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Japan's 1968: A Collective Reaction to Rapid Economic Growth in an Age of Turmoil 日本の1968　混乱期の高度成長への共同体的反応

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Tōmatsu Shōmei, *Untitled* from the *Protest Series*, 1969.

Introduction

In 1967, 1968, and 1969, Japan was wracked by student uprisings that ultimately forced the closure of university campuses nationwide. Japan's student uprisings more or less coincided with the so-called "Global Revolutions of 1968" raging around the world, including (among many others) civil rights and anti-Vietnam War protests in the United States, the Cultural Revolution in China, large uprisings of students and workers in France and Germany, and the "Prague Spring" in Czechoslovakia. Recent research on 1968 has focused on the common characteristics and the mutually reinforcing or convergent aspects of these many uprisings all around the world.[i] This has also been the major insight offered by recent research on the Japanese experience of 1968 published in English.[ii]

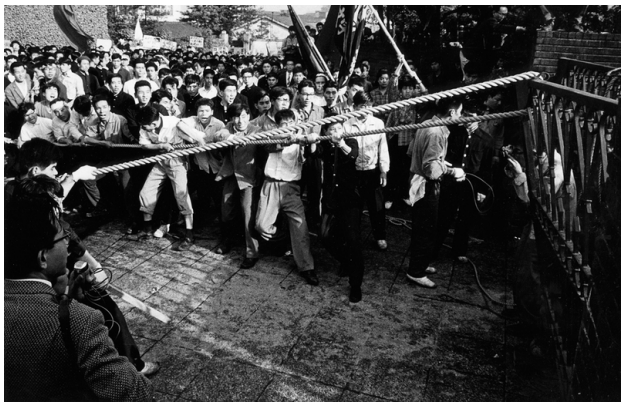
While it has become popular, however, to seek out underlying similarities between diverse social movements occurring around the world in and around the year 1968, especially within the context of global Cold War tensions, there remains value in investigating the ways these social movements were grounded in their own local social, political, and economic contexts. Accordingly, this article examines "Japan's 1968" within the context of Japan. This is by no means a claim of Japanese "uniqueness" or "exceptionalism." Nevertheless, Japan was in a somewhat unusual situation in 1968, as a rapidly Westernizing Asian nation in the midst of what was, at the time, unprecedented high-speed growth. A similar process of high speed industrialization and rapid social change would occur in nations such as South Korea and Taiwan in the 1980s and 1990s, and is taking place in places like China, Thailand, and India today, with Japan's experience in the 1960s often viewed as a model or precursor. This article is an effort to examine how a non-Western society reacted to rapid economic growth from the point of view of a historian, including political, economic, and demographic perspectives.

After providing a brief overview of Japan's late-sixties student rebellion and examining causes and contributing factors both inside and outside of Japan, I explore the ways in which Japan's 1968 uprisings differed subtly yet tellingly from those of other nations, including

their disdain for global late-sixties counterculture, their apolitical and inward-facing ethos of "endless self-negation," their moralistic, rather than morally relativist, tendencies, and their retrograde treatment of minorities and female activists. Ultimately, this essay situates Japan's experience of the 1968 global moment within the societal contradictions and rapid change brought about by Japan's unprecedented economic growth at that time.

Outline of the Student Uprisings

The story of Japan's 1968 student uprisings begins in 1960. That year, a broad-based popular movement to prevent ratification of the US-Japan Security Treaty (abbreviated "Anpo" in Japanese) was widely viewed as having brought Japan to the brink of revolution, but also precipitated the collapse of the existing Japanese student movement. The vanguard of the student protestors who participated in anti-Security Treaty movement in 1960 was the "Bund," a "new left" organization founded by radical students who had broken away from the Japanese Communist Party (JCP), and assumed control of Zengakuren (short for *zen nihon gakusei jichikai sō rengō*, the "All-Japan League of Student Governments"). In the aftermath of the 1960 struggle, which ultimately failed to block the Security Treaty, the nationwide Zengakuren organization split into numerous warring factions, known as "sects" (*sekuto*), which each established their own "Zengakuren." However, the numerous rival Zengakurens were relatively small in size, ranging from a few hundred to at most a few thousand core members, and their capacity to mobilize large numbers of students for protests continued to decline over the first half of the 1960s.



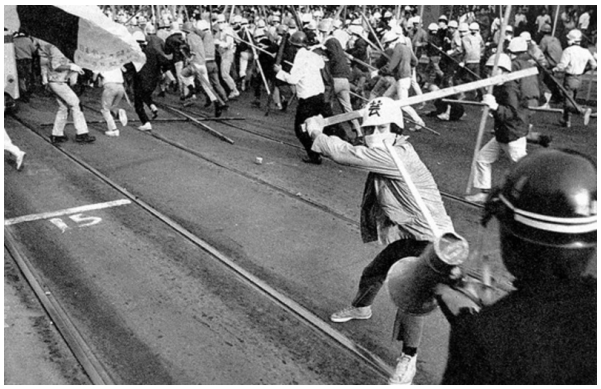
May 20, 1960
June 3, 1960
Hamada Hiroshi, *Ikari to kanashimi no kiroku* (A Record of Rage and Grief).

Meanwhile Japan's extraordinary economic growth in the 1960s did much to alleviate poverty, and the nation was well on its way to becoming a mass society. These factors, as well as news of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution and the oppression of human rights in the Soviet Union, increasingly muted the appeal of Marxism. The influence of the Socialist Party of Japan (SPJ), which had seen tremendous growth in the fifties, began to wane, and an attitude of political apathy became widespread among Japanese students. When a 1965 poll asked students what they enjoyed most about college life, the most popular response was "club activities and personal hobbies," and only one percent answered, "participating in student movements."[iii] In 1964, when sects attempted

to protest the entry of a US nuclear submarine into the port at Yokosuka, only a few hundred students showed up.

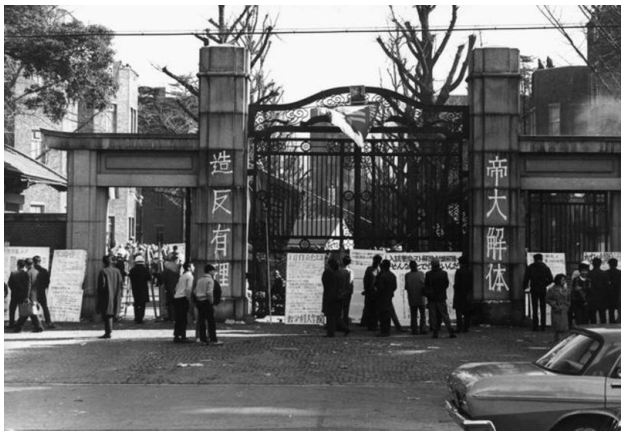
Shinjuku Underground Plaza, July, 1969.

The 1968 student uprising started suddenly. In October 1967, a small group of sect activists clashed with police near Tokyo's Haneda Airport, in an effort to prevent Prime Minister Satō Eisaku from traveling to South Vietnam. Students wearing plastic construction helmets and wielding two-by-fours overpowered lightly armed police. Images of the violent confrontation, in which one student activist was killed, were broadcast on national television news programs in vivid color, at a time when color televisions had only recently become widespread. Younger students and workers who had missed out on the 1960 protests were enthralled by the heroic struggle they witnessed on their televisions and the recently moribund Zengakuren sects saw a surge in membership and participation. By October 1968, tens of thousands of sect sympathizers would ransack Shinjuku Station in central Tokyo, in what was later remembered as the "Shinjuku Riot" (*Shinjuku sōran jiken*).



Watanabe Hitomi, Zengakuren protest, 1968–9.

In June 1968, students at the University of Tokyo, Japan's most elite university, and Nihon University, the largest institution of higher learning, with approximately one-tenth of Japan's total university student population, established Zenkyōtō (short for *zengaku kyōtō kaigi*; "All-Campus Joint Struggle Councils").[iv] Armed with hard hats and two-by-fours, they seized and barricaded their campuses against police intrusion. Zenkyōtō was independent from the sects and open to any willing participant, regardless of ideological affiliation. The barricaded universities were declared "liberated zones," and the image of students resisting police in the name of greater academic and personal freedom initially elicited sympathetic coverage from the Japanese media. From mid-1968 through early 1969 campus occupations, collectively remembered as the "Zenkyōtō movement," spread to hundreds of universities and thousands of high schools nationwide.



University of Tokyo, November 22, 1968.
University of Tokyo main gate graffiti: "Rebellion is rational," after Mao Zedong; "dismantle Imperial University."

