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The Politics of Disaster
and Their Role in Imagining an Outside

Understanding the Rise of the Post-Fukushima
Anti-Nuclear Movements

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Abstract

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Keywords: Fukushima, Social movement, Contemporary Japan,
Postmodernity, Political apathy, Identity, Emotion

Political disillusionment is widespread in contemporary Japanese society,
despite people's struggles in the recession. Our social relationships become
entangled, and we can no longer clearly identify our interest in politics. The
search for the outside of stagnant reality sometimes leads marginalised
young people to a disastrous imaginary for social change, such as war and
death.

The imaginary of disaster was actualised in March 2011. The huge
earthquake and tsunami caused the meltdown of the Fukushima Daiichi
nuclear plant, which triggered the largest wave of activism since the 1960s.
Based on the author's fieldwork on the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear
movements in Tokyo, this thesis investigates how the disaster impacted
people's sense of agency and ethics, and ultimately explores the new political
imaginary in postmodernity.

The disaster revealed the interconnected nature of contemporary society. The
thesis argues that their regret about their past indifference to politics
motivated the protesters into social commitment without any totalising
ideology or predetermined collective identity. They also found an ambiguity of
the self, which is insufficient to know what should be done. Hence, they
mobilise their bodies on to the streets, encountering others, and forcing
themselves to feel and think. This is an ethical attitude, yet it simultaneously
stems from the desire of each individual to make a difference to the self and
society. The thesis concludes that the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear
movements signify a new way of doing politics as endless experiments by
collectively responding to an unexpected force from an outside in a creative
way.

Acknowledgements

For about 20 years, I wanted to know about 'something', but I was not clear what it was. The only thing I was sure about was that none of the answers given to me were the right ones. I stopped searching for it when I finished my BA, because I thought that this 'something' may never be grasped.

I am so glad that I was allowed another chance to explore it. I can say that what is written here is what I wanted to know, although it is still an on-going exploration. This work would have never been completed without the following people:

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1　Background

> We narrow our horizons, we reduce our expectations. Hope goes out of our lives, hope goes out [of] our work, hope goes out of the way we think. Revolution, even emancipation, become ridiculous words. Well, of course: we are getting old. But that is not the problem. The problem is that the young too are old, many of them, sometimes even older than the old. The problem is that the world is getting old (Holloway, 2002, p. 154).

The imaginary of social change has been uncommon in contemporary Japanese society since the collapse of the student revolts in the 1960s and 1970s. Activism has been rare in Japanese society since then, and the rapid economic growth provided most Japanese people with an accessible form of satisfaction derived from the dominant system.

However, in the post-bubble Japan that has existed since the 1990s, many young people are facing the "pain of living (*ikizurasa*)" (Amamiya, 2010). In 2007, a 31-year-old part-time worker Tomohiro Akagi (2007) published an essay claiming that his "hope is war". With his monthly income of 100,000 yen, he is unable to support himself and is living in an "unendurable humiliation". To him, peace means only the continuation of social stability, in which he is too poor to support even himself. In contrast, war brings an opportunity for change.

Waiting for a destructive war for the opportunity of change is an absolutely passive attitude. Akagi shows no hope for social change through collective action. Akagi (2011) notes that, according to the prevailing norm of Japanese society, it is his own fault that he is a precarious worker. Although finding a secure job is difficult in recessionary Japan, Akagi is still blamed for his poverty because he is too 'lazy' to get a stable job (Akagi, 2007, 2011).

The anti-poverty activist Makoto Yuasa (2008) describes contemporary Japanese society as a "sliding-down society" (*Suberidai-shakai*); once people drop out of mainstream stability, they simply slip to the bottom. There is little sympathy and social support for precarious workers. For them, perhaps war or disaster is the only imaginary of social change, coming from outside like a fate, to destroy the stagnant system.

Akagi's hope of war signifies the political impasse. There is a sense of powerlessness permeating contemporary Japanese society, in which people are living with pain but have no idea how to escape it. The violent search for the outside of a stagnant reality has been seen in Japanese society. In 1995, members of the religious cult *Aum Shinrikyo* spread sarin gas in the Tokyo subway. As the title of Lifton's book suggests, they were "destroying the world to save it" (2000) from the corruption of the spirit. In 1997, 14-year-old 'Boy A' killed two pupils and claimed that he wanted to be recognised in his society as "a real existing person", since he had been living everyday life as "a transparent existence" (Asahi Shimbun Osaka Shakaibu, 2000).

In 2008, an alienated young temporary worker, Tomohiro Kato, randomly

killed seven people on a busy street in Tokyo. Having grown up in an estranged family relationship and finding himself working in precarious conditions, Kato's remaining comfort was the online chatting community; when he lost this last space to belong to due to harassment, he considered himself to have been "killed" (Kato, 2012) and his anger turned towards the stranger on the street.

The desperate hope for an outside also generates another form of violence, not to others but towards the self.[1] The book entitled *The Complete Manual of Suicide* (Tsurumi, 1993) became popular among young Japanese people in the 1990s. Its opening remark informs us that, since there is no more 'nuclear war' to destroy the world, suicide will be our last resort to end the misery of everyday life. In the 2000s, 'internet group suicide' (*netto-shinju*) became a familiar phenomenon, where strangers arranged the plan online, assembled and committed suicide together (Ozawa-de Silva, 2010; Ikunaga *et al.*, 2013). They built solidarity not for resistance or for living, but for dying.

On the other hand, for most young Japanese people, hopes for an outside of reality itself seemed to have almost disappeared. A young sociologist Noritoshi Furuichi (2011) claimed that, despite the image of a young generation being precarious and miserable, the majority of them express their satisfaction with their lives. The title of Furuichi's work (2011) describes his generation as "the happy young people in the nation of despair"; they regard

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[1] The suicide rate in Japan was the 4th highest in OECD countries in 2012 with 19.1 per 100,000 persons, following Lithuania (29.5), Korea (29.1) and Latvia (20.4) (OECD, 2015).

the future as hopeless but are living quite happily in the here and now, never hoping to change it (Furuichi, 2011).

This affirmation of reality sounds strange, considering the instability and insecurity of life in recessionary Japan. Lifetime employment systems have collapsed, and finding a full-time job is becoming difficult, particularly for those young people. Even successful full-time workers are forced to work extremely long hours. Deaths and suicides from overwork have already become a serious social problem in Japan. In 2008, a 26-year-old woman committed suicide two months after being hired as an employee at a restaurant chain. It turned out that she had been forced to work 140 hours overtime per month (Brasor, 2012). Her diary contains her desperate pleas: "my body is in pain […]. I can no longer move quick enough. Please somebody help me" (*Sankei West*, 2013).

The once shared sense that 'all Japanese people are middle classes' has long gone, and in 2014 about 16 per cent of Japanese people were living below the relative poverty line (*Economist*, 2015). "Japan is becoming an impoverished country" where even the term 'starving to death' has become familiar in news reporting (Allison, 2013, p.6). In 2013, a 28-year-old mother and her three-year-old son died of starvation. It is reported that, having fled her husband's violence and concealed her address, the mother had no one to ask for help (*Huffington Post*, 2013).

There seems to be a strange stagnation in Japanese society. Most young Japanese people claim to be "satisfied" with their lives (Furuichi, 2011), as

they manage to maintain some stability of life in a sea of uncertainty. However, their stability is actually fragile and they are at risk of slipping down the "sliding society" (Yuasa, 2008). Many people are already drowning, isolated from each other. There is a vacuum in politics. Their lives seem to be fragile, be they in the prevailing norm or not; however, there are few political actions from them to change the situation. The voter turnout in general elections is lowest among the younger generation.[2] Akagi's "hope for war" (2007) conveys his desire for change, but he himself feels so powerless that he is only passively waiting for the scene to change, rather than becoming a political agent of social change.

In March 2011, a catastrophic disaster occurred in this political vacuum. Just like Akagi's imaginary of war, it came from outside and destabilised the stagnant everyday life which seemed to offer 'no way out'. The earthquake and tsunami took the lives of nearly 16,000 people and more than 2,500 people remain missing. Then the nuclear plants exploded and the accident displaced more than 150,000 people from their homes.

The political theorist Satoshi Shirai explains that the Fukushima disaster revealed a dysfunctional social structure in Japan, which has been covertly sustained under the booming economy with the deceptive narrative of Japan as a "peaceful and prosperous" nation (Shirai, 2013, p.21). What lay beneath this structure was a "system of irresponsibility" (Shirai, 2013, p.10) which led Japan into the Pacific War. This system of irresponsibility fostered the culture

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[2] For example, at the general election in 2014, voter turnout among young people in their 20s was 32.58%, and among those in their 30s it was 42.09%, according to the Association for Promoting Fair Elections (2015).

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of concealing inconvenient information to save face, and advancing the once established plan with groundless optimism. In fact, although the potential risks of nuclear accidents had been documented before the Fukushima disaster, the government and the energy company took no precautionary measures and insisted that an accident was "unimaginable" (Shirai, 2013, p.8).[3]

Shirai (2013) points out that this 'system of irresponsibility' is not solely the culture of decision-makers but is also largely shared by ordinary Japanese people, who blindly obey the authorities without thinking. This culture of obedience seems to correspond with their passive attitude toward politics. Hence the question is: has the Fukushima disaster brought change to this culture?

After the disaster, some Japanese people started raising their voices. The anti-nuclear movements after the Fukushima disaster became the largest social movements since the 1960s, mobilising more than 100,000 people in the summer in 2012, and still continuing in 2015. One of the anti-nuclear demonstration organisers, Misao Redwolf (2013, p.58), believes that "by destabilising the system supporting the nuclear energy industry, we make a crack and send winds to mobilise society."

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[3] Shirai (2013, p.8) points out that in the interpellation in the lower Diet in 2006, the MP Hidekatsu Yoshii submitted a question on the risk of the nuclear accident, due to station blackout induced by earthquake and tsunami (House of Representative, 2006). In addition, the Fukushima Nuclear Accident Independent Investigation Commission reports that since 2006, "the regulators and TEPCO were aware of the risk that a total outage of electricity at the Fukushima Daiichi plant might occur if a tsunami were to reach the level of the site" but TEPCO "had not prepared any measures to lessen or eliminate the risk" and the regulators "failed to provide specific instructions to remedy the situation" (National Diet of Japan, 2012, p.16).

The protesters insist that Japanese society needs to change, and that they must be the agents of this change. Those protesters who gained confidence in their activism joined other protest actions against racism and against the government. Although they still have only a small presence in the dominant atmosphere of political disillusionment, this thesis argues that these movements show how ordinary people, who used to be rather apolitical, are able to engage with the political, and it tries to theorise their "politics of disaster."

1.2   Personal motivation, research objectives and questions

The primary aim of my research is to illustrate a new political imaginary to describe 'hope' for Japanese society, which seems to be immersed in disillusionment and a sense of 'no way out'. My ultimate research question is: How might we change society politically in postmodernity? In other words, I explore how our desire for fulfilled lives might become a creative political force rather than an imaginary of destruction.

This is motivated by my personal background. As a Japanese citizen born in 1980, I stand between the generation of Akagi (born in 1975) and Furuichi (born in 1985). I have lived with the same political disillusionment as they have done. Living in a "sliding-down society" (Yuasa, 2008), we are living with the fear of stepping out of the dominant norm, because once we deviate from it, what awaits us is a "humiliating" life threatened by poverty (Akagi, 2007). As Holloway (2002, p.154) notes, "hope goes out of the way [I] think", and I have been living strictly in the prevailing norm, knowing that the system is dysfunctional, as Shirai (2013) points out.

Unlike in the 1960s, people no longer share any political meta-narrative that might help produce a better society. Unlike the era of economic growth, finding a stable and satisfying life in the dominant system appears very difficult in recessionary Japanese society. The "pain of living" (Amamiya, 2010) lies in this predicament, where people are living precarious lives in a post-industrial society without any political narrative of hope. I believe that Japanese society needs a new political imaginary and practice, facing the precariousness of life in a society with contingency. The protesters in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements have taken on this task.

Since my primary research question of "how to change society" and the aim of describing a "new political imaginary" are abstract, this thesis also identifies several secondary aims and research questions. These are approached from three angles:

Aim 1) To describe the social struggles and political disillusionment in post-war Japanese society and the postmodern condition.

First of all, the thesis investigates the source of political disillusionment permeating contemporary Japanese society. It examines how the hope for change is expressed in post-war Japanese society. Although collective action for social change was imaginable for many young people in the student movements of the 1960s, such political voices have been lost in the later era. There are two questions in regard to this part: what has changed since then, and how has this led to most Japanese people becoming politically

disillusioned? These questions include an enquiry into the shift in their identity, sense of agency, perception of society and goals in life, as well as more objective factors such as the change in economic conditions and cultures.

Aim 2) To examine the emergent identities and ethics demonstrated by protesters in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements.

