    | 106     | 4      | 2.4    |
| 1900 | 4.7        | 1.3      | 3.4             | 0.4                 | 12.6            | 30.6              | 7.5                 | 7.9    | 0.4       | 16.6    | 0.9                  | 11.1    | 1.3    | 1.3    |
| 1901 | 9          | 2        | 5.3             | 1.7                 | 9.9             | 24                | 5.7                 | 11.3   | 1.5       | 14.6    | 0.4                  | 11.3    | 2      | 2.7    |
| 1902 | 7.4        | 2        | 3.5             | 1.3                 | 11.1            | 28.4              | 10.9                | 8      | 1.1       | 15.2    | 0.2                  | 11.5    | 2      | 1.7    |
| 1903 | 10         | 1.5      | 13.9            | 1.2                 | 10.8            | 16.8              | 2.9                 | 2.7    | 0.3       | 28.7    | 0.2                  | 8       | 1.5    | 1.3    |
| 1904 | 3.3        | 0.3      | 10.4            | 2.1                 | 8.3             | 13.8              | 6                   | 1.3    | 1         | 25.7    | 13.2                 | 6.5     | 0.3    | 1.1    |
| 1905 | 12.4       | 0.4      | 9.3             | 1.4                 | 14.2            | 17                | 4                   | 2.8    | 0.9       | 21.3    | 13.9                 | 2.2     | 0.4    | 1.8    |

- i The Auckland Weekly News was first published on 28<sup>th</sup> Nov 1864. The ladies' column first appeared on 2<sup>nd</sup> Dec, 1865. The column 'For the Ladies' was composed of some articles such as poetry, fashion, household hints, and so on. Those topics had changed according to social concern.
- ii According to Eric Olssen et al, 'the cults of domesticity and true womanhood initially appealed most to the urban upper-middle class but were soon accepted by the middle classes generally and by many in the working classes' [Olssen and Levesque 1978:7].
- iii Almost all the New Zealand women who were publicly active before World War 1 were members of the Union, which was the only national organization of women, and it laid the basis for women's organizations in this country.[Bunkle 1980]
- iv Studies of citizenship and gender have focused on the ways in which the social rights of citizenship were often unequally distributed by social welfare regimes which took the male bread winner as the model citizen[Hernes,1987].
- v Example for Canterbury Women's Institute[Olssen1981, Tennant 1986]
- vi Pakeha are New Zealanders of British and other European origin.



- vii Plunket society is an organization which provides health services to babies and young children. It was held in 1907 by Frederick Turby King to support mothers and children in a range of development, health and wellbeing of children for the future health of the nation.
- viii Throughout the late 1980s and the early 1990s the radical alterations in New Zealand's fiscal and social policies occurred. Abolition of The Family Allowances Act symbolized the end of New Zealand's Welfare State.

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Auckland Weekly News (1868-1905)