The exact goals of this "Zenkyōtō movement" are difficult to pin down. The term "Zenkyōtō" originally referred to separate coalitions of groups within each university when the movement started at the University of Tokyo and Nippon University in 1968. In other words, each university had its own separate "Zenkyōtō" which sought to reform specific institutions within that university, and there was little sense that the various Zenkyōtō were connected as part of a larger movement. At this early stage, many students who were not interested in domestic or international policy participated to improve their own situation within their own university. However, as Zenkyōtō began to appear on dozens of campuses around Japan, various New Left groups tried to reconstrue these local protest groups as a part of a nationwide movement with broader political goals, such as opposing the Vietnam War, the US-Japan Security Treaty, and the conservative Japanese government, or fomenting a Marxist revolution. When we examine the flyers produced by the many Zenkyōtō over time, whereas early flyers demanded only "reform" or "democracy" within each university, later flyers increasingly focused purely on broader political issues. This was a natural transition for some segments of the movement, because anti-Vietnam War and anti-Security Treaty sentiment was strong among Japanese people at that time (polls from the time showed that over 80 percent of Japanese people opposed US policy in Vietnam). Accordingly, some student activists welcomed a turn toward radicalism and revolutionary slogans. However as time passed, other students increasingly dropped out of the movement amidst growing resentment toward perceived manipulation by New Left groups.

University of Tokyo, suppression of student occupation, January 18–19, 1969.

The precise number of students who participated in the Zenkyōtō movement is ultimately unknowable. According to a wide variety of accounts, however, even in universities-the epicenters of the movement-activists and passive supporters represented no more than 20 percent of the total student population. The other 80 percent were either indifferent or opposed to the movement. At the time, Japan's college matriculation rate was around 20 percent, meaning that no more than four percent of the nation's late-teens and early-twenty-somethings (approximately 300,000 students) participated in the movement or supported it.

Student activity began to wane in 1969, after the government drafted draconian new legislation, euphemistically known as the "university management law," granting police much greater authority to crack down on campus disturbances. Meanwhile, the police developed more effective countermeasures for dealing with two-by-four-wielding students. By late 1969, the vast majority of barricades at universities and high schools throughout Japan had been demolished, and sect-instigated street demonstrations had been almost entirely suppressed.

The sects and radical students throughout Japan had long dreamed of repeating the 1960 Anpo struggle in 1970, when the government would debate renewal of the Security Treaty following the expiry of its initial 10-year term. Activists anticipated another mass movement and-with luck-a full-scale revolution. However, by 1970, the student movement had been almost entirely suppressed by the police. Moreover, by now the once-admired radical student movement increasingly offended the sensibilities of the general public. The Japanese economy was growing around 10 percent per year. While some problems, such industrial pollution, persisted, the Japanese populace was nevertheless increasingly satisfied with its standard of living. In the December 1969 general election the conservative ruling party (the Liberal Democratic Party, or LDP) secured a major victory, whereas the leftist SPJ suffered a crushing repudiation, losing 51 of its 141 seats in the Diet.

In June 1970 the Security Treaty was renewed without incident, and most students returned to a state of political apathy. A few extremists who formed the "Red Army Faction" (*sekigun-ha*) and advocated armed revolution to counter the increasingly well-equipped police faced relentless suppression. Stymied in Japan, some members hijacked a jetliner and flew to North Korea, while others decamped to the Middle East, where they fought alongside Palestinian guerillas. Those who remained in Japan joined

forces with other armed sects to form the United Red Army (*rengō sekigun*). In February 1972, 12 members were murdered in a bloody purge of the group's ranks at a secret mountain hideout. After a dramatic armed standoff with police, broadcast live on national television, the surviving members surrendered. The grisly incident was a tremendous shock to the few remaining student activists, and thereafter the student movement fell into total stagnation.

Asama Sansō incident, February 19-28, 1972.

Given the basic outline of Japan's 1968 uprisings above, two questions beg our consideration. First, in the midst of unprecedented economic growth and the development of a mass society in Japan, why did such a large-scale student uprising suddenly break out? And second, what, if anything, differentiated the Japanese student revolution from those in other nations around the world in 1968?[v]

Causes of the Student Uprising

Japan's student uprising arose in response to economic growth itself, and the mass-consumption society that suddenly emerged as a result. In other words, the student rebellion can be viewed as a kind of mass reaction to rapid economic growth. Let us examine the factors that conditioned this response, starting with the transformations wrought upon Japanese society by rapid economic growth, and moving on to further changes precipitated by the student uprising itself.

Urban Conditions and the Increase in Independent Voters

Historically, farmers, small businessmen, and neighborhood associations comprised the LDP voter base, whereas the SPJ and JCP relied on students and labor unionists. However, as economic growth and urbanization rapidly transformed Japanese society, individuals grew alienated from their original communities, precipitating a surge in independent voters with no strong party affiliation, especially among young city-dwellers.

According to a 1969 survey of members of the General Council of Trade Unions (abbreviated *Sōhyō* in Japanese), which was aligned with the SPJ from the immediate postwar through the 1980s, more than 40 percent of members aged 40 or older remained affiliated with the Socialist Party. In contrast, approximately 40 percent of the members under 40 considered themselves independent voters. Moreover, only ten percent of members in their twenties believed they could achieve political change by voting. This did not, however, mean that the other 90 percent had lost all interest in politics. In fact, 47 percent of members in their twenties supported the use of "direct action" tactics, such as sit-ins, demonstrations, and strikes.[vi] In other words, there was a marked polarization among young members. Around half seemed to have lost all interest in politics, while others, having lost faith in the electoral process, did not endorse traditional political parties but approved of direct action.

Underpinning this move toward direct action were the conditions faced by urban youth. Economic growth propelled large-scale migration from farming villages to the cities; in 1945, only 28 percent of Japan's population had

resided in cities, but by 1970, that figure reached 72 percent. An urbanization process that lasted a century in the United States was compressed into just 25 years in Japan. In 1962 Tokyo's population surpassed 10 million, and by 1968 its population density was 15,484 persons per square kilometer, greatly exceeding that of New York City (9,809 in 1967) or London (4,937 in 1969). According to a 1965 survey, 37 percent of Tokyoites lived in a space under five square meters per capita.[vii] A former Waseda University activist described student living conditions in 1966 as follows: "Most lived in rooms of three to four-and-a-half tatami mats. Needless to say, we had no household appliances like televisions or refrigerators."[viii]

The urban migration overwhelmingly consisted of youth. By 1965, 42 percent of Japan's urban population-and 47 percent of Tokyo's-was between 15 and 34 years of age.[ix] Moreover, since most of the migrants were male laborers, males exceeded females in urban centers such as Tokyo and Osaka by a wide margin.

Tōmatsu Shōmei, *Santōsha, Iwate Rikuchū Kawai Eki* (Third class car), 1959.

At the time, Japan was a developing nation, lacking in consumer goods and recreational facilities, and the US dollar was artificially pegged at a staggering 360 yen. In 1968, the average starting salary for a college graduate was 29,000 yen (around 80 dollars) per month, making travel abroad virtually impossible. In a 1968 survey asking participants what leisure activities they had engaged in within the last three months, the top four answers were reading, sewing (among women), drinking at home, and theater-going.[x]

In short, 1960s Tokyo witnessed a tremendous growth in the number of youths politically unaffiliated and alienated from their old communities, confined in cramped living quarters, and possessed of a great deal of free time.

At sect-led demonstrations, hordes of unaffiliated onlookers gathered to hurl taunts and stones at the police. This was not because they sympathized with the students' cause. Rather, many were depressed by their still unfamiliar urban lives and sought a form of entertainment that would not cost money. The *Mainichi Shimbun* reported that during an April 1968 protest against construction of a US army hospital, the youthful crowd chanted "This is fun!" while hurling rocks at police.[xi] In the October 1968 Shinjuku Riot, it was not sect students but crowds of factory workers, restaurant clerks, and white-collar workers who engaged in the most destructive acts; in fact, sect students attempted to curb this behavior. Violent clashes with police had become a form of entertainment. High school students interviewed in the magazine *Shokun* in 1969 reported that, ignoring ideology, they joined the protests of whichever sects seemed more likely to engage in violence.[xii]

Tōmatsu Shōmei, *Young Power 3* from *Tōkyō, Shinjuku*, 1969.

"*Entrance Exam Wars*" *and Campus Discontent*

Rapid economic growth was accompanied by dramatic increases in high school and university enrollment. The 1960 national high school matriculation rate was 57 percent, but exceeded 90 percent in Tokyo. The college matriculation rate soared from 10.3 percent in 1960 to 37.8 percent by 1975. The number of universities also surged, from 71 public and 116 private universities in 1952, to 74 public and an astounding 258 private universities by 1967. Moreover, since the postwar "baby boom" generation was approximately 20 percent larger than the preceding generation, university enrollments expanded even more than the increased matriculation rate alone would suggest.