Secondly, the thesis analyses the political practices in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements. The analysis is based on my fieldwork in Tokyo conducted on several occasions between 2012 and 2015. The Fukushima disaster worked as a force from the outside which destabilised the stagnancy of everyday life, just as Akagi imagined in his "hope of war" (2007). These movements mobilised the largest number of people since the 1960s student revolt.

It is notable that this mobilisation occurred in the so-called postmodern condition where people do not share a political ideology. Most of the participants identified themselves as apolitical before the disaster (Gonoi, 2012: Oguma, 2012, 2013). We will therefore be able to see these anti-nuclear movements as the on-going efforts of people regaining a sense of political agency for social change. My research questions here are as follows: In what ways are people motivated to join the protests, what kind of identity do they describe, and how do they make their commitment to politics?

Aim 3) To envisage a new political imaginary in postmodern Japan with the implications of the knowledge-practice of the post-Fukushima social

movements.

Thirdly, although any such endeavour has evident limitations, I explore a political imaginary and practices for social change carried out without people resorting to violence or falling into nihilism. My objective here is to articulate 'postmodern' political theory. Although conventional political theories presume a solid collective identity and rational discourses to describe clear objectives, these aspects have become vague in contemporary society. On the other hand, the politics that emerged from the Fukushima disaster had no such preconditions. By comparing their politics with the existing political philosophy, I explore what might be a new agency, social relationships, and ethics in a complex society. Finally, this exploration led me to ask: What kind of knowledge is needed to respond to the 'pain in life' in contemporary society?

1.3　　Structure

This thesis consists of nine chapters. After this introductory chapter, chapters two and three address my first research aim: to describe the social struggles in post-war Japanese society and the postmodern condition. Chapter two is the literature review section and provides a descriptive approach to investigate the imaginary of social change in post-war Japanese society. Based on the sociologist Masachi Osawa's (2008) framework, it explains how people's imagination of 'anti-real' or an alternative to reality has been lost political sense, turning to fictional images in the 1980s, and almost disappearing since the 1990s. Then I argue that, now, without any shared political narrative to describe hope, many people have ended up in self-subjugation to authority in order to prevent their lives becoming insecure

and meaningless.

A more theoretical analysis of the postmodern political impasse is conducted in chapter three. After examining the definition of postmodernity, the chapter articulates the difficulty of identifying a possible political subject who desires social change, because in a complex society the source of oppression becomes unclear. In addition, cultural diversity in contemporary society makes it difficult for people to share a plausible meta-narrative for social change. Using the framework of the autonomists (Holloway, 2010a, b, 2011; Hardt and Negri, 2000, 2004; Virno, 2004a, 2006a, b), the situationists (Debord, 1983; Vaneigem, 1983) and the post-anarchists (Call, 2002; May, 2005; Newman, 2007), this chapter explores a political project in such a condition. I argue that the 'postmodern' subjects without predetermined collective identity and shared ideology can still motivate themselves into politics through their own emotions (Goodwin *et al*., 2001; Gould, 2004) and construct a collective identity from their embodied experience in the social movements. These actions then make "rhizomatic" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988) connections, which allow further development of the movement.

Chapters four, five and six are devoted to the second aim of my research: to examine identities and ethics among the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters. Chapter four constructs a methodological frame for my fieldwork research. Conventional social movement research tries to discover the objective truth of social movements, with its analysis of resources, political structures or strategic frames (McAdam *et al*., 1996; Benford and Snow, 2000). Yet these theories only allow analysis within the context of institutional politics,

whereas my research explores a political approach by those who have no access to these resources. Thus, my thesis suggests that social movements themselves are the subjects of new knowledge (Chesters, 2012), and it investigates their practices as a new way of doing politics. Based on this, I describe the details of my fieldwork, the choice of the case, identification of interviewees, my position as the researcher, etc.

Based on my interviews with the protesters in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement, chapter five examines the motivational factor of this movement. I argue that the politics that emerged in the movements is neither led by shared ideology nor based on predetermined identity. The protesters are motivated by emotions, as Goodwin *et al*. (2001) suggest, such as shock, anger, and regret at their previous indifference to politics. They reject who they used to be, and such emotions construct new "project identity" (Castells, 1997).

While the diverse emotional expressions in the movement create new political practices, this chapter also points out the weakness of this movement, as demonstrated by elections which require consensus. I also argue that the protesters' confidence in activism changed fluid emotional discourse into more solid political concepts, which might be rendering the movement closed to people outside.

Chapter six examines the protesters' ethics, asking how their actions, motivated by personal emotions, avoid being selfish. I argue that the disaster brought a sense of ambiguity and incompleteness of the self, and this

awareness causes the protesters to remain open to the radical others (Critchley, 2007) who force them to feel and think. The protesters' concept of life goes beyond the individual bodies, and they often express their desire as indiscernible subjects in whom the boundary of the self and the other is vague. I examine such subjectivity with Deleuze and Guattari's (1988) concept of 'machinic' assemblage, which seems to suggest a new ethical relationship with other people.

Chapters seven and eight explore my third objective, which is to envisage a new political imaginary in postmodern Japan. Chapter seven compares several actions in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements with different strains of political philosophy to face the postmodern predicament: radical politics in liberalism and post-anarchism. I argue that some actions in the post-Fukushima activism are "majoritarian" actions which intend to "pluralise" hegemony (Mouffe, 2005) by framing the protesters' emotional language into a unified political demand. Other actions use emotions as a driving force for encounters, connections and creation (Call, 2002; Day, 2005), and therefore they are "minoritarian" actions. This chapter insists that the novelty of this movement is the co-existence of these actions. It indicates a flexible subjectivity and open ontology which does not require a coherent model of politics.

These analyses lead me to the final exploration in chapter eight, which is to map out a potential political imaginary in postmodernity. The knowledge created in the post-Fukushima activism signifies an ontological reversal; it proposes the ethics as the desire of a "dissolved" self who is permeated by

the otherness, rather than the moral obligation of a solid self to the other. It suggests that the meaning of life might be acquired not by a self being recognised but by mingling one's desire with that of others in an assemblage and making a difference to it, which I describe as the affirmation of 'dignity'. Such ontology is explained as the ontology of 'becoming' with the philosophy of Bergson and Deleuze, who consider that the world is constantly changing. The role of knowledge in this ontology is not to provide an invariant model but to live with the changing situation (Williams, 2013). I explore it through the concept of 'self-organisation' (De Landa, 2013; Connolly, 2013). Based on these arguments, I suggest that my research be considered as one part of such knowledge.

Chapter nine summarises the key findings of my research and highlights its implications and contributions. I reiterate that a new political imaginary needs to go beyond thinking about legitimate models or looking for 'solutions' for alienated young people. I conclude that my research describes many experiments in turning our desires for fulfilled lives into political forces for change, from which each of us may create hope.

Chapter 2 Literature review:
Political predicament in the pre-disaster Japan

Introduction

This chapter examines the political impasse and a sense of powerlessness in contemporary Japanese society. How did people lose a plausible narrative to guide their life, and how did it affect their sense of political agency? This chapter conducts a chronological analysis of the changing perceptions and sense of agency among Japanese people in post-war society.

The sociologists Munesuke Mita (1971, in Osawa, 2008) and Masachi Osawa (2008) acknowledge that there was a conceptual shift in how Japanese people describe the imagination of the "anti-real" or the alternative to reality. According to Mita (1971, in Osawa, 2008), the concept of the "anti-real" in the post-war Japanese society shifted from the "ideal" (the United States as a role model) in 1945-1960 to a "dream" (of revolution) in the 1960s and 70s; since then, it has turned into an era of the "fictive." Osawa (2008) develops Mita's analysis by unifying the era of the ideal and the dream, and adding a new period after the "era of the fictive." Osawa argues that, in contemporary society, the concept of the anti-real is no longer fictive but "impossible" (2008).

This thesis adopts Osawa's categorisation to analyse how the hope of social change has been diluted in contemporary Japanese society. The first "era of the ideal" (2.1) covers approximately the period between 1945 and 1970, when Japanese people still shared some sort of meta-narrative of what society should be like. With the clear vision of an alternative to the reality,

counter-hegemonic social movements became popular in this era (Osawa, 2008). The next "era of the fictive" (2.2) was the high noon of consumer capitalism in Japanese society, which corresponds with the period between 1970 and 1995. Stable economic growth provided legitimacy for the prevailing system, instead of the dead political meta-narratives. It allowed people to consume a preformed identity to make their lives meaningful, and even the hope for an 'outside' was provided within the system as a form of culture (Iida, 2002; Osawa, 2008; Uno, 2011).

On the other hand, the recession of the 1990s onward undermined the stability of the dominant system and the legitimacy of prevailing norms. More and more people are excluded from a stable life, yet they are unable to experience a sense of agency for social change. This is what Osawa calls "the era of the impossible" (2.3 and 2.4). The loss of meta-narratives in this postmodern era makes it difficult for them to share a motivation for collective action and causes significant frustration. The main theme of this chapter is to illustrate how young people try to find their identity in these conditions where the social relationship between individuals and society has become vague.

2.1 The era of the ideal

2.1.1 The United States as a role model

Masachi Osawa (2008) articulates that "the era of the ideal" refers to the time between 1945 and around 1970. According to him, this era is characterised as the existence of the transcendent other which provides the absolute guide for a life.

The post-war period of Japan started with the five-year occupation by the allied powers. In particular, the United States provided Japanese people with the image of 'ideal' form of society (Osawa, 2008). Osawa argues that, at the end of the war, Japanese people immediately switched the authority for value judgement from the emperor to the United States. Through the mediation of the United states as 'the transcendental Other', Japanese people could broadly agree on what the ideal life consisted of (Osawa, 2008). The intellectuals celebrated the democratic system and the peaceful Constitution renouncing war (Suga, 2006; Kasai, 2012). Many ordinary Japanese people were attracted by the American lifestyle surrounded by electronic appliances (Osawa, 2008).

The United States was more than the ideal. In 1951, the San Francisco Peace Treaty ended the military occupation by the allied powers, and Japan regained its sovereignty. At the same time, the Japan-US security treaty (the *Ampo* treaty) was signed, allowing the US military to stay in Japan and shoulder the country's defence. The revision of the *Ampo* treaty was sought by the Prime Minister Nobusuke Kishi, who demanded a more equal military partnership (Hosaka, 2007). This incited mass protest movements in 1960 by Japanese people who strongly opposed to any involvement in US-led wars.

The protest against the *Ampo* treaty was originally led by leftist political parties, labour unions and the group of university students called *Zengakuren*. This was originally a youth organisation of the Japanese Communist Party (JCP). However, rejecting its party's parliamentarism, *Zengakuren* separated from it and established a new independent communist party 'Bund', which

initiated direct actions including violent confrontation with the police (Tomono, 2010).

The movement expanded into general public when Kishi signed the treaty and steamrollered the Bill through the Diet. Housewives, farmers and retired people all joined the movement and more than five million people participated in general strikes (Hosaka, 2007). The movement peaked on 18 June 1960, when 250,000 people demonstrated around the National Diet; however, the treaty became law the next day (Hosaka, 2007; Tomono, 2010).

On the one hand, the *Ampo* struggle was not quite about the movement against the *Ampo* treaty (Hosaka, 2007; Tomono, 2010; Kasai, 2012). For ordinary people, it was an anti-Kishi movement in the first place, as he had ignored parliament to pass the Bill. The protesters believed that they were 'protecting' post-war democracy from Kishi's dictatorship, which reminded them of wartime Japan (Hosaka, 2007; Tomono, 2010).

On the other hand, the *Zengakuren* students was expecting communist revolution. They believed that the turmoil of the *Ampo* struggle would create an opportunity for revolution, although they did not have a clear vision of how to achieve it (Tomono, 2010). *Zengakuren* chose violent confrontation with the state hegemony, and when the movement peaked on 18 June, many of its leaders had already been arrested. Despite the huge number of people surrounding the National Diet, they could do nothing but to sit in until the Bill became law (Tomono, 2010).

The Prime Minister Kishi resigned due to the turmoil of the *Ampo* struggle in 1960. His successor Hayato Ikeda introduced an economic-centred agenda, promising to double the nation's income in ten years. While the left social movements failed to create a new counter-ideology, the conservative Liberal Democratic Party's government successfully articulated the desire of the people within the new national goal (Iida, 2002, p.116).

2.1.2. The *Zenkyoto* movement and the beginning of postmodernity

The limitations of a totalising ideology for social change became clearer in the second upsurge of the student movements in the late 1960s. These were triggered by conflicts in two universities, in both of which the students challenged the authoritarian management system to demand their autonomy. [4] The student revolts expanded into more than 100 universities during 1968 and early 1969 (Tsurumi, 1970), and the protesters organised a nationwide non-sect coalition '*Zenkyoto*'. Their revolts included protests against the Vietnam War and the revision of the *Ampo* treaty in 1970.