The result was fierce academic competition dubbed "entrance exam wars" (*juken sensō*). A 1964 survey found that 64 percent of junior high schools offered supplemental test preparation courses on top of six hours of regular classes, with some schools administering as many as 320 practice tests a year. Schools increasingly sorted students into different classes based on testing ability. Media interviews with middle school students yielded quotations such as, "My nerves are completely shot from prepping for exams day and night," and "I haven't ever really spoken to my classmates about anything other than exams."[xiii]

It was such conditions that provided the context for rebellion against professors and occupation of the universities in the form of the Zenkyōtō movement. A Zenkyōtō activist wrote, "Students hurled their cumulative hatred for the many teachers who had administered their lives in the name of education ever since grade school at their professors."[xiv]

As youths, these students prepared for exams anticipating an idyllic university life ahead. Having heard of the close relationships between professors and students that had characterized earlier times, when university students had been members of a tiny elite, they studied hard, looking forward to a future appropriate for elites. But these expectations were betrayed. With university enrollments soaring, professors used microphones to lecture to hundreds of students in packed auditoriums. Moreover, as new universities sprouted up across Japan, qualified instructors were in short supply. The inadequate lectures that resulted were denounced as "mass-

produced lectures" (*masu-puro kōgi*), and over-enrolled universities, as "mammoth universities" (*manmosu daigaku*). In 1966 the student newspaper of Chūō University, a noted "mammoth university," calculated that there were no more than 0.5 square meters on campus per student.[xv]

With the economy booming, graduates had no trouble finding employment if they did not aim too high. However, the supply of elite jobs failed to keep up with the surge in university graduates. Whereas 43 percent of graduates secured office jobs in 1951, only 31 percent did so in 1967. On the other hand, graduates finding employment in sales rose from 3 percent to 19 percent in the same span. In 1968 a student activist wrote, "We all had high hopes when we entered university…but the product we received was extremely shoddy….The overwhelming increase in students has greatly diminished the social status of university graduates, and graduating from university no longer guarantees employment at a large company."[xvi] This kind of frustration became a major cause of the student uprising.

Rapid Modernization and Identity Crisis

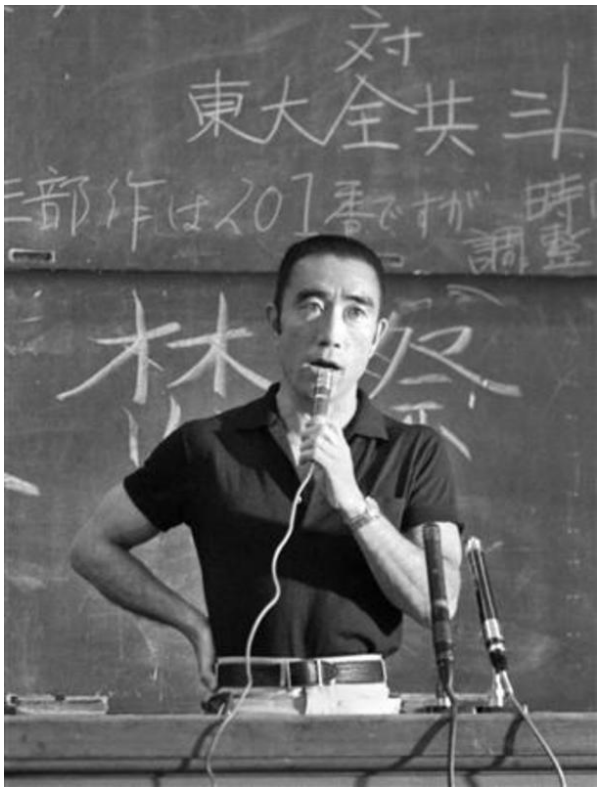
Rapid economic growth transformed Japan from a developing nation into a developed one. In 1948, per capita income was approximately $100 US dollars, compared to $1,269 in the United States and $91 in Sri Lanka. Yet by 1968, Japan surpassed West Germany to become the second largest economy in the Western world.[xvii] Japan's urban population exploded, and by 1965 the number of jobs in manufacturing surpassed those in agriculture, forestry, and fishing for the first time. Meanwhile, massive redevelopment of Tokyo and other cities ahead of the 1964 Tokyo Olympics drastically transformed the urban lived environment.

Students who grew up when Japan was still a developing nation felt overwhelmed by these transformations. A student from Okayama prefecture who entered the University of Tokyo in 1966 wrote that Tokyo's massive concrete buildings and overpasses struck him as utterly inhuman. He recalled experiencing an "existential crisis" he believed was exceedingly common among his generation. Modern urban society struck students as "unfeeling" and "headed in the wrong direction," he wrote, which was why many students of his generation turned to existential philosophy, absurdist theater, and Marxist theories of alienation.[xviii]

To cope with enlarged enrollments, universities erected massive concrete complexes, in which students raised in farming villages and accustomed to rural landscapes and intimate interpersonal relationships experienced a profound a sense of alienation. A student activist wrote in 1968, "The moment you enter the university…you lose your individual identity and become just another face in the crowd. Spending every day in these modern buildings is indescribably dehumanizing."[xix]

Meanwhile, the sudden plunge into consumer society provoked feelings of guilt and anxiety. In the 1960s, rural Japanese were still raised according to a prewar ideology emphasizing conservation and thrift. But students now found themselves in a new, urban culture of mass production and mass consumption on an unprecedented scale. One historian recalled being a young housewife at the time: "Suddenly we were getting richer and richer. We could buy washing machines and TVs, but we felt extremely uneasy. We kept thinking, is this okay? Is this really okay?"[xx] In a 1969 leaflet, Waseda's Zenkyōtō declared their "hatred for this bloated consumerist society."[xxi] A former Kyoto University dean reminisced, "Wealth was a source of tremendous stress at that time. It was wholly new to us." He speculated that "the anxieties we felt when we suddenly no longer had to endure poverty" helped spur the student uprisings.[xxii]

These feelings of anxiety, together with dissatisfaction with universities, fostered criticism of capitalism and modernization as the forces responsible for disturbing social transformations. Marxist theory was read anew, despite the decline in support for traditional Marxist political parties. Anti-modernity, in the forms of romanticism and absurdist theater, gained popularity, and folklorists garnered fame for collecting farming village tales. Right-wing novelist Mishima Yukio, who extolled antiquated ideals of *bushidō* and prewar Japancentrism, also became popular among Zenkyōtō students, despite the fact that their political leanings were in opposition to Mishima's.



Mishima Yukio speaking to Zenkyōtō at University of Tokyo, May 13, 1969.

While some of the anxieties caused by Japan's unprecedented economic growth may have been unique to the Japanese student movement, Japanese students shared an overarching dissatisfaction with modern society found in many developed nations at the time. Feelings of isolation and alienation proliferated, and as students came to understand that they would most likely not find the jobs they hoped for, many were afflicted with identity crises and a sense of hopelessness.

Many of these students sought fulfilment in direct action such as demonstrations and occupations. A Tama Art University student despaired, "The bright future that I had imagined for myself was gone." She joined Zenkyōtō "seeking a breakthrough for self-expression."[xxiii] Similarly, a Nihon University Zenkyōtō member wrote: "Life is empty and the future is hopeless. We wear helmets, carry wooden sticks, and confront death. At least in that moment, one should experience some form of being alive."[xxiv]

Takahashi Akira, a sociologist studying student activism, wrote in 1968: "Today's left-wing students obsessively ask existential questions....[Their movement is,] in addition to being an expression of the youth identity crisis, an earnest (albeit naïve) attempt to grasp the social crisis."[xxv] One Zenkyōtō activist wrote that "the sense of hopelessness resulting from the knowledge that, in exchange for a stable material lifestyle, we would all leave academia to become cogs in the industrial machine" forced her to ask: "What am I?" It was this self-doubt, she recalls, that led her to join the movement.[xxvi]

This mentality differed from that of the students participating in the Anpo struggle ten years earlier, who felt no unease due to rapid economic growth, nor were driven to action by a sense of alienation. These students, born in the late thirties, had experienced the war as children. They grew up in the period of starvation and widespread chaos that followed

Japan's defeat, and it was these experiences that motivated them. The head of Meiji University's student association wrote, "I was born in 1938 and grew up in a time when we had nothing. After the war, I experienced as much hunger as I could bear. [If the treaty passed] I thought that we would return to those days. This fear motivated me to join the anti-Anpo struggle. I had had enough of war and hunger."[xxvii]

By contrast, activists who battled police at Haneda Airport in 1967 proclaimed: "We are showing the police we exist. We are showing them that we are human." A former activist from the 1960 struggle commented, "They put extreme emphasis on their being there at that moment. I think that was the first time the word 'existence' (*jitsuzon*) was used in a speech at a rally."[xxviii] The attitudes of these two generations, divided by sudden economic growth, differed tremendously.

Characteristics Particular to the Japanese Student Uprising

Compared to contemporaneous student uprisings in developed nations, the Japanese uprisings occurred within a still largely rural nation that was rapidly transforming into a developed nation with an advanced industrial economy and mass-consumption society. Memories of growing up in a very different Japan still deeply colored students' mentalities. Let us examine the divergent characteristics of the Japanese student uprising engendered by this particular context.