What differentiates *Zenkyoto*'s revolt from the 1960's *Ampo* struggle was its concept of "self-interrogation", which was intended to investigate the power inside its members. This was especially pursued in the conflict at the University of Tokyo, the highest-profile university in Japan. As elites-in-the-making, these students' anti-hegemonic struggle inevitably questioned their own identity (Iida, 2002). This concept of self-interrogation

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[4] The conflict in the University of Tokyo was enflamed when the University punished the medical students who had clashed with the university management in demanding the improvement of the intern system. Another conflict arose in Nihon University, where the students raged against the University's accounting fraud.

was also theorised in the anti-Vietnam War movement '*Beheiren*' (Peace for Vietnam committee). Established in the mid-1960s, *Beheiren* activists engaged in supporting US deserters who were seeking asylum (Iida, 2002).

The *Ampo* struggle in 1960 was aimed at 'protecting' democracy and maintaining a peaceful everyday life as the status quo, by ensuring that Japan would never be involved in war. In contrast, *Beheiren* paid attention to the fact that their peaceful daily life itself could contribute to the Vietnam War. They had accepted US bases inside Japan and given a justification for the Japanese government to support the war (Muto, 1969; Oda, in Iida, 2002; Kosaka, 2006). While the 1960 *Ampo* movement framed the protest as the good citizens against the bad hegemony, the *Beheiren* movement accused citizens because of their own complicity (Kosaka, 2006). The theory of anti-war inevitably required a change in society itself (Muto, 1969) or even its "destruction" (Yoshikawa, 1969).

Moreover, the *Beheiren* movement was distinguished by its decentralised nature. It had "no clearly defined membership or organizing principles, nor a central office or hierarchically organized command structure" (Iida, 2002, p.121). In the movement, "self-educated individuals" came together with "a strongly shared and vaguely defined feeling"; *Beheiren* was the antithesis of the organised conventional left politics based on ideology (Iida, 2002, p.121).

Although the *Ampo* struggle, the *Zenkyoto* movement and *Beheiren*'s action all challenged the hegemony, the latter two emphasised the challenge to the power within their own identity. It might be said that the *Zenkyoto* and

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Beheiren movements reflected the postmodern condition in Japanese society. Iida describes that, throughout the 1960s, "systems of control shifted from hard, tangible institutions to soft, intangible networks of knowledge." Here "the formerly objectifiable enemy was transformed into the more abstract systemic authority of which one was a part" (Iida, 2002, p.158).

However, this novel imaginary for social change in the late 1960s failed to identify the political discourse for their struggle. The *Zenkyoto* activist and theorist Shuhei Kosaka recalls that they "did not know who the enemy was at that time." He continues;

> I had even no idea about whether the enemy belongs to some objective social entity, or it resides in personal situation. As a result we had no other choice to use the old language to criticise our enemy [...]. By the term 'old language' I mean the discourse of the Japanese post-war democracy regime and traditional Marxist language. […] We shared the feeling of uncomfortableness and alienation in a newly emerged society, but there was a twist between our feeling and language (Kosaka, 2006, p.36).

Although the movement was motivated by its members' everyday life experiences, it was still framed by a totalising ideology (Oguma, 2012). There was indeed a twist; those student revolutionaries in the sixties only had Marxism to describe the alternative, while the Marxist ideology of overthrowing the capitalist system had already lacked a sense of reality in Japan, because capitalism was already deeply rooted in its consumer society

(Kotani, 2004).

After the occupation of Tokyo University collapsed, some claimed that the only way to achieve social change was through violent revolution; the Japanese Red Army flew overseas to establish bases for such a violent revolution (Tomono, 2010). Inside Japanese society, student revolutionaries were divided into small groups and started violent infighting, which killed more than 100 members (Suga, 2006). Some student activists believed that creating turmoil would bring a chance of revolution; however, this 'creation of turmoil' itself eventually became the objective (Tomono, 2010).

Their self-criticism against the hegemonic power within their identity also pushed some young people to extremes. The Asama Sanso incident[5] in 1972 showed how extreme 'disciplining' inside the student group ended up in a deadly purge against its own members. In 1974, a group called the East Asia Anti-Japan Armed Front bombed the offices of Mitsubishi Heavy Industries and killed eight people, claiming that it was a part of their battle against Japanese imperialism (Kasai, 2012; Oguma, 2012).

2.1.3 The end of the era of the ideal

The 'failure' of the student movements signifies the difficulty of describing their struggle politically in a complex post-industrial society. This was not only the problem of the radical left movement. The nationalist approach to radical

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[5] The Asama Sanso incident was a hostage crisis involving a far-left student group, the United Red Army. After the violent purge which killed its group members, the remaining activists fled from the police, broke into a mountain lodge and took the lodge-keeper's wife hostage.

politics also came to an impasse. For the novelist Yukio Mishima, the spirit of the Japanese people became empty in post-war society. He strongly criticised Japanese people who immediately discarded their strong respect for the emperor after their defeat in WWII and welcomed the hegemony of the United States and its economic prosperity (Iida, 2002; Osawa, 2008). Mishima hoped to restore Japanese society under the unification of the emperor. In 1970, he seized the base of the Japanese self-defence force and urged soldiers to instigate a coup. When hardly anybody in the force showed sympathy, he killed himself by ritual disembowelment.

Iida (2002) argues that Mishima and *Zenkyoto* share a similar anti-modern orientation in their pursuit of a collective identity. In the late 1960s, they were living in a society where subjective interiority had become the product of the market and had become foreign to them. Their resistance targeted mainstream political realism and economic functionalism, which "went hand-in-hand with corporate capital's ongoing restructuring of society" (Iida, 2002, pp.160-161). Iida states that both actions attempted to reconnect the broken linkages between the individual and the social whole, rationality and emotion, mind and body.

According to Osawa (2008, p.75), the *Zenkyoto* movement signifies the end of the era of the ideal, as 'the ideal' of young people who joined this movement "hardly had concrete details" and it was "merely the negation of the present authority, the present ideal." This is a typical analysis of this movement, which was considered an immature rebellion or a "make-believe game of revolution (*kakumei gokko*)" (Suga, 2006) without any political claim.

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However, Miyauchi (2006) explains that the *Zenkyoto* movement was "a movement without language" and therefore a movement "to seek language." In other words, the *Zenkyoto* movement was creating a new political imaginary based on "language of the body (e.g. emotions, feelings)" in an era when people were unsure about who was alienating whom and what was causing their sufferings (Miyauchi, 2006). As Jasper (1997, p.127) explains, emotions are in fact political resources to "give ideas, ideologies, identities, and even interests their power to motivate". Hence, rather than being described as immature rebellion, the *Zenkyoto* movement should be seen as the failed attempt to construct a new political imaginary based on emotion.

Suga (2006) claims that the political movement after the *Zenkyoto* movement took two different paths; while the revolutionist movement turned to violent infighting, a newly emerged minority movement engaged in the struggle for the rights of subjugated people, such as ethnic minorities and *Buraku* people (descendants of a feudal outcast group). According to Suga (2006), these minority movements emerged as a counter-response to the revolutionary movement. In particular, the feminist movement sought a 'new political language' to counter the state-centred revolutionary politics and challenged the hegemonic nature which was internalised within the activists themselves. However, as Suga (2006) points out, a minority movement has to stand on a particular fixed identity, while such identities are often socially constructed.

Moreover, questioning the foundations of society itself became uncommon in the materially affluent Japanese society. Oguma (2012, p.151) introduces the

voice of one student who was helping people affected by environmental pollution because he/she "does not have any problem in [his/her] own life." In an era when 90% of the people consider themselves part of the middle class, the political imaginary as the majority of Japanese people is to help the small number of people with subjugated identities to achieve equality with them (Oguma, 2012).

In the 1970s, the desire for social change itself seemed to fade away. After the *Ampo* turmoil in 1960, the Prime Minister Hayato Ikeda announced economic prosperity as a new national strategy. Thereafter, Japan entered a period of rapid economic growth, which diverted people's dissatisfaction "away from real concerns towards the aspiration for a better economic life" (Iida, 2002, p.116). The student protesters of the 1960s were themselves later assimilated into a comparatively prosperous Japanese society and became 'corporate warriors'.

It is often pointed out both in Japan and Western societies that the sixties movement itself had an affinity with the capitalist market, as the movement pursued the liberation of desire. Stephens (1998) rejects the common view that the sixties movement has been co-opted by consumer capitalism. Analysing the fate of sixties activism in Western society, Stephens (1998) acknowledges that what happened was not one-sided co-optation but the tense interaction between market capitalism and counterculture. A new set of grass-roots values was created by young people, and it impacted the market, just as the market affected them. Although the sixties movement might be considered a 'failure' in a conventional political frame, Stephens (1998)

argues that the resistance in the sixties expanded the political arena into the sphere of culture.

A similar analysis is presented in Japan. Gonoi (2012) argues that anti-hegemonic resistance permeated the sphere of everyday life, forming the political-cultural sphere. However, Japanese counterculture seems to be a marginal phenomenon compared to that of Western societies. As Kotani (2004) analyses, the huge economic success since the 1960s has preserved, or even solidified, the traditional values in Japanese society, such as a man as a breadwinner and a woman as a mother and housewife. The old establishment has never been seriously challenged in Japanese society, as the successful economy provided stability in life.

2.2 The era of the fictive

2.2.1 Triumph of economy and emergence of new identity

Japanese society in the 1960s enjoyed an 'economic miracle'. In 1968, Japan's Gross National Product became the second highest in the world, overtaking that of West Germany. Although the Japanese economy experienced stagnation in the early 1970s, due to the Nixon shock in 1971 and the oil shock in 1973, its prompt recovery ensured long-term stable economic growth until the 1990s. It allowed most Japanese people to share a new collective identity as "middle-class Japanese" (Iida, 2002).

This triumphant economic success worked as a meta-narrative (Iida, 2002; Azuma and Kasai, 2003; Oguma, 2012). It supplied a plausible universal goal for Japanese people as they could believe that a good education would

assure them of a good job in a big company, which would bring a good life (Yoda, 2006; Oguma, 2012). This narrative was ingrained so deeply in everyday life that it even embroiled young children in a highly competitive society (Yoda, 2006).

According to Iida (2002), the confidence in economic success endorsed people's identities. Japan's economic success invited huge attention from Western countries, best illustrated in Ezra Vogel's book *Japan as Number One* (1979, in Iida, 2002). This external attention helped Japanese people to rediscover and reconstruct their sense of identity by celebrating the uniqueness of Japan. (Iida, 2002, p.200-201).

In addition, a prosperous economy and the materially affluent society enabled young Japanese people to actualise the ideal life through consumption. The young generation, who enjoyed consuming ever changing fashions, signs and images, were described as a 'new humankind' (*Shin-jinrui*) (Iida, 2002; Osawa, 2008). According to Osawa, this 'new humankind' avoided a serious commitment to real society, which he describes as the mode of "ironical devotion" (Osawa, 2008, p.105). Although they enjoyed consumption, they simultaneously kept an ironical distance from the values created in the market and mass media. According to Osawa, they did not believe the authentic value they consumed, but just "pretended" that the value existed. Osawa calls this period the new "era of the fictive," when "even the 'real' might be seen as a fabrication through the mediation of language or symbols" (Osawa, 2008, p.68). It is a celebration of the society of simulacra (Baudrillard, 1994).

2.2.2 Consumer society and the self as 'crystal'

The lifestyle of this 'new human race' is illustrated in Yasuo Tanaka's best-selling novel in 1981 entitled *Nantonaku Kurisutaru* (Somehow Crystal) (Tanaka, [1981] 2013). The story is about the urban life of a female university student and fashion model, Yuri. She lives with her boyfriend, who is a musician, but she has a one-night relationship with another man out of boredom.

This novel is notable as it contains a huge number of footnotes (442) to explain fashion items, cafes, restaurants and the music that appears in the novel. It serves as a 'how to' guidebook for a fashionable urban life, by providing information on what to buy and where to go (Iida, 2002; Inouye, 2008). This explicit celebration of material affluence highlights the new urban lifestyle of young people liberated from a moral anchor (Iida, 2002).

The meaning of its title 'somehow crystal' is described during a conversation between Yuri and her one-night-stand partner Masataka. Yuri describes her lifestyle as being as clear as crystal because she does not have any concerns. This is followed by Masataka's comment that they have "never had a philosophical question like what love is," and "never become passionate about anything." However, he thinks that they are "neither empty nor opaque" as they are not naive enough to accept whatever they are told (Tanaka, [1981] 2013, p.130).

The author Tanaka was a university student in Tokyo when he wrote this

novel.[6] Tanaka explains that, in writing this novel, he was mounting a challenge to Japanese literature. He notes: "in the time when Japanese society has become so affluent, Japanese novels are still obsessed with the old questions such as 'what life is.'" What Tanaka wrote instead was the "reality of young people whose life theme is 'feeling good'" ([1981] 2013, p.230).

In fact, Tanaka has his heroine Yuri state that, for her generation, "feeling is the measure of all things" (Tanaka, [1981] 2013, p.58). However, Inouye (2008) asserts that this seemingly anarchistic thought expressed by Yuri does not mean that she is completely free, because she internalises a certain code describing what it means to be fashionable. In one sense this era was miraculous in that the identity of young Japanese adults and their 'feeling' somehow corresponded with branded materials, and these were all financially available to them. Still, Inouye claims that the cultural codes in this era are difficult to follow; hence, "[t]he best we can do is to produce an exhaustive listing of what concretely is in style at any given moment" (Inouye, 2008, p.184).