Moralistic Tendencies and "Self-Negation"

A major source of student dissatisfaction with universities was the betrayal of their expectations of what a university should be, derived from an earlier era when enrollments had been much lower. Strongly influenced by the German educational doctrines of the Humboldt model, Japanese universities had originally been intended as bastions of truth and learning, removed from the concerns of the mundane world.

In 1968 one Zenkyōtō activist wrote, "If students are diligent in their studies, it should be a certainty that they won't be poisoned by industrial society. Nowadays, this certainty is much less certain.…Our fight is a struggle to smash the academic-industrial complex."[xxix] Another Zenkyōtō activist angrily recalled, "Rather than places for research, universities had become nothing but preparatory schools for entering the workplace, just as high schools had become preparatory schools for university entrance exams.…I lost faith in universities that bowed only to the demands of government and big business."[xxx] Criticism of this "academic-industrial complex" was a major theme of the Japanese student movement. Their mentality was a blend of Marxist critical logic and a conservative reaction to industrial society.

In 1966, Waseda University was occupied and barricaded in a precursor to the Zenkyōtō movement. A poet who visited students behind the barricades observed, "Given that most graduates would go on to secure full-time employment, universities think they might as well try to produce the kinds of graduates the business world desires. The students' reaction to this, in their nostalgia for the university as a 'walled garden of truth,' seems to be genuine. So, in a certain sense, it is the students who are being conservative."[xxxi]

In 1968, behind the barricades, students dissatisfied with "mass-produced" lectures invited distinguished guest speakers and held independently-run classes. One Nihon University Zenkyōtō member claimed that thanks to these independent lectures, students felt as if they were "taking real university courses for the first time;" graffiti scrawled on his school's walls proclaimed: "*Now* we are students."[xxxii]

Graffiti at Nihon University, "I fight for freedom"; "Nihon University Liberated Zone Public Toilet."

The strategy of barricading and occupying universities relied on a longstanding image of universities being at a monastic remove from the everyday world-autonomous zones where the police and other external forces should not intervene. Fearing a backlash from the public and the university professoriat, police initially refrained from entering the barricaded campuses, and the student occupations of Tokyo and Nihon Universities lasted more than six months.

The fundamentally conservative idea that universities should not be "poisoned by industrial society" was rarely made explicit, but instead expressed in a contemporary idiom. One manifestation of this was Marxist critiques of industrial society. Another was the criticism of universities as sites of soulless mass production. In his 1968 study, Takahashi Akira observed students condemning the universities as "a subcontracted mechanism in service to the forces contributing to the manpower policies of imperialistic monopoly-capitalists," or even "finishing schools for human robots."[xxxiii]

Students also opposed undemocratic university administrations. At the University of Tokyo in those days, professors exercised absolute authority over labs, departments, and research institutes, forcing postgraduate and medical students into unpaid labor; opposition to this state of affairs precipitated the initial uprising there. Meanwhile at Nihon University, an autocratic chief executive monopolized administrative decisions, not only suppressing students' views, but also, it was learned, supervising a massive tuition embezzlement scheme. Reacting to these issues, students initially rose up to demand greater transparency in university accounting and democratization of university administration. One activist recalls, "Ideology did not motivate us, nor did any particular theory. Arguments came after the fact. Rather, our main motivation was frustration that existing systems and conventions did not suit the realities of postwar life."[xxxiv]

Having spent their earliest years prior to rapid economic growth, students were unsettled by the sudden emergence of a mass-consumption economy. At the same time, they opposed authoritarianism, as befitted the first generation to receive the "democratic education" installed by the US occupation. As an older generation of professors and administrators exercised authoritarian control, and as universities transformed into employment preparation schools, the students' ambivalent feelings fostered two seemingly contradictory desires. On one hand, they sought to overthrow older generations in what amounted to a revolution; on the other hand, they embraced an essentially conservative mentality that sought to preserve the university from the encroachment of industrial capitalism. The ideology that initially seemed most capable of encompassing these two desires was Marxism. The strand of Marxism found in other developed nations, whereby theories of alienation produced critiques of modern society, was of course also present in Japan. But in Japan, the Marxist revival was abetted by its utility in expressing student ambivalence.

Since this ambivalence was deep-rooted, the Japanese student uprising did not become as conservative as the right-wing Hindu movement in India today, nor did it result in a technocratic revolution in university management. Students disavowed both conservative and progressive positions, instead rejecting society in all its forms. This rejection, combined with anxiety over the dislocations of rapid economic growth, led students to take an ethical stance that has been dubbed existentialist.

The student protests that launched the Zenkyōtō movement in 1966 and 1967 made many concrete demands, including, for example, that tuition fees be lowered. But from the 1968 University of Tokyo uprising onward, students seemed far less interested in specific demands than in fighting for vaguely-defined goals such as "socialist revolution" or "university dissolution" that were convenient stand-ins for a barely-articulated process of self-formation. When asked what kind of university Zenkyōtō hoped to establish, one member replied, "All we want is the battle itself."[xxxv] At the University of Tokyo and elsewhere, Zenkyōtō activists repeatedly rejected any opportunity for compromise, with the result that they continued fighting resolutely until they were totally defeated and the police demolished their barricades.

Protest on Hakusan-dōri, September 9, 1968.

When a 1968 survey asked University of Tokyo students what they were fighting for, responses included: "asserting the self," 41.7 percent; "self-transformation," 31.7 percent; "dismantling the current university structure," 27.2 percent; "pursuing fundamental thought," 25.6 percent; "rejection of the system," 25 percent. Concrete goals for improving the university system were scorned as "reformism" (*kairyōshugi*) and "settling for small gains" (*monotorishugi*). When University of Tokyo Zenkyōtō members were asked about their career ambitions, academic researcher was the most popular response, while government official or business owner were among the least; less than 1 percent wanted to enter politics.[xxxvi] Here we find a mix of a radicalism that sought to repudiate all existing social structures, an ethics of self-restraint that rejected consumer desires and real-world prestige in favor of self-cultivation and the pursuit of knowledge, and a desire for social systems that emphasized individual self-worth.

The catchphrase "self-negation" (*jiko hitei*) caught on at the University of Tokyo and spread to campuses across the nation. "Self-transformation" had been a slogan amongst Marxists originally from the bourgeoisie, invoked to demonstrate shedding the past to be reborn as a member of the proletariat. For University of Tokyo students, elites who had fought their way through the "exam wars" to win a spot at Japan's loftiest educational institution, the term "self-negation" meant they had fully repented their past course and now sought to destroy the very university they had fought so hard to enter. In other words, they were rejecting a mode of existence whereby they would inexorably be sorted and slotted into allotted posts in a capitalist industrial society.

This doctrine of "self-negation" was reminiscent of the "aggressor consciousness" criticized by the Japanese anti-Vietnam War movement active around the same time. Anti-war

sentiment had remained strong throughout Japanese society since the end of the Asia-Pacific War, but what was innovative about the Japanese anti-Vietnam activists was their notion that all Japanese were "aggressors," given the economic benefits Japan was reaping from the Vietnam War. Many university students took part in an anti-Vietnam movement known as Beheiren, short for *Betonamu ni heiwa o! shimin rengō* ("Peace in Vietnam Citizens League"). One student member wrote in 1967, "When I consider how Japan's economy benefits from US Vietnam War procurements, I realize I am feasting on the blood of the Vietnamese….The anti-war movement is the only way I can apologize to the Vietnamese people."[xxxvii]

During this period US "special procurements" for the Vietnam War accounted for 10 to 20 percent of Japan's trade. These procurements were not as significant as the earlier Korean War procurements, which represented about sixty percent of Japan's trade at that time. But Japanese peace movements during the Korean War never targeted Japan's war profiteering, instead focusing solely on US and/or communist bloc aggression. The emphasis on self-identifying as an "aggressor" due to the benefits Japan received from the Vietnam War can be thought of as an expression of the students' moralism, a moralism arising from the confusion and guilt occasioned by high-speed economic growth and demanding endless flagellation and negation of a self that would otherwise be tempted to indulge in the pleasures of material prosperity.

As the student uprisings garnered nationwide attention, the movement largely retreated from its initial ascetic moralism; increasingly, activists openly courted mass-media celebrity and for some, the only goal became the ecstasy of battle itself. Japanese students were also greatly spurred on by news of other student uprisings around the world. One Waseda University Zenkyōtō member recalled, "We admired those movements, and we wanted to do something too. We only worried about justifications after we had taken over the campus."[xxxviii]

Counterculture and the Student Uprisings

The relationship between Japanese student activists and the counterculture differed from their counterparts in the US and elsewhere. Although Japanese students were certainly aware of student uprisings in other parts of the world and were conscious of being part of a shared, global revolutionary movement in 1968, their access to cultural trends was not instantaneous, and their reception of these trends was not universal.

In the mid-to-late sixties, Japanese students still had almost no opportunity to travel abroad. Governmental regulations had prevented Japanese people from freely traveling abroad without a government-approved purpose until 1964, and even after deregulation airfare and seafare remained prohibitively expensive.[xxxix] Thus for the most part Japanese students could learn about cultural trends in the West only through books or articles which had been translated into Japanese, and often poorly translated at that, due to insufficient knowledge on the part of translators about social and cultural contexts in the US or Europe. Inevitably, there were many misrepresentations and indigenizations within worldwide countercultural trends, even as students did embrace a feeling of "everyone living in the same 1968."

To take one example, consider how the Japanese student protestors related to rock music. As mentioned, the average starting salary for university graduates was only around $80 per month, but LP records cost ¥2,100 ($6), the cheapest Japanese-made guitars cost ¥18,000 ($50), and an imported American guitar cost more than ¥200,000 ($560). Owning records was uncommon, and few people even owned record players. Moreover, playing loud

music in cramped wooden apartments would result in immediate complaints from neighbors. Accordingly, young people had few chances to hear new records outside of music clubs in large cities.

In fact, most students had been raised on popular ballads by Japanese singers, and showed little interest in rock music. A noted music critic who was in middle school when the Beatles came to Japan in 1966 recalled that although a few classmates were fans, many students complained that the Beatles' long hair was ugly, or that the music was too loud and should not even be called music.[xl] Long hair did not become popular among youths until the final days of the student uprisings in 1970, and in 1968 students still had short hair.

A survey of baby boomers' musical tastes in the late sixties revealed the following preferences: folk music, 40 percent; ballads, 14 percent; pop, 12 percent; classical, 12 percent; jazz, 10 percent; and rock, 8 percent.[xli] There was also a lag between when songs first became popular in America and when they became popular in Japan; Japanese fans of Western music at the end of the sixties tended to prefer American tunes from the late fifties and early sixties.

Student activists often sang the socialist revolutionary song "The Internationale," construction-worker-turned-folk-singer Okabayashi Nobuyasu's song "Tomo yo" ("Hey Friend"), and the anthem of the American Civil Rights movement, "We Shall Overcome." Joan Baez performed the latter when Beheiren invited her to Japan in 1967, inspiring student members to stage a "folk guerilla" anti-war demonstration outside Shinjuku Station in 1969. The delay in American news and music trends reaching Japan helps explain why folk music associated with the American Civil Rights Movement of the early 1960s seems to have had more influence on the Japan student movement of 1968-69 than the more recent rock music favored by contemporaneous American anti-Vietnam protestors.

Okabayashi Nobuyasu, *Yamadani blues* & *Tomo yo* cover.
"Folk guerilla," Shinjuku Underground Plaza, July, 1969.

For Japanese student activists, influenced as they were by Marxism, folk music may have been tolerable, whereas rock was often thought of as overly commercial or hedonistic. Even many non-Marxists, feeling disoriented amidst the flood of consumer goods, abstained from a foreign musical culture that seemed overly hedonistic. One activist argued that playing a guitar in the occupied universities would have made what they were doing seem frivolous.[xlii] A student who later became a rock musician

remembered putting on rock tunes behind the barricades and being chastised for listening to "bourgeois" music.[xliii] Instead, student activists drew on a conservative ethics of self-restraint, and a popular slogan used to maintain order behind the barricades was "Revolutionary Army Discipline."

Because the student activists generally avoided cultural activities as petit bourgeois, a rift emerged between youth engaged with counterculture and the militant student movement. A rock musician *fūten* (literally "slacker," the Japanese equivalent of the Western "hippie") in charge of music for the independent theater troupe Tenjō Sajiki recalled, "[The activists] had no interest whatsoever in anti-war songs or folk music. You were either a *fūten* or a revolutionary, but not both."[xliv]

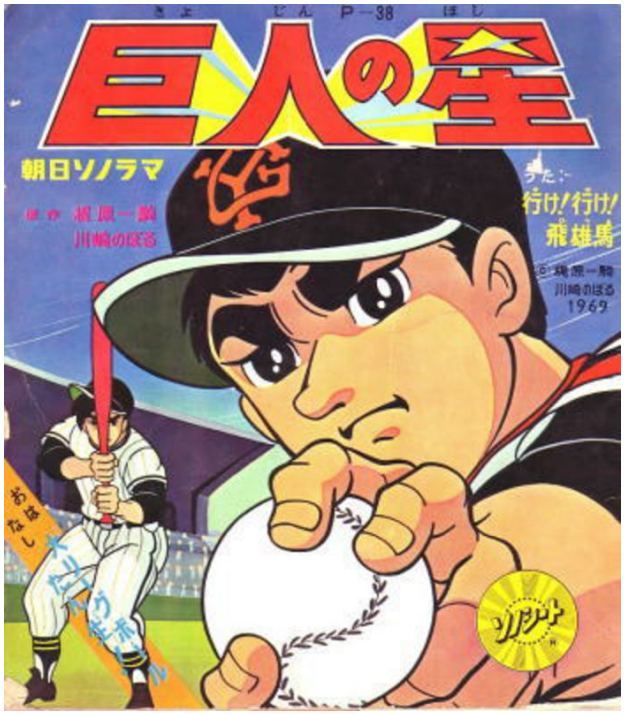
But as economic growth continued at rapid pace, the mentality of the activists began to change. A younger activist recalled, "The students two or so years older than me were mostly hopelessly straight-laced leftists, but if you looked at those a year younger, about half of them were leftists who had embraced consumerism….Going to demonstrations by day, they couldn't fall asleep at night without listening to some jazz. They were torn in both directions."[xlv] Towards the end of the Zenkyōtō movement, long hair became increasingly popular and rock concerts were held behind the barricades. Several members of the Red Army Faction of the early 1970s were members of rock bands.

One form of cultural production that Zenkyōtō students enjoyed was the Japanese *yakuza* (gangster) film. Ticket prices were low and the cinema was the most popular form of recreation in early postwar Japan. Similar to India today, Japan in the fifties led all nations in films produced per annum. The Zenkyōtō activists' fierce adoration of yakuza films likely resulted not only from the protagonists' being outlaws who defied the system, but also because the films accorded with the students' ascetic, anti-capitalist mentality. The typical yakuza film made at the time was set in modern-day Japan, but pitted an old-fashioned gangster who valued traditional morality against a new breed of yakuza more deeply involved with industrial capitalism. The typical story arc saw the old-school yakuza suffer various indignities before finally rising up to wreak bloody vengeance.

Manga comics were another subculture widely enjoyed by Japanese youth at this time. Because the baby boomers were so numerous, the manga industry catered to them from an early age, gradually adjusting comic book content as the boomers aged. This led to the rise of manga aimed at young adults, and the baby boomers comprised the first generation in Japan that did not stop reading comics in their late teens.

Because the widely held notion was that manga were for children, reports of elite university students reading manga behind the barricades were initially met with surprise. Manga characters were even used as mascots for the student uprisings, appearing on placards and flyers or even painted on activist's helmets, to identify their sect affiliation. The chairman of the Red Army Faction recalled, "We certainly read a lot of manga in our faction. We loved *Shōnen Magazine*, *Shōnen Sunday*, Shirato Sanpei's *Ninja Combat Manual*, and *Tomorrow's Joe*."[xlvi] Indeed, when the Red Army Faction carried out a hijacking in March 1970, the culprits declared, "We are Tomorrow's Joe!"

Tomorrow's Joe
Star of the Giants
Ninja Combat Manual



"Tomorrow's Joe" is a young boxer fighting against all odds, while the protagonist of *Star of the Giants*, also popular among activists, is a young baseball player; both are youths from impoverished backgrounds who undergo intense spiritual and physical training in order to win glory by triumphing over rich-kid rivals. Although these characters did strive for upward mobility, the rigorous asceticism emphasized in the manga recalled an ethics of self-restraint that was vanishing from Japan at the time, and the opponents toppled were from the bourgeoisie. Significantly, both characters continue their strenuous training even after achieving higher social status, pushing onward until their bodies are utterly broken, as if punishing themselves for betraying their roots through social mobility. This ethic appealed to the moralistic tendencies of the student activists, who spurned material accumulation and cherished to the end the ideal of endless self-negation.