This image of the self as something solid and clear but not empty is an interesting signifier of identity in 1980s Japan, when it is compared with the identity of a later era. In 1997, a 14-year-old murderer described himself as a "transparent existence." This indicates a more formless, unidentifiable self than being "somehow crystal."

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[6] Yuri, the main character of the novel, was born in 1959, and the author Yasuo Tanaka was born in 1956.

2.2.3 Consuming post-structuralist knowledge

The self as crystal and its attitude of ironic devotion to simulacra was endorsed by the young academic Akira Asada, who introduced post-structuralism to the general public. His book *Kozo to Chikara* (Structure and Power; 1983) explains the theories of Lacan, Battaile, Deleuze and Guattari. In his following work *Tosoron* (On Escape; 1984), Asada celebrates a nomadic individual who escapes from the code.

Asada's intention was to introduce "schizophrenic" thinking to Japanese society, which was haunted by "paranoiac" thinking: people were running in the same direction through competition (Asada, 1983, 1984). Asada's *Kozo to Chikara* sold 80,000 copies in the first few weeks of its publication, which was unusual for an academic book. It was soon picked up by the mass media and, together with several other young intellectuals, Asada was seen as the leading figure of "new academism."

This may be an ironical phenomenon. As an intellectual with post-structuralist ideas, Asada's aim was to provide 'joyful wisdom' instead of meta-narratives. He claimed that knowledge should be used as a tool that the reader can utilise to create something new (Ivy, 1989). However, in conjunction with the mass media campaign in consumer society, this knowledge itself serves the dominant market system rather than becoming a tool for 'schizophrenic thinking.'

Iida (2002) criticises Asada for simplifying sophisticated post-structuralist

knowledge and, in the worst case, turning it into a mere entertainment. For Iida, Asada seemed to be encouraging an irresponsible attitude, because Asada interprets Deleuze's nomadism as men running away from their wives and families "simply because that is much more fun" (1984, p.4; in Iida, 2002, p.184).

Nakamasa (2006) identifies Asada's nomadic subject as a 'freeter', a Japanese coinage signifying a temporary or part-time worker. In the prosperous economy of 1980s Japan, a 'freeter' was regarded as a person enjoying a liberated working style in which he/she might flexibly choose where and how much to work. However, in the post-bubble Japanese society after the 1990s, these freeters became the symbol of precarious workers; they are no longer what young people choose to be but, rather, what they are forced to be (Genda, 2005, p.52). In the post-bubble society, Asada's schizophrenic lifestyle only signifies a disempowered and atomised subject.

It can be said that Asada's prescription was only viable in 1980s Japanese society with its prosperous economy. Although Asada (1984) introduces a nomadic attitude as the strategy of liberation, the critic Hiroki Azuma interprets it as the strategy of "withdrawing himself to the shelter and only reaching out his sensory organ" (Azuma and Kasai, 2003, p.167). Deleuze and Guattari (1988) note how dangerous this nomadism can be. However, the nomadic subject that Asada emphasises is actually someone whose identity is protected from the chaotic outside, and who only consumes the sense of liberation without exposing him/herself to the unstable complexity of postmodernity.

The *Zenkyoto* activist Shuhei Kosaka (2006) suggests that so-called 'postmodern' philosophy was utilised in Japan as an excuse to accept a reality penetrated by consumer capitalism. It might be said that, in the 1960s, the *Zenkyoto* generation first faced the postmodern condition in Japan. They found that the existing ideology had become incompatible with their reality, and they tried to bridge their real experience of body and the political ideology (Kosaka, 2006). However, in the 1980s, imported post-structuralism allowed intellectuals to abandon their quest to theorise about how they might live well in a complex society. It spread "cheerful nihilism" in society and affirmed the way of life in the prevailing norm (Kosaka, 2006, p.166).

2.2.4 Search for an outside in subculture

The generation of "ironic devotion" (Osawa, 2008), the identity of a "crystal" self (Tanaka, [1981] 2013) and the attitude of tasting a sense of liberation seem to represent the dominant culture of 1980s Japanese society. However, not all people could be satisfied by filling their identities with slightly differentiated commodities in the dominant culture.

The discomfort in society could no longer be described as an imaginary of revolution; rather, it was "expressed differently as occultism to the desire for the fantasy world" (Kosaka, 2006, p.173). TV animation, comic books and TV games provided the remaining imaginary of the anti-real for those young people who desired an outside of stagnant reality. Among boys, stories on the theme of 'society after nuclear war' were popular (Miyadai, 1998). In such stories, the main character makes a whole new start in extremely difficult

conditions, and overcomes hardships with his friends and colleagues. Among girls, stories about reincarnation were favoured (Miyadai, 1998). A typical storyline involves the main character suddenly finding that she is a reincarnation of someone who died in the past before achieving their mission. These imaginative excursions indicate young people's desire for the "extra-ordinal outside," which might provide them with a historical meaning (Miyadai, 1998; Osawa, 2008).

However, Uno (2011) claims that the image of an outside in subculture changed in the 1990s. The popular cartoonist Kyoko Okazaki's comic book *River's Edge* ([1994] 2000) describes the empty and stagnant everyday life of alienated high school students, such as a bullied gay boy and an anorexic fashion model. Although their lives are filled with dead-end love, prostitutes, estranged family relationships and so on, they hardly share the pain with their friends, and their chats are preoccupied with celebrity gossip and branded cosmetics. In such a "boring everyday life", things accumulate, and in the end bloody violence explodes like "a balloon bursting" (Okazaki, [1994] 2000, p.192). Okazaki describes their everyday lives as "living in a flat battlefield" ([1994] 2000, p.207).

After seeing her friend destroyed in this episode of bloody violence, the heroine regrets that they "were chatting forever after school" in order "to hide something" (Okazaki, [1994] 2000, p.219). In a flat battlefield, not even pain can be felt and it is buried under symbols and signs. Unlike Yuri in Tanaka's novel in the 1980s, for whom most branded goods represented her feelings, Okazaki's comic highlights the generation for whom these goods are actually

nothing to do with their reality with a sense of stagnation. Those goods are simulacra (Baudrillard, 1994) which have lost touch with their feeling, but they fill their lives with simulacra because they have nothing else to express themselves and to share with their friends. Reality can only make sense through simulacra. The only exception is their secret 'treasure': a stranger's body found by the murky river. The cultural critic Uno (2011, p.20) states that the lives of these young people are so stagnant that death is the only imagination of an outside.

Around the same time, a book entitled *The Complete Manual of Suicide* (Tsurumi, 1993) became popular among young people. This million-seller book describes many ways to commit suicide and has a very provocative opening message. Alongside Okazaki's work, Tsurumi describes death as the only attainable 'outside' of a stagnant reality.

> …the world never ends. Nuclear plants have never exploded and our dream of fatal nuclear war has vanished. […] Now we have finally realised. 'The fatal impact' will never come. […] If we desperately want the world to end, then our last resort will be 'that thing' (Tsurumi, 1993, p. 4).

Of course, "that thing" means suicide. Okazaki and Tsurumi's imagination of death as the only 'outside' signifies the end of "the era of the fictive". Now the anti-real is unimaginable even as a fiction. Tsurumi ridicules the naive desire for a nuclear disaster coming to deconstruct stagnant reality. He tells people to stop waiting for the fiction to become true, and he reminds them that there

is still a way in this reality to save ourselves from misery.

Probably the most devastating pursuit of an outside during this period was attempted by the religious cult *Aum Shinrikyo*. In March 1995, *Aum* attacked the crowded Tokyo subway with deadly sarin nerve gas. Thirteen people were killed and more than 6,000 were injured. The founder of *Aum Shinrikyo*, Shoko Asahara (born Chizuo Matsumoto), encouraged his followers to adopt a Buddhist-like practice to become spiritually more developed in order that they might survive in the world after Armageddon. The sarin gas attack was explained as a salvation project to rescue the general public from corruption (Inouye, 2008).

It is often pointed out that the *Aum* incident was the actualisation of the subcultural imagination of the 1980s, which provided a sense of an outside to a simulated society (Iida, 2002; Miyadai, 1998). *Aum*'s doctrine was a mixture of Tibetan Buddhism, yoga, and Christian apocalyptical theology, with the imaginary of a 'sacred mission' from popular TV animations, comic books and TV games. *Aum* attracted highly educated young people from the top-ranked universities. They developed deadly chemical and biological weapons in their underground laboratories and even conducted research on nuclear bombs (Iida, 2002).

Citing Yazawa's argument (1997, in Castells, 1997), Castells argues that *Aum* appealed to alienated Japanese youth, who could not find their place in the material affluence of Japanese society. *Aum* articulated a supreme mission for them which connects their lives with the wholeness and a historical

meaning (Iida, 2002; Uno, 2011). The members of *Aum* were encouraged practice and meditation to create a 'spiritual communication' with the guru Asahara; and this was helped with electric 'head-gear' which was said to configure Asahara's brain wave (Castells, 1997). *Aum* also provided a space for a communal life, which attracted young people who had estranged family relationships and hoped to satisfy their lack of emotional engagement with their everyday lives (Iida, 2002).

Aum Shinrikyo successfully portrayed the image of "anti-real" with its apocalyptic narrative, high-tech warfare, spiritual perfection and a life of commonality (Castells, 1997). However, this imaginary resulted in a grotesque mass murder. Many intellectuals agree that the year 1995 marked the turning point in Japanese society (Miyadai, 1998; Azuma, 2001; Osawa, 2008; Uno, 2011). It was the beginning of what Osawa (2008) calls "the era of the impossible" when the imaginary of the anti-real became impossible to narrate.

2.3 The era of the impossible

2.3.1 The exposure to the postmodern condition

After *Aum*'s sarin attack, the sociologist Shinji Miyadai proposed a radical antidote: stop asking about the true meaning of our life. He warns that seeking something authentic or an absolute meaning in life is dangerous. Instead, he proposed that we should accept the emptiness of reality and live "an endless everyday life" (Miyadai, 1998).

Miyadai identifies this attitude in the middle-class high school girls in the

1990s called *kogyaru* (little gals). Some *kogyaru* in this era engaged in 'compensated dating' or *enjokosai*, which is a dating service including sexual relationships mainly for middle-aged men. Miyadai (1998) suggests that *kogyaru* discarded their subjectivity which seeks the meaning of life. Hence, they could casually exchange their bodies for money.

Miyadai did not see this as a form of sexual abuse, but rather as 'liberation'. He describes *enjokosai* as a fashionable technique employed by teenage girls to access a sense of 'extra-ordinariness' and obtain money for pleasure, while continuing their boring everyday lives as high school students. Iida (2002) argues that it brought more than material gain for *kogyaru*, as it shows "the desire for access to the world outside the school yard and the family embrace." Becoming a commodity means becoming anonymous, which brings a sense of liberation from one's identity and social morality (Iida, 2002, p.231-232).

Whilst Miyadai emphasises the 'casualness' of this behaviour in which they painlessly sold their bodies for a sense of extra-ordinariness, he fails to see that the relation between these middle-aged men and the girls is not equal. Moreover, Miyadai describes *kogyaru* in the almost same way as the 'crystal' generations of the 1980s, who gained momentary pleasure by consuming branded goods, even though these *kogaru* were sacrificing their body for getting pleasure.

Miyarai's prescription for the *Aum* incident was to stick to this prevailing lifestyle of the 1980s or even accelerate the society of simulacra to the limit. This is a problematic prescription. In the 1980s, the act of consumption

seemed to provide the 'crystal generation' with a sense of liberation from the traditional way of life. Nevertheless, their 'liberated' life with a 'free' choice was following consumer catalogues and 'how-to' guidebooks (Inouye, 2008). In the 1990s, *Enjokosai* was also framed as a 'free choice' for these girls to gain a sense of liberation. However, this 'liberation' from the coerced meaning of life by their parents or schools was immediately exploited by another asymmetrical power relationship. *Enjokosai* was the commodification of their entire life, and it was a form of exploitation by middle-aged men with power and stability over the precarious girls without power.

Uno argues that seeing *enjokosai* as the act of abandoning meaning is inaccurate. For many teenagers, *enjokosai* was the pursuit of the very meaning of life. Uno (2011) insists that they sought a meaning in life by being needed by middle-aged men, and they tried to regain reality through traumatic experience. Far from the liberation from meaning, they may have attempted to engrave a strong narrative directly onto their bodies to regain the meaning of the self. Uno (2011) points out that *enjokosai* is closer to self-harming. Miyadai himself later admitted that *enjokosai* had become self-harming rather than the casual play of fashionable teenagers, and he withdrew his earlier advice (Uno, 2011).

Uno points out the different socio-economic contexts of the 1980s and the 1990s. In the stable consumer society of 1980s Japan, young people could construct their identities through acts of consumption. They could actualise themselves by attaching values created through the mass media. The dominant culture of the 1980s encouraged people to "have fun playing in the

sea of a multicultural consumer society" (Uno, 2011, p.75) by consuming differentiated goods. Some people failed to accommodate themselves to this dominant form; however, their desire for an alternative to the simulated society was already fictive and was provided within the dominant system as subculture.

The fluid market value brings enjoyment to our lives if we could merely focus on the act of consumption, and assume that our life itself is never threatened by this fluidity. This was the case of Japanese society in the 1980s, when even the nomadic freeters (temporary workers) had been safely protected by a growing economy. However, the collapse of this bubble economy around 1990 brought a long recession. It undermined the lifetime employment system, which had laid the foundation for a stable life for Japanese people with a clear life goal. It degraded 'freeters' into the precarious 'working poor' who even face death by starvation. Since the 1990s, Japanese society has faced the fluidity of postmodernity without any protection and security.

In the era of the impossible, what provides the transcendental reference of life is neither a shared ideology nor trends of consumer society: according to Osawa, what determines the value of life is the fluid and changeable "eyes of the others." People need to seek recognition from others in order to make their lives valuable (Osawa, 2008). In this perspective, *enjokosai* in the 1990s may be described as the girls sacrificing their bodies to gain recognition, rather than enjoying the endlessness of everyday life without meaning.

2.3.2 Desperation for connection and recognition

In what Osawa (2008) calls "the era of the impossible", we can identify some hopeless attempts by young Japanese people to gain recognition, acceptance and approval. The published diary of a teenage girl, Aya Nanjo (2004), highlights her desperate attempt to regain her sense of self and gain attention by hurting her own body. She reported her attempts at wrist-cutting and drug overdosing on an online website and eventually became a popular 'idol' of those young people who shared the same emptiness and pain of living. Nanjo died of a drug overdose in 1999 at the age of 18.

Doi (2008) compares her diary with that of Etsuko Takano, a 20-year-old female university student who killed herself during the student movement in 1969. At the end of what Osawa (2008) calls "the era of the ideal," Takano suffered in the conflict between her ideal picture of herself and herself in reality. In her diary (Takano, 1971), Takano noted her strong desire to change herself, to be autonomous, to establish an independent thought not to be affected by other people. Eventually, this turned into a harsh self-interrogation and she blamed herself for being unable to change.

Doi (2008, pp.86-87) investigates the words these women left before their deaths. Takano (1971, pp.164-165) noted that she wanted to "go somewhere far away" in order to become independent. In contrast, Nanjo wonders "who will remember me after I disappear" (Doi, 2008, pp.86-86). Takano wanted to disconnect her relationship from others since it disturbed her will to accomplish her ideal self. In contrast, Nanjo had no sense of the ideal self. She hoped to solve her emptiness by connecting with someone and being

recognised by them. While the former pursued the liberation of the subject from the meaning that was attached to her by society, the latter desired salvation from meaninglessness, or the recovery of a solid meaning.

A similar comparison is made between the juvenile crimes in "the era of the ideal" and those in "the era of the impossible." In 1997, a 14-year-old, 'Boy A', killed two pupils and placed the head of one of his victims in front of his junior high school. He left a criminal confession with it, in which he identified himself as 'Sakakibara Seito' and provoked the police, stating: "this is the beginning of the game." Later he sent another crime statement to the local newspaper and explained his motivation:

> …I tried to attract public attention, because I had been, and I will forever be, a transparent existence, and I would at least like to have myself recognised as a real, living human being (Asahi Shimbun Osaka Shakaibu, 2000, p.262).

According to Osawa (2008), what Sakakibara needed was "the eyes of others"; and this motivation is oppositional to another juvenile crime in the era of the ideal.

Between 1968 and 1969, 19-year-old Norio Nagayama killed four people randomly with a gun stolen from the US base. Born to an extremely poor family in a rural area, Nagayama was one of those middle school graduates who were employed *en masse* in the rapidly growing Tokyo area. Osawa (2008) notes that Nagayama strongly aspired to an affluent urban life, and he

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desired to be included in his ideal society. However, in Tokyo he suffered from "the eyes of the others" which still stigmatised him as a poor, rustic, uneducated man. Nagayama later explained his crime as revenge on society (Osawa, 2008).

While Nagayama wanted to be free from the eyes of those who stigmatised him, Sakakibara wanted the eyes of the others to identify him as something (Osawa, 2008). Osawa's analysis of Sakakibara's crime appears similar to Doi's analysis of Nanjo's self-harm. They both wanted recognition, although Sakakibara sought it by destroying the bodies of other people, while Nanjo destroyed her own body. Osawa (2008) notes that, in this "era of the impossible," bodies may be the only solid basis on which to narrate life, and destructive action against them may be the last remaining imagination for the outside of the meaningless void.

If we take a closer look, the motivation for Sakakibara's murderous acts is also different from what motivated *Aum*'s attack. *Aum Shinrikyo* attempted to establish an 'alternative society' for those who were not accepted in the dominant culture. However, Sakakibara established a personal god only to justify his behaviour. Miyadai (1998) insists that Sakakibara's murders may signify the progress of "dis-sociality," and he notes that this tendency may have been accelerated. While Sakakibara was still pursuing the meaning of his existence, other juvenile murders in the later era seem to have had more personal and impulsive reasons. An example of this further dis-socialisation might be identified in a juvenile murder committed in 2000; a 17-year-old boy in Aichi prefecture killed a stranger "out of boredom" and explained that he

"wanted to experience killing people" (Asahi Shimbun, 2000).

Aum attracted those who had lost the meaning of life in the dominant culture as they could visualise an alternative society and a new meaning of life. Sakakibara also felt that he had become empty in his everyday life, although what he sought was mere recognition by the existing system. As a "transparent existence" who was invisible to society, Sakakibara needed some extreme colour to be recognised, and murder was the colour he chose. However, the 'murder out of boredom' sounds as though he merely wanted to relieve the frustration of being transparent. If so, he seems to accept being transparent. In this attempt, we can no longer identify any pursuit of the meaning to be shared.

However, it is also important to note that, even at this level, some sort of subjectivity still exists, in contrast to Miyadai's (1998) original suggestion to discard it. Even if there is no longer a subject who is desperate to recover the meaning of the self, there is still a desire to make his life more satisfying; the problem is that the way of gaining satisfaction has become less and less clear.

2.3.3 Accepting the transparent existence

The term 'transparent self' explains the feeling of alienation and ambiguous identity in contemporary Japanese society. However, rather than rejecting it like Sakakibara, most young people now seem to accommodate themselves with the transparent self, by reflecting the colour required in a particular situation in the dominant system.

A case in point is the job-hunting activity undertaken by university students, which is called *'shushoku katsudo'* or *'shukatsu'* in short. Japanese university students spend their third and final year on this activity, starting with self-analysis, company analysis, taking guidance of how to write 'entry sheets' (CVs), and how to behave in interviews. Through this process, they prepare themselves to become whomever the company wants. They install the ideal characteristics for a society or a particular company (Ouchi and Takenobu, 2013).

In a society in recession, most Japanese companies limit their recruitment to new graduates. To obtain stable regular employment, the students must succeed in this one chance to brand themselves 'new graduates'. The students tend to devote their entire lives to *shukatsu*. Ouchi calls this '*zenshin-shukatsu*' (a whole-body job-hunting) and explains that failure in the *shukatsu* activity signifies to the students that their entire life is a failure (Ouchi and Takenobu, 2013). The pressure of *shukatsu* even drives students to suicide (Morioka, 2013). Morioka introduces a note posted online by a student engaged in *shukatsu*, who claims that continuing *shukatsu* is "getting utterly, unbearably painful" when he keeps "submitting entry sheets, joining guidance sessions, taking interviews, making an artificial smile, explaining fake motivation, being evaluated by interviewers only to be told that [he is] useless" (Morioka, 2013, p.103).

The students are selling themselves by pretending to have whatever personality the company wants. *Zenshin-shukatsu*, as its name suggests, is

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the total permeation of the hegemonic power into their lives. They are no longer the 'crystal' self of the 1980s, but literarily transparent; they have no protection of the self from the fluid power penetrating the self and moulding their lives. Takenobu and Ouchi (2013) also note that the students internalise not only the company's preference but also the dominative values around them; hence, the young people are deprived of the right to be hated (Takenobu and Ouchi, 2013) by friends and other people around them.

Doi (2008, 2009) identifies this tendency in the classroom relationship in contemporary Japan. He notes that the students are extremely fearful of standing out in the group or breaking the harmonious communication in the group. Hence, they are carefully reading "the atmosphere" in the group and talking/behaving in conformity with the culture of the group. Moreover, each member plays a certain character and familiarises the discourse inside the group. Doi (2009, p.23) describes this role-playing as "characterisation." They narrow down their community, fix their roles and discourses, and maintain pre-established harmony in order to reassure the certainty of the self. The social relationships of young people are fragmented into small groups, among whom there is hardly any interaction (Doi, 2009).

 According to Osawa (2008), people in the era of the impossible need to outsource the sense of value to the eyes of the others around them (Osawa, 2008). Since this reference is fluid, people are required to be flexible and reactive. To reduce this burden, they close their territory and restrict others who evaluate them. They are avoiding the radical other who destabilises this certainty.

Osawa (2008) believes that, in such an era, those young people actually desire "the other without otherness." This other will be accepted as long as it does not threaten their lives. In other words, the other is welcomed unless they demonstrate the unexpected otherness. Doi's (2008; 2009) analysis of "characterisation" and "reading atmosphere" seems to signify the attempts to assure this "other without otherness": the other who provides acceptance but never hurts. Doi (2009) explains that this self-subjugation to the simulative narratives is the strategy adopted by young people to prevent their lives becoming meaningless. However, it creates an extreme pressure inside the group. They need to talk and behave in accordance with this preformed narrative in order to 'be liked by the other'.

Baudrillard claims that, because people in contemporary society have expelled the radical otherness which brings uncertainty, their community has now become "the hell of the same" (Baudrillard, 1993, p.122). Without otherness, people cannot even distinguish their identities from those of others. On the other hand, the outside of their community is another world, the world of those who are expelled, which operates on a totally different logic and is becoming more and more different from the inside. This image of parallel worlds portrays contemporary Japanese society with a deadly stagnant inside and a completely meaningless outside.

2.4 Difficulty of social change in the era of the impossible

2.4.1 Prevailing culture: consuming the other without otherness

The parallel worlds of the deadly stagnant inside and the deserted outside

both create what Amamiya (2010) identifies as "the pain of living" (*ikizurasa*). However, these pains were hardly shared as the political claim, and their struggles are isolated.

It seems that, in contemporary Japanese society, many people are still successfully maintaining stability and certainty in their lives by limiting their territory. A young sociologist, Noritoshi Furuichi (2011), acknowledges that his generation is not unhappy, contrary to the image of young people in the "pains of living" (Amamiya, 2010). From the governmental statistics of 2010, Furuichi insists that 65.9% of male and the 75.2% of female respondents in their 20s claimed to be satisfied with their lives. According to Furuichi (2011, p.104), these young people are in the state of "consummatory." Instead of hoping for better conditions or an alternative to reality, they are happy with what they have here and now, and they cherish the time spent with their close friends.

Furuichi admits that this self-contained lifestyle may invite boredom; however, he indicates that undertaking voluntary work in the developing countries or the disaster-hit area would allow them to acquire a meaning in life. Miyadai (1998) points out that the voluntary work following the Hanshin earthquake in 1995 was the partial actualisation of the imaginary of the 'life after the nuclear war' in the 1980s subculture. Such voluntary activity supplies a sense of the outside without seriously affecting their stable territory in everyday life. Furuichi (2011) also notes that young people prefer voluntary work with a simple narrative, such as "if you do this, we can build a school in Cambodia." Such descriptions are similar to "the era of the fictive" when people were withdrawing from the instability and complexity of society and simply

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consuming a sense of the outside from their shelter. Furuichi's argument indicates that a significant number of young Japanese people are still capable of, and content with, "the endless everyday life" (Miyadai, 1998) with the occasional excitement supplied from the tamed otherness.

However, we cannot ignore the crucial difference between the era of the fictive and the era of the impossible. First of all, as discussed earlier, the post-bubble recession since the 1990s has threatened their "endless everyday life." Furuichi's statistical analysis cannot show what these young people meant by saying that their lives were satisfactory. If they manage to obtain some stability in a fluid society, they might say that they are happy. However it costs a lot to obtain and maintain this stability. The pressure to accommodate the self to the dominant value system is strong, and failure to do so means the failure of their entire lives, as seen as the example of *shukatsu* activity.

As Osawa (2008) points out, people now believe that their value of life is not described as some kind of shared narrative; rather, it depends on the evaluation by the other people around them. This leads many young people to become desperate for recognition and acceptance by other people, as seen in the example of "reading atmosphere" and "characterisation" (Doi, 2008, 2009). In addition, this pursuit of recognition often sacrifices the meaning in communication. The sociologist Akihiro Kitada (2005) acknowledges that the communication of young people becomes formalistic in contemporary society. They are not communicating to share meanings; they are merely exchanging conversational materials (*neta*) in order to connect, because connection

shows that they are recognised and valuable (Kitada, 2005).