Among the manga of the day, there were many stories of young heroes who confront and rejuvenate the decaying world of adults. Miyazaki Hayao, the famed animator born in 1941, offers an explanation for why this sort of

manga proliferated: "Once Japan lost the War, popular culture had to change. Since it was the adults who lost the War, we wouldn't stand for any more self-important adults.…Children, on the other hand, were pure-they bore no responsibility for the War-so we made them our protagonists."[xlvii]

These trends in manga and animation were well suited to the desires of the student activists. A member of the United Red Army recalled that one reason he joined the organization was his yearning to be like a TV cartoon hero, one of the "good guys."[xlviii] Immensely popular for similar reasons was Shirato Sanpei's manga *Ninja Combat Manual*, mentioned by the chair of the Red Army Faction, above, which depicted self-abnegating ninja heroes fighting alongside the peasant rebels of the Edo period.

Environmental Issues, Minorities, and Women

Around 1968, people in Japan began to pay attention to environmental concerns and minority issues, as well as to the women's liberation movement. The connections among these developments and the student uprisings warrant deeper investigation.

W. Eugene Smith, Minamata Bay, 1971.

In 1968 a Japanese court finally ruled that the cause of "Minamata disease" was mercury pollution, and environmental degradation became a major focus of popular attention and outrage. That same year, a resident Korean named Kwon Hyi-Ro took several hostages and engaged in a standoff with police, spurring debate about the status of minorities in Japan. But during the student uprisings in 1968 and '69, these concerns were for the most part left out of the discussion. There are three reasons for this.

The first is that the sects, grounded in Marxism, had no interest in these issues. According to environmental activist Ui Jun, when he appealed to sect leaders to take action on pollution, they responded, "Once we've taken over the state, all of those problems will sort themselves out."[xlix] From their orthodox Marxist standpoint, problems with the environment and the treatment of minorities stemmed from the contradictions of capitalism, and would naturally resolve under socialism. At the same time, sect leaders fretted that highlighting these issues without pushing for full-scale revolution would be nothing more than "reformism" that would help capitalism hold on longer.

The second reason is that the students were single-mindedly focused on the twin obsessions of endless self-negation and blocking renewal of the Security Treaty. The slogans and handbills of the students in '68 and '69 accordingly neglected the issues outlined above.

Finally, the students' attitudes towards women were antiquated and increasingly out-dated. Behind the barricades, women were relegated to ancillary roles, including cooking, serving tea, first-aid, and taking minutes during meetings. A member of the Red Army Faction recalled that the organization took no action when female activists were raped, and another member publicly stated, "Activist girls are all

dogfaces. If you're looking for a wife, stick to girls outside the organization."[lh]

This state of affairs changed dramatically after the Security Treaty was renewed. Having experienced defeat, the students desperately sought new issues to confront. It was in the immediate aftermath of the treaty's automatic renewal, in July 1970, that the Kaseitō (Chinese Youth Organization, a group for Japanese of Chinese descent) denounced the Japanese left wing for ignoring minority issues. Aroused by this, student activists increasingly organized around the problems faced by minorities, including resident Koreans, Okinawans, Ainu, and Burakumin. It was also at this time that some radical sect members began supporting Minamata disease sufferers and other pollution victims.

Much like long hair, sexual liberation arrived at the end of the student uprisings. There had been relatively little sexual activity within the barricaded universities, where discipline had been so highly prized. After Zenkyōtō's defeat, disheartened students sought salvation in romantic love, which led to Japanese sexual liberation. Birth control pills were not legal in Japan, however, and sex education and publications with information about sex were still underdeveloped, so there was a surge in pregnancies and abortions. By the early 1970s, the number of abortions approached two million per annum.[li]

The first woman's liberation (*ūman ribu* demonstration in Japan took place in October 1970, sparking similar activities across the nation. The organizers were female ex-members of sects and Zenkyōtō groups. They were furious both at the discrimination they had suffered within the student movement, and at being forced into abortions during the frenzied free love experimentation in the wake of the failed student uprisings. Up until June 1970, female student activists suffered in silence so as not to undermine the struggle against the Security Treaty. Once the treaty was renewed, they felt free to form their own movement.

Enoki Misako
Protest by Liberated Union of Women Against the Prohibition of Abortion and Demanding the Legalization of the Pill (Chūbiren).

Another reason these shifts began taking place around 1970 was that up until the late 1960s, student activists cherished the notion that large segments of the working class had been left behind by high-speed growth, and expected these workers would soon rise up in revolution in response to their oppression. But by 1970, it had become clear that virtually all segments of the Japanese working class were beneficiaries of economic growth. The LDP's overwhelming

victory in the December 1969 general election was in part a product of widespread consciousness of growing prosperity. That may also help to explain the fact that the labor unions did not join in the anti-treaty movement in 1970 after having done so in 1960. A September 1970 article in a new left journal conceded, "with very few exceptions, the only laborers excluded from reaching higher strata of the Japanese working class are the Burakumin, Okinawans, Koreans, and Chinese."[lii]

This also helped spur a shift in attention to minority issues. It suddenly seemed clear that Koreans, Chinese, and Okinawans had been sacrificed to Japan's modernization and war of aggression, and that ethnic Japanese had grown prosperous through the sacrifice of these minorities. Up until that point, the dominant historical narrative had been that the Japanese people had been victims of the Asia-Pacific War ending in the destruction by firebombing and atomic bombing of 66 major Japanese cities, and that responsibility for the calamitous defeat lay with politicians and military men. However, since the mid-1960s, when Japan became involved in supporting the US-led war in Vietnam, the view had been spreading that the Japanese people were implicated as aggressors in the Vietnam War. By 1970, this aggressor consciousness was increasingly being extended backward in time to encompass Japan's role as aggressor in World War II. The result was the rise of a new historical consciousness emphasizing Japan's war responsibility to challenge orthodox historical narratives.

For the student activists, holding all Japanese people-including workers and themselves-responsible for wartime aggression reflected their loss of faith in a non-revolutionary, increasingly prosperous working class, as well as with their mentality of self-negation born of a guilty conscience over Japan's prosperity. However, neonationalists in the 1990s would castigate this view of the war as self-flagellating, and by the early 2000s, with Japan's economy seemingly stagnant and attention increasingly drawn to domestic poverty and economic inequality, this view of history associated with progressives would lose much of its power.[liii]

After the Student Uprising

After reaching their peak in 1968 and 1969, the student uprisings died down by 1970. No reform of the university system was enacted, nor did any large-scale movement like Germany's Green Party emerge as a result of the movements. There are three reasons for this.

The first reason involves the moralistic tendencies of the Japanese student rebellion described above. The Zenkyōtō movement had championed the dismantling of the university and derided the idea of reforming the system as "incrementalism." Ultimately it brought no significant change in the universities. The general public supported the policies that the Nihon University Zenkyōtō fought for in the beginning, such as public release of university accounting records and democratization of university administration. However, as Zenkyōtō shifted toward a moralistic concern with "the formation of self-subjectivity" and "abolishing the established system," the public came to regard the student uprisings as an incomprehensible morass of childish rebelliousness. Failing to maintain the sympathy of average citizens, the movement was unable to transform the electoral politics of the time.

Among those who participated in the student uprisings, there were very few who placed any hope for the future on conventional forms of political activity, and virtually no one tried to enter party politics in order to create a political movement. A comparatively large number of protest participants wound up in academia or the mass media, where they played a role in

shaping intellectual currents by addressing issues such as discrimination faced by minorities and recognition of Japan's war responsibility, but this did not lead to a larger transformative social movement. Moreover, the discomfort baby boomers felt toward prosperity was not shared by younger generations raised in a wealthy society, and thus the student movement's critiques of capitalism and the academic-industrial complex failed to win the support of subsequent generations.

The second reason for the demise of the student uprisings and the lack of a viable successor movement was the continued Japanese economic boom. In the 1960s, the Japanese economy grew by more than 10 percent a year, with nearly full employment, a pattern extending even to student activists. With labor in such high demand, only a tiny handful of the most extreme activists were blacklisted by Japanese corporations, and an even smaller number of those were ultimately unable to find permanent jobs.

Even during the oil shocks of 1973 and 1979, the Japanese economy still grew at a rate of 4-5 percent each year, and full employment for young adults continued. The ruling LDP established a stable base of support that would last until the economy stagnated in the 1990s. While the problems of urban overcrowding and pollution drew attention, leading to LDP losses at the municipal level in some areas, this was not enough to drive it from power. Even when former student activists attempted to create activist civic organizations, these did not flourish under the favorable economic conditions of the time. This was a crucial difference between Japan and nations like Germany, where a surge in youth unemployment following the second oil shock of 1978-79 sparked criticism of society as a whole, abetting the rise of the Green Party.

The majority of those who were involved in the Japanese student movement of 1968 not only gained secure corporate employment, but also enjoyed stable households. Because the wages of male workers rose steadily, many Japanese women left farms and factories to became full-time homemakers. In 1970, the percentage of women in the workforce in Japan was greater than that of the United States, but after 1970, their number began to decline in Japan. In contrast, the percentage of women in the workforce rose in the US; in 1974, the percentage of female workers in the US surpassed that of Japan and the two nations continued to diverge in this regard for decades. While the 1970s witnessed a decrease in full-time homemakers and the "collapse" of the traditional nuclear family became a major issue in the US, Japan experienced an increase in full-time homemakers and the transition from extended families to nuclear families.