The abandonment of meaning in contemporary society is pointed out by the critic Hiroki Azuma (2001). In his analysis, contemporary Japanese society consists of two layers, with small narratives (simulacra) and a grand non-narrative (database). What we share is the meaningless database, and we construct simple small narratives by combining data (Azuma, 2001). Meaning is delegated to a mere combination of data; it does not claim a coherent message to be shared but only brings personal satisfaction. For Azuma, the 1990s onward is the "era of animals," indicating that people no longer demand shared meanings or narratives for their lives (Azuma, 2001).

We may be able to compare this exchange of data with the communication of high school students in Kyoko Okazaki's comic '*River's Edge*' ([1994] 2000). Their conversation was also filled with simulacra. However, while Okazaki allows her heroine to sense that these simulacra were 'hiding' their pain which should have been expressed and shared, Kitada and Azuma's argument shows the pursuit of the shared meaning has become outdated, and therefore simulacra are easily accepted and utilised as *neta*. Exchanging *neta* and mutual recognition became the dominant communication style in the late 1990s to the 2000s, according to Kitada (2005).

In the era of the impossible, the economic instability accelerates people's self-protective strategy to accommodate themselves to the dominant norm. This strategy is supported by social relationship of 'reading atmosphere' and communication without sharing the meaning. This culture brings a sense of

'no way out' and triggered hopeless violence, which I analyse in the next section.

2.4.2 Periphery: Searching for the lost 'other'

The Akihabara incident was a massacre in 2008 committed by 25-year-old temporary worker Tomohiro Kato. He deliberately drove a truck into a group of pedestrians on the street in Akihabara, Tokyo, and proceeded to stab them with a knife. Seven people were killed.

The sensational crime led many researchers to investigate the background cause of the massacre. Kato had an estranged relationship with his family. His mother had imposed strict discipline on Kato when he was a child. She controlled his choice of clothes, put him into water to punish him when he failed to memorise the multiplication tables, and forced him to stand barefoot in the snow to punish him for soaking his shoes (Kato, 2012). These punishments were given without any verbal explanation, and Kato just "learned to accept" them without thinking (2012, p.67).

Moreover, at the time of his crime, Kato was a typical member of the 'working poor' who was frequently changing his job. A few days before the murder, he left his workplace with anger because he could not find his work uniform and thought that someone was trying to force him to quit. This background provided a plausible assumption that Kato sought revenge against society, or at least hoped for recognition from society through the mass murder (Kano, 2008; Serizawa, 2008; Ogi, 2008; Sasaki, 2011).

However, at his trial in 2011, Kato denied that his intention was revenge on society or an appeal to society. Instead, he claimed that the massacre was revenge on 'a particular person' who had harassed him on the online community, which was his only comfort (Sankei News, 2010a). This confused researchers, mass media and the general public because they could not understand how such a 'tiny' problem had led him to commit mass murder.

Kato attempts further self-analyses of his crime in his memoir (2012). He reiterates that he had no intention of taking revenge on society. Instead, he notes that he always wanted a "connection to society" (Kato, 2012). For example, he bought a car which cost more than he could afford, and he explains that he did so for the sake of the car dealer, because that salesperson was his "connection to society." It is notable that what he describes as a "connection to society" is actually a connection to 'somebody'. He explains that he feels lonely when he is "not sure if he exists in somebody's mind" (Kato, 2012, p.16). For him, isolation is social "death," which scares him more than physical death.

Kato's existence was probably a transparent one; however, unlike Sakakibara, his crime was not to invent his colour and display it. Kato believes that he does not have his self (Kato, 2012, p.23). In childhood he was strictly forced to accommodate his mother's values, and in school he tried to be a good student. Exhausted by these imposed roles, he eventually diverted his way, which led to him becoming a nomadic temporary worker (Nakajima, 2011). Alienation gave him a desperate desire for connection, and he played a certain "character" to be liked by friends or the others.

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Although Kato had friends in his real life, he found more comfort in the online community where he could be honest with himself (Nakajima, 2011). In this online community he expressed his grief at having no friends and his distress as a temporary worker. According to Kato (Sankei, 2010c), the online community was like a "home," where he could exchange *honne* (honest feelings) "without worrying about others' reaction" while, in the real world, he had to communicate with people through *tatemae* (the accepted view).

However, his communication was actually far more complex than this. Although he explains that he wrote *honne* in the online community, he also comments that they were not the expression of his real emotion. What he commented as '*honne*' were *neta* (conversation materials) to entertain people, which is different from '*honshin*' (true feeling, or 'real mind' in direct translation) (Sankei News, 2010b). He explained that he had played the fictional character of the 'bad looking guy who has no friends' in order to attract people.

This corresponds with Kitada's analysis (2005) of communication for a mere "connection" rather than for sharing a meaning. Kato never tried to share his real pain in life; he gave up sharing it from the beginning and instead pursued a mere connection by fictionalising his life and making it more attractive to the eyes of the others.

Kato had a transparent existence unless he was recognised by someone, and he devoted himself to the online community to gain recognition. However, by

sacrificing his body to make a connection, he became another form of 'transparent existence'. In the online community, someone started pretending to be Kato. Having had his identity taken over, he felt he had been "killed" (Kato, 2012, p.53). He sought revenge against the person who had "killed" him, but he was unable to identify him/her. He had no way to communicate his pain. He created honest fiction (*neta*) to reach the harasser, which is the story of mass murder (Nakajima, 2011).

He posted on the online bulletin board that he had bought knives. He hinted at his desire to kill. He continued with this fictional story and finally managed to get his murder plan noticed online in order that the harasser might recognise it and feel guilty. With this notice posted, he felt that there was no going back (Nakajima, 2011). He explained at his trial that he had wanted someone to stop him, but at last decided to continue the plan because;

> If I do not take action, I can never regain the BBS (the community in the online bulletin board system). I do not have a loving family. No job. No friends (Kato, in Sankei News, 2010b).

Nakajima (2011) indicates that what Kato really wanted was honest interaction in real life, rather than communication through *neta* online. By fictionalising his life, he was looking for someone to whom he could reveal his true pain. Once, Kato even quit his job to visit some people whom he had got to know online (Nakajima, 2011).

In his autobiography, Kato (2012) analyses what might have stopped him from

committing this crime. He acknowledges that his desperation for connection would have been satisfied through "voluntary work" (Kato, 2012, p.156). It is tragic that this desire for connection turned him away from real society, led him to the online community, and made him fictionalise his life, which further alienated him. He wanted the others but failed to connect with them and ended up devastating the lives of others. Kato's crime signifies the difficulty of encountering the others and relating to them in contemporary society.

In addition, Kato's confession signifies the difficulty of identifying the cause of frustration in this era. For instance, he confessed at his trial that he felt a "doubt" that temporary workers like him were treated like disposable tools. Yet he explained that he "was not furious" about it. He said that he was content with the advice given to him online, which said "that [being treated like a tool] is the way it is when you belong to the organisation" (Sankei News, 2010b). He commented that his job status was not "dissatisfying" and that it only gave him a "doubt" (Sankei News, 2010d). Then he clarified that "dissatisfaction" describes the thing that he cannot accept, and "doubt" describes what he has already accepted (Sankei News, 2010d). He *accepted* being treated like a tool – it appears that he was alienated even from his ability to feel dissatisfaction. As Berardi (2015, p.49) notes, precariousness in contemporary society is "not only the condition of labour" but "is also the fragmentation of the social body, the fracturing of self-perception and of the perception of time."

The Akihabara incident highlights several aspects of political impasse in contemporary Japanese society; alienation from feeling, impossibility of sharing 'the pain of living' with other people, and difficulty in describing the

outside of reality. This Akihabara incident evoked sympathy from young people, especially those of the same generation as Kato. He was considered the last member of the "lost generation," those born between 1972 and 1982 who left school when the recessionary Japanese economy brought serious job shortages. In their eyes, what Kato had done was "terrorism" in an era when the enemy of the struggle had become unclear and all the political language for narrating hope had vanished (Asao *et al*, 2008; Akagi *et al*, 2008).

2.4.3 Outside: hopeless hope of disaster

Kato's violence seems to have been caused in the periphery of the dominant norm. He could not accommodate himself to the dominant norm; however, he could not imagine an outside of it.

Nevertheless, some actually articulate the language-less vision of an outside: the imaginary of disaster and war. In 2007, a part-time worker, Tomohiro Akagi, published a provocative essay to challenge the dominant norm, stating that his "hope is war" (2007). He identifies himself as a low-waged worker in his 30s, who is still unable to earn enough money to support himself. For him, war is the only solution to his misery and it is an opportunity for change rather than tragedy. War would spread equal suffering to everybody and would provide him with a respectable role as a soldier, which is "better than dying as a member of the economic weak" (Akagi, 2011, p.228). Most importantly, this kind of total destruction would destroy norms, mobilise society and bring about a paradigm shift.

Like Japanese society after the pacific war, I want the present structure to be destroyed and to make a new start. In that sense, being invaded by a foreign country or hit by a disaster would also serve the purpose (Akagi, in Koizumi, 2009, p.60).

War as hope is in fact the actualised imaginary. In 2014, it was reported that a university student had been arrested because he had planned to join 'Islamic State'. He explained that his motivation had come from the failure of his job-hunting activities (*shukatsu*), and he had a suicidal desire (Asahi Shimbun, 2014b). As Akagi claims, war might be better than the miserable peace.

"(Being in the battlefield) makes me feel comfortable. It suits me! The people here are living all-out, in order to live"— Haruna Yukawa (2014a) wrote a blog about his experience of visiting war-torn Syria in 2014. Yukawa had been bullied in childhood; after his attempted suicide in his 30s, he started a private military company in order "to use his life for people" (Yukawa, 2014b) and went to Syria. He was taken hostage by Islamic State and executed in 2015 at the age of 42, together with his friend, the journalist Kenji Goto, who tried to rescue him. [7]

War seems to be the game-changing tool. Akagi's imaginary of war as the opportunity for change is shared by many. Still, Akagi's argument (2007, 2011) appears significant, because he is able to explain why politics does not provide any hope. Akagi (2011) does not believe the leftists' call for solidarity. He shows his strong distrust of the liberal left discourse, since their

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[7] For the English source about Yukawa's life, see the McCurry (2015).

celebration of peace and human rights does not include him. In addition, he claims that the labour movements only care about protecting their own interests by sacrificing more precarious irregular workers (Akagi, 2011). Therefore he claims;

> Those whom I wish to suffer from the war are not those in power, but the majority stable workers who trample over the working poor in order to secure their own lives, and dare to demand their rights and money from the powers, as if they were the oppressed (Akagi, 2011, p.232).

His anger is never directed at the so-called '1%' of society, the rich people. Rather, it is directed at the middle-class people who accept and support the system, knowing that it is alienating many people. In a fluid society, some of the 99% are still able to retain stability and become self-enclosed, paying no attention to those who have already lost the stability of life.

It is notable that Akagi's hope of war is absolutely passive. He has no sense of agency, and is simply waiting for catastrophic war to afflict Japanese society and destroy its foundations. Asked why he does not desire revolution, he replies that "revolution is a turnabout by majority number of people against the small number of authorities"; he claims that it is impossible for him to call for it, as he bears the label of an "idler" and would not receive sympathy from the majority of society (Akagi, 2011, pp.231-232).

There is a twist between the flexibilisation of the economy in the

post-industrial society and the inflexible social order in Japan (Allison, 2013, p.60). In the era of economic growth, working as a freeter (temporary worker) was a matter of choice, and it was even a symbol of freedom. Although those days are long gone, Japanese society still regards precarious workers as the architects of their own misfortune.

Economic growth used to be "a self-sustaining mechanism," in which the "hegemony of large corporations" has preserved traditional Japanese social structures, disciplines and harmony (Yoda, 2006, p.40). "Japan wasn't a welfare state" according to Allison (2013, p.10); it was the corporation and the family (unpaid housewives) that "figured as the de-facto welfare institutions." However this "de-facto" welfare system collapsed when lifelong employment eroded. The "sliding-down society" (Yuasa, 2008) emerged, in which one step away from the dominant norm sends people directly down to the bottom due to the lack of a social safety net (Yuasa, 2008).

Several liberal left intellectuals tried to dissuade Akagi, claiming that war would bring more suffering to him (Fukushima, 2007; Mori, 2007). However, for Akagi (2011), they fail to realise how miserable the life of young people is in a so-called 'peaceful' society. Amamiya (2010) reveals the precarious nature of young people's lives; for example, temporary workers might easily lose their jobs if they take a day off due to illness. Homeless daily hired workers sleep overnight at 24-hour internet cafés. Finding regular employment does not guarantee a stable life either. Many workers are exhausted by extreme overwork, which even leads to death or suicide (Amamiya, 2010). As was mentioned in Chapter one, even dying from poverty

is now a very real possibility. It is understandable that Akagi prefers "the gamble of war which brings a 99% chance that he would lose" to "peace in which he would remain a loser with 100% certainty" (Akagi, 2011, p.264).