The third reason for the demise of the movement was the nature of the sects that sparked the 1968 uprisings. Most of the sects traced their origins to the 1950s, and the classical Marxism they embraced was a product of the late-fifties milieu in which they originated. This doctrinaire Marxism emerged during a time when the nation was impoverished by defeat in war and the destruction of its cities, conditions profoundly different from the prevailing realities of Japanese society after a decade of high-speed economic growth. The sects maintained a rigid, party-like structure that was incompatible with the kind of grassroots, egalitarian organization that was emerging around the world in the late 1960s. Nonetheless, in the short time that elapsed between the late 1950s and 1968, the sects maintained a powerful hold over the student movement in Japan.

The open-membership Zenkyōtō groups that had formed spontaneously throughout Japan in 1968 seemed more suited to the times, but they expended all of their energy in dramatic confrontations, and in every case their number and size shrank dramatically within a year of

formation. Thereafter, a majority of the students left the movement, and those who wished to continue on had no choice but to rejoin the sects. In this way, the sects recaptured large numbers of members all at once, despite remaining out-of-step with the times. The chance for less radical and more effective spontaneous activist organizations to emerge was lost.

In 1968, Japan still lacked a substantial urban middle class, and no powerful non-Marxist civic movement emerged other than Beheiren. After 1970 Beheiren pioneered a new grassroots-style activism, but civic movements never gained much traction, largely due to the unprecedented wealth and general sense of satisfaction produced by the surging Japanese economy. This situation in Japan was different from that in nations like the United States, where a wide variety of non-Marxist citizens groups and student groups (such as SNCC) emerged out of a much more robust and variegated anti-Vietnam War movement, as well the Civil Rights and womens' movements, which possessed no close analogues in Japan.

Of the reasons described above, the moralistic character of the Zenkyōtō movement and the weakness of civic activism seen in the nature of the sects reflect the fact that Japan was a late-developing nation rapidly becoming an advanced nation due to high-speed economic growth. Furthermore, Japan's economic prosperity in the 1970s and 1980s is also related to its late-development. The manufacturing sector in Japan surpassed the farming, forestry, and fishing sector for the first time in 1965, but the service sector did not overtake manufacturing until 1994. In contrast to the US and other nations where manufacturing rapidly declined from the 1970s onward, the strength of manufacturing in Japan in the 1970s and 1980s stabilized the economy and employment, reflecting Japan's late-development. If "1968" happened in the US at a time when the nation was transitioning from an industrialized society to a post-industrial society, it could be said that in Japan, "1968" occurred as the nation was navigating the transition from a lightly industrialized society to a hyper-industrialized society.

The 1972 United Red Army Incident took place precisely at the moment when the student movement had died down and the generation of students who participated in the uprisings had begun to find permanent employment. This incident, in which 12 members of the group were murdered by their comrades, shocked the nation. The reasons for the killings remained unclear for many years, but it seems that as the group was hiding from the police at a secret location in the mountains, some members, fearing that others might escape and reveal the location of their hideout, purged those they believed less stalwart than themselves. This, however, is not how the incident was initially portrayed and understood. Rather, it was widely believed that the purges related to the doctrine of self-negation and insufficient rejection of bourgeois lifestyle and materialistic temptations. Reports at the time especially emphasized the killing of a female member who was purportedly executed for wearing a ring, emblematic of materialistic temptations, and hence an inability to transcend a bourgeois lifestyle. People all around Japan felt that they had been given a glimpse of the grisly, inevitable endpoint of the ideology of "endless self-negation," and many concluded from this incident that it was simply no longer possible to oppose the realities of economic growth and material desire. Now that a majority of the student activists had entered permanent employment and had shouldered the burden of supporting Japan's economy, they encouraged the younger generations that followed them to conform to the reality of Japanese society, because after the United Red Army Incident, the alternative seemed to be going up into the mountains and killing each other. For many years thereafter, any activity that sounded like social activism was haunted by the specter of

this bloody incident, and the growth of new social movements in Japan, including new forms of NGOs that were forming in other nations at this time, was significantly impeded.

Theoretically speaking, the student uprising in Japan in 1968 was a kind of "reactive revolution" based on an old-fashioned common moral sense.[liv] In some ways, it had a similar character to food riots in the English countryside the 18th century as described by E.P. Thompson. According to Thompson, these riots were based on a common political culture rooted in traditional rights and relationships whereby English peasants had expected to pay a "fair price" for essential goods. The food rioters fiercely adhered to a sense of "moral economy," in which a traditional "fair price" was more important to the community than maintaining a "free" market price.[lv] Just as the English food riots erupted against a backdrop of a rapidly emerging market economy in the countryside, the student uprisings in Japan were a reaction to the process of transformation from a poor developing nation to a prosperous advanced nation against the backdrop of unprecedented economic growth.

Our investigation of this transition has suggested possible answers to a number of questions: How did high-speed economic growth-unprecedented at that time in Japanese, and indeed world, history-and the concomitant social transformations and dislocations influence contemporary Japanese culture and psychology? How can we explain the emergence of a vigorous anti-capitalist movement precisely at a moment when capitalism seemed to be enjoying one of its greatest triumphs? Do the answers to these questions also suggest insights into the contemporaneous student uprisings and hippie movements in the United States and Europe, or to the national liberation and socialist movements in developing nations? Why are young people in regions grappling with rapid economic growth and the spread of consumer culture today, such as India and the Middle East, drawn to the Hindu right-wing movement and Islamic fundamentalism? Up to this point, the only publications regarding the 1968 student uprising, even in Japan, have been nostalgic memoirs by people who participated in them, but it is now necessary to treat these uprisings as a historical phenomenon and an object of social scientific analysis.

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translation of *Tan'itsu minzoku shinwa no kigen: "Nihonjin" no jigazō no keifu* (Tokyo: Shinyōsha, 1995).

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Notes

[i] See, for example, Jeremi Suri, *Power and Protest: Global Revolution and the Rise of Detante* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), and the six articles published as part of "AHR Forum: The International 1968," parts I and II, *The American Historical Review* 114, no. 1 and 114, no. 2 (February 2009 and April 2009).

[ii] See, for example, William Marotti, "Japan 1968: The Performance of Violence and the Theater of Protest," *The American Historical Review* 114, no. 1 (February 2009), 97-135, and Takemasa Ando, "Transforming 'Everydayness': Japanese New Left Movements and the Meaning of their Direct Action," *Japanese Studies* 33, no. 1 (2013), 1-19.

[iii] Muramatsu Takashi, *Daigaku wa yureru*, (Mainichi Shimbunsha, 1967), 44.

[iv] As early as 1965, students at various universities throughout Japan had begun barricading campuses in the name of causes such as opposing tuition hikes. However, in the spring of 1968, these earlier protests were not widely known, and thus the 1968 protests at the University of Tokyo and Nihon University protests are remembered as the primary sparks for the wider Zenkyōtō movement.

[v] I have analyzed these points in much greater detail in my book-length study *1968* (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 2009).

[vi] Tachibana Takashi, "Ichiryū kigyō ni hansen josei ga kyūzō shite iru," *Gendai* (December 1969), 107-8.

[vii] Yūki Seigo, *Kaso/kamitsu* (San'ichi Shobō, 1970), 9, 13, 18, 70-73.

[viii] Miyazaki Manabu, *Toppamono* (Gentōsha Autorō Bunko, 1998), 1:121.

[ix] Uemura Tadashi, *Henbō suru shakai*, (Seibundō Shinkōsha, 1969), 82-83.

[x] Ibid., 119, 174.

[xi] "Gunshū, hageshiku tōseki," *Mainichi Shimbun*, April 3, 1968.

[xii] "Roundtable: 'Gebaruto-chan ki o tsukete'" *Shokun* (February 1970), 231.

[xiii] Muramatsu Takashi, *Shingaku no arashi* (Mainichi Shimbunsha, 1965), 113-14, 35.

[xiv] Amano Yasukazu, "'Sengo' hihan no undō to ronri," *Ryūdō* (April 1980), reproduced in Ogura Toshimaru, ed., *Komentaaru sengo 50-nen,* vol. 5: *Rōdō, shōhi, shakai undo* (Shakai Hyōronsha, 1995), 237.

[xv] "Kore de mo bengaku no ba ka, genjitsu o chokushi seyo," *Chūō Daigaku Shimbun*, September 13, 1966.

[xvi] Akiyama Katsuyuki and Aoki Tadashi, *Zengakuren wa nani o kangaeru ka* (Jiyū Kokuminsha, 1968), 121-26, 137-39.

[xvii] By 1968, Japan's per capita GDP had risen to $1,451 in nominal US dollars, compared to $4,491 in the United States and $3,422 in West Germany.