Nevertheless, it is obvious that catastrophe itself is not what Akagi really wants. After the disastrous earthquake in March 2011, Akagi (2011) discloses his ambivalent feelings; it seems that Japanese society will only be changed by a disastrous event, although a disaster never brings hope. The mobilisation brought about by war would be devastating, and any change brought about by war or disaster is once and for all. Whoever emerges as the winners in the war will try to cement society again, creating other outsiders (Akagi, 2011, p.241). Thus, he notes: "what I criticised in my essay is the society which cannot change until someone dies. What I do hope for is the society which changes without anyone dying" (2011, p.381). What he is really hoping for is probably a continuous openness and change without intense pain. Hence, the question to be asked is: What is a non-violent and sustainable imaginary for social change?

2.4.4 Politics in the era of the impossible

In contemporary Japanese society, several attempts have been made to overcome this deadly imaginary of an outside. For example, Karin Amamiya is a female activist who is the same age as Akagi. She has experience of being bullied in school; she used to work as a precarious 'freeter' who could not foresee her future, and she made repeated attempts to cut her wrists. She has experience of being a member of a far-right group (Amamiya, 2004; Amamiya and Kayano, 2008). Furthermore, she was also a battlefield hunter.

Everyday life in Japanese society does not bring her any sense of living, and she visited Iraq - a real battlefield with real pains. She notes: "we see the news (about Iraq) but forget about it as soon as we change a channel. I just did not want such an engagement with the world" (Amamiya, 2004, p.61).

Amamiya eventually started reporting about the "pain of living (*ikizurasa*)" among young Japanese people like her. Then an encounter with the term "precariat" broadened her horizons. She felt that this term describes all the sufferers she had observed. It gave her a new identity on which to fight for her right to live (Amamiya, 2010). As Standing (2011, p.7) points out, the precariat should be understood as a "class-in-the-making" rather than a "class-as-itself". Originally, the term 'precariat' was a neologism from the adjective 'precarious' and the noun 'proletariat'; it described people living with insecurity, such as the poor protection from dismissal, unhealthy working environments and low incomes (Standing, 2011). However, Amamiya's definition is broader than this:

> The 'precariat' includes freeters, temporary or contract employees, fragile self-employed people, NEETs and *hikikomori*[8] who have withdrawn from working, people who have a mental illness or a suicide wish, and permanent employees facing death from overwork (Amamiya, 2010, p.24).

Amamiya now actively joins and organises precariat demonstrations, as well

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[8] The term *Hikikomori* literally means withdrawers, who seldom go out of their house or room and avoid social interactions.

as reporting on the struggles of young alienated Japanese people. The demonstrations include those by right-wing youths and mentally unstable people. She describes how she heard "a great, primitive scream" when some teenagers with mental problems joined the street demonstration and cried out "don't make a fool of me" or "we are here living" (Amamiya and Kayano, 2008, p.179). This is an attempt to negate the prevailing 'self-responsibility' discourse in Japan, which says that people have to be responsible for their own lives.

This type of movement is not an entirely new phenomenon in Japanese society. In the early 1990s, a group called '*Dame-ren*' became known as an alternative community movement among young people. *Dame-ren*, which means the 'association of useless people', provided a communication space for those who regarded themselves as 'dame' (useless) in society because they have no job, skills, friends and so forth (Mouri, 2005). It aimed to "establish a comfortable society that any *dame* could enjoy" instead of improving themselves, and intended to reverse the negative label '*dame*' (Mouri, 2005, p.24).

This counterculture has been revived in the 2000s by the anarchistic collective *Shitoro no Ran*, meaning 'amateur's revolt'. These are the young people around 30s associated with the recycling shop called *Shiroto no Ran* in the Koenji area of Tokyo; they create an alternative space for encounters, hold small street parties, and organise humorous demonstrations such as 'make

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rent free' and 'return my bike' demos [9] (Amamiya, 2010). When the Fukushima disaster occurred in 2011, it was these people in *Shiroto no Ran* who triggered the surge in anti-nuclear movements.

However, while the sociologist Yoshitaka Mouri (2011) insists that *Shiroto no Ran* is "inventing a new form of cultural politics," Furuichi (2011) analyses it as rather apolitical in its actions. Examining the anti-nuclear protest mobilised by *Shiroto no Ran*, Furuichi (2011) argues that the movement will stabilise the status quo rather than changing society, because it works merely as a convenient outlet for the feeling of dissatisfaction.

This discourse of social movements as safety valves is common criticism of the carnivalesque street movement (Grindon, 2004), and it was already claimed in Japan against the anti-Iraq war movement in 2003. This movement was known as the first 'performative' street protest in Japan which combined politics with music and art (Mouri, 2005; Gonoi, 2012). However, it was criticised by traditional activists for being an 'apolitical' event that was pursuing entertainment rather than expressing anger (Henmi, 2004). The *Beheiren* activist Yuichi Yoshikawa (2004) pointed out that young peace activists in the anti-Iraq war movement tended to avoid deep discussion because they 'respected' each other's position and were afraid of hurting human relationships. This is reminiscent of the dominant culture of "reading the atmosphere" (Doi, 2008) and fixed discourses (Doi, 2009), which may signify a political impasse rather than a new form of politics.

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[9] In Japan, illegally parked bicycles are removed by the local administrative office, and the owners have to pay to get them back.

The street protest may not necessarily signify a new political imaginary. Commenting on the upsurge in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements, a young sociologist, Hiroshi Kainuma (2012), warns against the unconditional celebration of demonstrations, saying that there are also xenophobic nationalist demonstrations in contemporary Japanese society. Nationalism is a more familiar reaction to the precariousness of life in Japan. The critic and psychiatrist Rika Kayama (2002) had already pointed out a 'casual' nationalism among young people who openly celebrate their identity as Japanese, and warned that it might be poured into xenophobic attitudes. In fact, the internet society has provided an anonymous space in which to express and share xenophobic feelings, and some have been organising anti-Korean demonstrations since the late 2000s (Yasuda, 2012).

Although the rise of nationalism seems to reflect the desire for shared meta-narratives and the reassurance of a stable identity, Kitada (2005) believes that the nationalistic discourse itself is being treated as '*neta*' for connections. The precariat activist Amamiya discloses her experiences in a far-right group, confessing that it was comfortable because she did not have to think (Amamiya, 2004). She was accepted as long as she followed the stereotypical code of the group. Her self-analysis indicates that even the seemingly 'political' discourse in nationalism is already simulated.

It appears that street politics since the 2000s has received mixed evaluation. Amamiya describes it as a new form of politics by the 'precariat', who are expressing a 'primitive scream'. On the other hand, Furuichi (2011) implies

that it is the apolitical consumption of extra-ordinariness, which entails the same culture as the 1980s when even the imaginary of an outside was tamed. Not all street actions are creative or revolutionary. Still, it can be said that such street protests at least visualise the desire for an outside which has been hidden and fragmented in contemporary Japanese society.

Summary and further directions

This chapter provided an overview of how Japanese people have lost their 'political' voices for social change in the socio-economic shift in post-war Japan. The sixties movement, especially the *Zenkyoto* movement, revealed that the totalising ideology and the state-centred imaginary of revolution was incompatible with the struggles of many young people, whose lives were already immersed in the capitalist system.

A new political language was no longer sought on a large scale thereafter. The rapid economic growth provided many Japanese people with financial stability, a shared identity as middle-class Japanese nationals, and an accessible guideline for life. In this period, even a sense of the outside was obtained through consumption.

The collapse of the economic bubble in early 1990s and the nagging recession undermined all these aspects. Japanese people came to face the precariousness of life in a complex society. Nevertheless, their identities are already too fragmented to form a collective political agency for resistance, and a political meta-narrative to provide a common cause for revolt has also already vanished. Many alienated young people cannot describe their hope

for an alternative and some end up making violent attempts to end their miserable everyday lives through mass murder and suicide. Others seem to retain stability of life in the prevailing system, yet their lives are also threatened. The feeling of insecurity drives many of them to over-conformity.

The earthquake, tsunami and the nuclear accident in March 2011 destabilised this stagnant condition of contemporary Japanese society. As Akagi says, if we state that only disaster can provide an opportunity for social change, it will sound too cynical. However, the disaster actually happened, and it mobilised many people onto the streets to join the anti-nuclear movements. The evaluation of this movement has not yet been fully conducted: Is it consumption of excitement or new political practices for social change? Has even this catastrophic event become simulacra to prolong our everyday lives, or has this disaster ended the "endless everyday life" (Miyadai, 1998)?

Rather than answering 'Yes' or 'No' to these questions, this research starts from the premise that these movements show people's desire for something new, which cannot be explained in a conventional political framework. The important point is that these street protests are less painful and potentially more creative than all the destructive attempts to articulate an outside examined in this chapter. It is worth seeking a new political imaginary in these movements.

Chapter 3 Theoretical framework:
Political projects in the postmodern condition

Introduction

The previous chapter examined the condition of the political predicament in post-industrial Japanese society. The reaction of Japanese people to this condition seems to be fragmented. Although many young people describe themselves as "satisfied" with their lives in narrow relationships with their friends (Furuichi, 2011), in reality they push themselves to assimilate into the dominant norm in order to maintain a stable life (Doi, 2008, 2009; Ouchi and Takenobu, 2013). They can hardly have a sense of agency for social change. As the example of Tomohiro Kato in the Akihabara incident suggests, perhaps they cannot even 'feel' dissatisfaction and, therefore, cannot desire change. Akagi's hope for war (2007) signifies a hopeless desire for social change in contemporary society.

The last section of the previous chapter suggested that the carnivalesque protests by the "precariats" (Amamiya, 2010) and the anti-nuclear movements after the Fukushima disaster seem to imply a new political imaginary in the postmodern condition. Before conducting a detailed analysis of this, this chapter overviews the contemporary political theories with several questions raised in the previous chapter: why has the raising of voices for social change become so difficult? What kind of language can describe the struggles and hope in this era, when all political narratives seem to be disembodied? What brings the oppressed people together, and what motivates them to take action instead of retreating into the smaller community in order to protect themselves

from a fluid society?

This thesis articulates the struggle for life in "the era of the impossible" (Osawa, 2008) as the "postmodern condition." Its definition is examined in the first section (3.1), paying particular attention to the different modes of postmodernity in Western society and Japan. In Japan, the prescription for the political predicament is mostly suggested by the 'modernists' who are attempting to re-establish some kind of meta-narratives. However, I argue that these meta-narratives cannot provide hope for alienated young people in contemporary Japan.

This has led me to examine post-structuralist theories for indications of a possible political imaginary. First of all, the concept of power in contemporary society is examined (3.2). Here, the questions are as follows: who is alienated and from what, and who wants to be liberated, and from what? In contemporary society, the source of oppression is no longer identified in hegemonic institutions, outside the subject. Our social relationship is already permeated by the hegemonic power to define who we are and how we live. Therefore, rather than the insurrection against the state power to replace it with another hegemony, we need a particular struggles in our everyday life to reject our pre-determined identity.

In the next section (3.3), the agency of this new liberation project is analysed in more detail through situationist theory (Debord, 1983; Vaneigem, 1983; Plant, 1992) and by using some concepts of the autonomists (Hardt and Negri, 2000, 2004; Virno, 2004; 2006a, b; Holloway, 2010a, b, 2011). At the same

time, this section points out the difficulty of desiring an 'outside' of the hegemonic system since it is the hegemonic system that provides values and meanings in our life. Baudrillard's simulation theory (1994) is examined here to analyse the authority of meaning.

A new vision of the society-to-come is studied in the next section (3.4). How can we illustrate our political goal? This section starts by examining the liberalist attempt to re-establish some sort of transcendental meta-narratives (Rawls, 1999; Habermas, 1990). It then searches for an un-essential form of universality as the possible impetus for radical politics (Newman, 2007). Finally, the study explores the potential for deconstructing the telos, as well as the subject. The role of emotions and improvised actions in politics is examined here (Goodwin, *et al*., 2001; Chesters and Welsh, 2006; McDonald, 2006). Deleuze and Guattari's (1988) "rhizome" becomes the key concept of imagining a politics without the ultimate telos.

The final section (3.5) constructs a premise of a possible new political imaginary in contemporary Japanese society. My emphasis is on a heteronomous subject rather than a self-conscious subject who acts on the basis of his/her rational interest. The study also seeks a new form of ethics which encourage a heteronomous subject to remain open to new encounters instead of remaining self-enclosed and self-sufficient.

3.1 What is the 'postmodern condition'?

3.1.1 Loss of meta-narratives and political disenchantment

A well-known definition of the postmodern condition by Lyotard is "incredulity

toward meta-narratives" (1984, p. xxiv). Newman (2007; pp.18-19) states that the term 'meta-narratives' signifies the universal ideas or discourses that derive from Enlightenment thinking: the idea that scientific knowledge enables us to discover the absolute 'truth' and that the world is able to be rationally understood. 'Modern' knowledge of science and rationality has provided a new understanding of the world, replacing the 'pre-modern' authority of God.