[xviii] Kosaka Shūhei, *Shisō to shite no zenkyōtō sedai* (Chikuma Shinsho, 2006), 35-6; Kosaka Shūhei, "'Hanran ron' to sono jidai" in Nagasaki Hiroshi, *Hanran ron* (Sairyūsha, 1991), 211-12.

[xix] Akiyama and Aoki, 125.

[xx] Ueno Chizuko and Kanō Mikiyo, "Feminizumu to bōryoku," *Bungakushi wo yomikaeru*, vol. 5: *Ribu to iu kakumei* (Inpakuto Shuppankai, 2003), 13.

[xxi] "Tōdai, Nichidai sensō ni rentai shi Waseda ni hangyaku no barikēdo o!", flyer dated February 5, 1967, reproduced in Tsumura Takashi, *Tamashii ni fureru kakumei* (Rain Shuppan, 1970), 228.

[xxii] Okuda Azuma, Okamoto Michio, and Ueyanagi Katsurō, "Kyōto Daigaku no funsō," in Ōsaki Hitoshi, "*Daigaku funsō*" *o kataru* (Yūshindō, 1991), 220.

[xxiii] Yonezu Tomoko, "Barikēdo o kugutte," in Onnatachi no Genzai o Tou Kai, ed., *Zenkyōtō kara ribu e* (Inpakuto Shuppankai, 1996), 121.

[xxiv] Sawanobori Makoto, "Barikēdo to wa nani ka," *Jōkyō* (March 1969), reproduced in *Zenkyōtō o yomu* (Jōkyō Shuppan, 1997), 96.

[xxv] Iida Momo, Kukuchi Masanori, Takahashi Akira, Nagai Yōnosuke, and Hagihara Nobutoshi, "Gakusei hangyaku" to gendai shakai no kōzō henka," *Chūō Kōron* (July 1968), 51.

[xxvi] Mori Setsuko, "'Otoko name onna' kara ribu e," in Onnatachi no Genzai o Tou Kai, ed., *Zenkyōtō kara ribu e* (Inpakuto Shuppankai, 1996), 164.

[xxvii] Ōtoshi Shigeyuki, *Anpo sedai 1000-nin no saigetsu* (Kōdansha, 1980), 226.

[xxviii] Fukuda Yoshiyuki, Shibata Shō, Noguchi Takehiko, Satō Makoto, Iida Momo, "Gakusei undō no shisō no jizokusei," *Chūō Kōron* (December 1967), 296.

[xxix] K.H., "Tatakai no sōryoku o motte," in Nihon Daigaku Bunri Gakubu Tōsō Iinkai Shokikyoku, ed., *Hangyaku no barikēdo* (San'ichi Shobō, 1991), 227.

[xxx] Uegaki Yasuhiro, *Heishitachi no Rengō Sekigun* (Sairyūsha, 2001), 33-4.

[xxxi] Sekine Hiroshi, "Sōdai barikēdo no shisō," *Gendai no Riron* (May 1966), 105-06.

[xxxii] K.M., "Ichi-nen no shuki" and "Kōnai ni nemuru meiku no hyakusen," in Nihon Daigaku

Bunri Gakubu Tōsō Iinkai Shokikyoku, ed., *Hangyaku no barikēdo* (San'ichi Shobō, 1991), 230, 269.

[xxxiii] Takahashi Akira, "Chokusetsu kōdō no shinrito shisō" *Chūō Kōron* (September 1968), 226-27.

[xxxiv] Hase Yuriko, "Zenkyōtō de mananda koto," in Onnatachi no Genzai o Tou Kai, ed., *Zenkyōtō kara ribu e* (Inpakuto Shuppankai, 1996), 107.

[xxxv] Tōdai Tōsō Tōron Shiryō Kankō Kai, ed., *Tōdai kaitai no ronri*, reproduced in *Nihon no daigaku kakumei* (Nihon Hyōronsha, 1969), 4:132.

[xxxvi] *Sekai* Editorial Department, "Tōdai tōsō to gakusei no ishiki," *Sekai* (September 1969), 64, 71.

[xxxvii] Adachi Motoko "Betonamujin ni mōshiwake nai" *Beheiren Nyūsu* (July 1967).

[xxxviii] Tsumura Takashi, ed., *Zenkyōtō: jizoku to tenkei* (Satsukisha, 1980), 142.

[xxxix] For more on the 1964 deregulation of foreign travel and its relation to Japanese counterculture, see Bruce Suttmeier, "Ethnography as Consumption: Travel and National Identity in Oda Makoto's *Nan de mo mite yarō,*" *Journal of Japanese Studies* 35, no. 1 (Winter 2009), 61-86.

[xl] Shibuya Yūichi, *Rokku myūjikku shinka ron* (Shinchō Bunko, 1990), 13; Onzō Shigeru, *Biitoruzu Nihonban yo, eien ni* (Heibonsha, 2003), 69.

[xli] Miura Atsushi, *Dankai sedai o sōkatsu suru* (Makino Shuppan, 2005), 58-9.

[xlii] Yomota Inuhiko and Tsubouchi Yūzō, "1968 to 1972," *Shinchō* (February 2004), 217.

[xliii] Interview of Jibiki Yūichi by Kawamura Atsushi, October 5, 2010.

[xliv] J.A. Caesar, "Guriin hausu de no natsukashiki fūten seikatsu," *Tōkyōjin* (July 2005), 46.

[xlv] Takahashi Genichirō and Ōtsuka Eiji, "'Rekishi' to 'fantashii,'" *Torippaa* (Summer 2003), 7; Takahashi Genichirō and Shibuya Yūichi, "Ima, ronjiru kotow wa," *Mainichi Shimbun*, January 13, 2008.

[xlvi] Shiomi Takaya, *Sekigun-ha shimatsu ki* (Sairyūsha, 2003), 57.

[xlvii] "Miyazaki Hayao yon-man ji intabyū," *SIGHT* (Winter 2002), 20.

[xlviii] Katō Michinori, *Rengō Sekigun shōnen A* (Shinchōsha, 2003), 42-43.

[xlix] Ui Jun, "Kōsei no uragaeshi no repurika," in Watanabe Ichie, Shiokawa Yoshinori, and Ōyabu Ryūsuke, eds., *Shinsayoku undō 40-nen no hikari to kage* (Shinsensha, 1999), 301.

[l] Uegaki, 125.

[li] Shutō Kumiko, "Yūsei hogo hō kaiaku soshi undō to 'Chūpiren,'" in Onnatachi no Genzai o Tou Kai, ed., *Zenkyōtō kara ribu e* (Inpakuto Shuppankai, 1996), 266.

[lii] Mito Osamu, "Sabetsu ni mujikaku na kakumei shutai o dangai suru," *Jōkyō* (September 1970), 88.

[liii] The anti-nuclear power movement which arose in the wake of the Fukushima Daiichi incident of 2011 included a large number of participants from among the generation of the 1968 movement. The motivation and sentiments behind their participation, however, seemed to differ from those of younger participants. Participants from the 1968 generation tended to cite as their motivation a sense of guilt from having benefited from nuclear power, enjoying a life of affluence since the 1970s thanks in part to nuclear energy.

However, participants from younger generations, especially contingent worker activists, seemed at least partly motivated by a critique of the "lifetime employment" system that was predominant in Japan until 1980s and was archetypically symbolized by the employment policies of electric power companies such as TEPCO. Most of the leading activists in the anti-nuclear movement after Fukushima fell into the latter category (see Oguma Eiji,ed., *Genpatsu o tomeru hitobito: 3.11 kara kantei mae made* (Tokyo: Bungei Shunjū, 2013)). Contemporary social movements in Japan, because they are arising in a declining economy, inevitably have a somewhat different character compared to the 1968 uprising, taking place as it did during a time of tremendous economic expansion. However, regardless of divergences arising from the directionality of the economy in terms of growing or declining, rapid economic and social change plays a major role in the rise of social movements.

[liv] We should distinguish the term "reactive revolution" as I use it in this article from usual notions of "reactionary" politics. By using the word "reactive," I simply mean to suggest that Japanese students literally "reacted" against the situation in which they found themselves. Although I argue that this "reaction" was "old-fashioned" in that it was based on a type of traditional moral economy, it is important to recognize that such reactions can often be classified as "progressive" or "innovative" as we can see in examples such as contemporaneous ecology movements around the world or efforts by Japanese students to install a sort of direct democracy on college campuses. If I may be allowed to make a comparison to a recent case I have not investigated in detail,when I visited the so-called "Umbrella Revolution" of pro-democracy protests in Hong-Kong in October 2014, several participants mentioned their anxiety about rapid social changes in two decades since the sovereignty transfer to China as one factor motivating the movement.

[lv] E.P. Thompson, "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the 18th Century." *Past & Present* 50 (1971), 76-136.