However, the legitimacy of these universal narratives has been questioned in contemporary society with its diversity and complexity. The postmodern condition acknowledges that "all forms of knowledge have to be seen as particular narratives," each of which claims its own legitimacy (Newman, 2007, p.20).

The 'political' grand narrative based on this scientific thinking used to be understood as the "proletarian emancipation" or "the universal liberal notions of natural rights and freedoms" (Newman, 2007, p.24). We have already seen that those concepts have lost their plausibility in contemporary Japanese society, resulting in Akagi's harsh criticism of a liberal 'peace' (See 2.4.3).

Newman (2007, p.24) describes the postmodern political condition as follows. First of all, the subject "remains opaque" to him/herself, as s/he is affected and constituted by conditions outside of his/her control. Secondly, rationality and morality do not provide "the absolute foundations that guide the subject's political and ethical judgment and ethical decision making". Thirdly, therefore, people are fragmented in political and social fields, and are left with incommensurable identities and political ideologies.

The doubting of meta-narratives in postmodernity deprives the subject of the ability to describe a hope for a better society. He/she becomes a fragmented powerless entity with no foundation for building a collective identity. According to Newman (2007, p.39), this postmodern condition invites two reactions: some are thrown into a radical drift from their social identity, while others commit desperate attempts to cling to the remaining identities and discourses, or even seek to return to a 'pre-modern' condition of absolute authority. On the other hand, Critchley (2007, pp.4-5) describes two forms of political disappointment in the postmodern era: one is "passive nihilism," a withdrawal from commitment, while the other is "active nihilism," a violent destruction of what one believes to be meaningless.

These arguments imply that the reaction to the postmodern condition tends to be either destructively open or deadly stagnant. This corresponds with my analysis in chapter two. Japanese society in "the era of the impossible" (Osawa, 2008) is a multi-layered society. Inside the closed territory are "the happy young people in the nation of despair" (Furuichi, 2011). People are constantly working to conform to the norm of the community they belong to, hoping that they could secure stable and meaningful lives. I described this norm as changeable and intangible "atmosphere." People do not desire social change; they instead enclose themselves into a small territory and play fixed roles (Furuichi, 2011). Critchley's (2007, p.4) "passive nihilism" explains this attitude well.

At the periphery of these small communities, some people are completely

exhausted by their efforts to conform to the fluid and fragmented norm; however, they still believe that they have to stick to it, because beyond it lies precisely what Akagi (2007) calls a "humiliating" life. These 'outsiders' suffer from poverty, overwork and a feeling of isolation, but they receive little sympathy from society, as it is 'their own fault' (Akagi, 2007; Amamiya and Kayano, 2008; Allison, 2013). Akagi's hope for war is what Critchley (2007, p.5) calls "active nihilism."

Although this mapping seems too simplistic, it shows the fragmentation of Japanese people who face the precarious condition in life. Newman explains that the fragmentation and alienation in contemporary society derive from the loss of the self-conscious subject and the universal foundation of political and ethical judgement. Despite the fact that most people face the precariousness of life, there is less chance of sharing it and constructing a collective identity for politics.

As was examined in the previous chapter, the primary source of frustration for contemporary young Japanese people seems to be the over-conformity to these small narratives, rather than being rootless entities. The example of "the whole body job hunting" (Ouchi and Takenobu, 2013) highlights their tendency of self-submission in order to obtain recognition (See chapter 2). In this sense, the problematic reaction to the postmodern condition in Japanese society is neither a nihilistic drift nor a paranoiac re-establishment of traditional authority. The problem is the existence of a fluid authority, "the eyes of the other" (Osawa, 2008) and "atmosphere" (Doi, 2008; 2009). Japanese society has its own specific problems with the 'postmodern condition', which are slightly

different from those of Western society.

3.1.2 The postmodern condition in the Japanese context

Some researchers point out that what I have been describing as the 'postmodern condition' is not a new phenomenon in Japan. According to Clammer (1995, p.62), "in some sense Japanese culture has always been 'postmodern.'" The subject of Japanese society is traditionally what David Riesman (1961) explains as the "other directed" society.[10] People "must ceaselessly take the intention and calculations of the other into account" (Ivy, 1989. p.34). This 'other' imposes the absolute value system on the subject. In Japanese culture, it is one's relationship with the community that provides meaning to the self.

The American anthropologist Ruth Benedict (1989) investigated Japanese culture during the Second World War and described it as "shame culture," compared to the Western "guilt culture." While a subject in the guilt culture internalises the conviction of sin, the shame cultures "rely on external sanctions for good behaviour" because "shame is a reaction to other people's criticism" (1989, p.223). The characteristics of "reading atmosphere" (Doi, 2008) and the obsession with relationships are indeed parts of traditional Japanese culture. [11]

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[10] Riesman (1961) described post-WWII American society as 'other direction type' which people paid sensitive attention to the expectations to others. He distinguished this 'tradition-direction', in which the personal goal is automatically decided by people's background, or 'inner-direction', in which the individuals are guided by internalised goals.

[11] The anthropological analysis is conducted to trace the origin of this traditionally "other-directed" culture. It may be due to religious reasons as neither Shinto nor

According to Clammer (1995, p.62), the individual in Japanese culture "is not autonomous, but is both created and sustained in a social nexus that gives language, meaning, values and the kind of fulfilment that can only be found in social relationships."   It is not the authenticity or the essence that gives value to things and makes people obey. The pressure from other people becomes an invisible authority. Hence, Japanese culture is traditionally anti-essentialist. Roland Barthes (in Iida, 2002, p.201) describes Japan as "an empire of signs" in that social interaction is "guided and constituted by the stylized exchange of signs, without the subject taking an active part in ascribing meaning to the world they live in." The 'postmodern' aspect of Japanese culture is identified in its non-logocentrism, eclecticism, the privileging of aesthetic over function, and so on (Bird, 2002).

This 'postmodern' nature may have helped Japanese 'modernisation.' The nineteenth century's Japanese 'modernisation' slogan openly encouraged the mixing of Eastern ethics with Western science (Bird, 2002). It is notable that this modernisation slogan is itself fundamentally at odds with the very definition of Western modernity, because it is anti-Enlightenment (Bird, 2002). While Enlightenment thinking provides a totalising view of the world, Japanese society accepted the Enlightenment knowledge only as a form, rather than as a coherent knowledge system to explain the world (Bird, 2002).

Buddhism has any concept of a permanent/immutable self. Its rice-growing culture may require cooperation, or it may stem from the traditional ancestor system which connects the subject with the traits of past generations (Clammer, 1995, pp.61-62). However, the investigation of this lies in the field of cultural studies, and it is beyond the scope of my research.

In Japan, enlightenment knowledge was separated from the practical knowledge of how people live.

I agree with these researchers that Japanese culture has traditionally been 'postmodern-like'. However, it is still possible to separate Japanese modernity from postmodernity, because the majority of people used to share a homogeneous value system, or so-called meta-narratives. As Clammer (1995, p.19) argues, "'the grand narrative' of Japan is not the same 'ism' but a widely held image of Japan itself." It was not metaphysics with which to explain the world, but more like a universal code or a form to regulate society. The actual content does not carry much importance as long as it provides a sense of certainty and stable orders.

For instance, post-war Japanese society accepted Western democracy instead of the value system provided under the emperor. The student revolutionaries took communism as the universal reference. After the collapse of political meta-narratives, the stability of the Japanese economy could still provide the homogeneous belief of the Japanese that they are all middle class. These were Japanese meta-narratives which were "a widely held image" (Clammer, 1995, p.19). Interestingly, Clammer positively insists that these deconstructed subjects in Japan would be the alternative model to the European model of autonomous individualism. For Clammer (1995, p.118), Japanese culture cannot be understood as "groupism" in which the individuals are controlled by the solid value of the group. Japanese culture instead operates under "contextualism," in which a flexible social nexus works as an anchor, authorising people's identity and providing stability for a traditionally

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heteronomous subject.

Although this "contextualism" seems to be a plausible analysis of Japanese culture, Clammer's evaluation seems too optimistic. The stability of Japanese society has been supported by shared meta-narratives as a 'mode', such as the authority of the emperor, liberal democracy and communism as the ideal political goal, and economic growth as a stabilising factor. The postmodern problem occurred when these meta-narratives ceased to be the shared image of Japanese people, as the previous chapter analysed. Instead of the universal image, they are now forced to accommodate the ever-changing small images. As Osawa (2008) points out, now the authorities are fragmented into the eyes of the other, and the desire for a fulfilled life drives people to cling to this fragmented authority.

3.1.3 Prescriptions for the postmodern condition

The previous section argued that, in Japanese society, what people value is not necessarily authenticity. Rather value is always created relationally, and what other people believe becomes the hegemonic value. In the 'postmodern' condition in Japanese society, this inauthentic but hegemonic value has become fluid and fragmented, and people find it difficult to conform to.

It is no wonder that, in such a condition, the most convincing prescription proposed by Japanese intellectuals is 'to achieve real modernity': to achieve the inner-directed rational subject, which Japanese society has never had.

The political scientist Masao Maruyama is the leading figure of this claim.

Maruyama (1965) insists that, since the self-conscious self was always absent in Japan, Western individualism was accepted in a somehow distorted manner. While modern subjectivity is independent but still associative, Japanese subjectivity is atomised and self-gratifying (Maruyama, 1965). Therefore, Maruyama claims that Japanese people bear little responsibility to the rest of society (Clammer, 1995, p.20).

Following Maruyama's argument, the political theorist Satoshi Shirai (2013, p.10) acknowledges that Japanese society has been sustaining the "system of irresponsibility." He focuses on the Japanese people's recognition of the pacific war; in Japan, the term "losing the war" is hardly used since it was replaced by the idiom "the war ended." The pacific war is seen as something like a natural disaster beyond humans' intention. Shirai (2013) argues that it has allowed Japanese citizens to excuse themselves from responsibility for the war. For Shirai, the Fukushima nuclear accident in 2011 again exposed this "system of irresponsibility"; the government and the energy company ignored the risk of accident although it had been documented (See 1.1). The novelist and critic Kiyoshi Kasai also argues as follows:

> [What allowed the pacific war to occur was] the rootless self-belief by the war commanders, […] groundless wishful thinking, irresponsible avoidance of decision making and turmoil, overdependence on stopgap measures. They were precisely traced in the nuclear disaster in 2011 (Kasai, 2012, p.87).

It is a strong argument that Japanese society needs to achieve real modernity

with an autonomous, rational and responsible political subject. However, simultaneously, it is questionable whether this liberalist slogan of achieving modernity can provide hope for the alienation in contemporary Japanese society. Masao Maruyama was a professor at the University of Tokyo during the *Zenkyoto* student revolts, and these student activists saw Maruyama as one of the hegemonic symbols. They claimed that, while Maruyama condemned the system of irresponsibility during the war, Maruyama himself turned a blind eye to the autocracy of the professors in the University (Takeuchi, 2005). For these student activists, post-war liberalism already sounded disembodied and hypocritical.

Maruyama's name is also critically mentioned by Akagi. The precise title of his "Hope is War" essay (2007) is "I wanna slap Masao Maruyama: a 31-year-old freeter, whose hope is war." Although Akagi's essay never deeply examines the political philosophy of Maruyama, using his name in such a way suggests his cynical view of this post-war liberal theorist.[12]

Furthermore, analysing the racist demonstrations against Korean residents in Japan since the 2000s, Yasuda (2012) acknowledges that what nourished this right-wing exclusionism is the feeling of antipathy towards the logic of liberal intellectuals whose life is always safely protected by fame. Yasuda argues that the xenophobic movements are the 'anti-hegemonic' movements of those who have the 'pains of living' (*ikizurasa*) in recessionary Japan. Akagi (2011)

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[12] Akagi (2007, 2011) only mentions the episode of Maruyama in the pacific war. This elite academician was recruited as a soldier and was bullied in the army by a mere private with no academic background. Akagi uses this episode to show how war could work as a paradigm shift.

also admits that his distrust in the liberal discourse has an affinity with nationalism; for those who are living with humiliation as the 'working poor', Japanese-ness is the only available majoritarian identity.

It seems that the discourse of the post-war liberal could not deal with the resentment of those people with 'pain of living' (*ikizurasa*). Although the proposal of 'achieving Enlightenment modernity' is dominant amongst Japanese political scientists, their adherence to the self-conscious subject ignores the complicity of the postmodern subject.

The problem of postmodernity is more seriously examined in sociology. The sociologist Miyadai used to propose to give up searching for any meta-narratives and to live "an endless everyday life"; however, finding that this prescription is not working in the post-bubble Japanese society, he (2002) insists that the remaining prescription is to regain dignity under the unity of the emperor. He adds that it is not authentic belief in the emperor; emperor worship is a mere 'mode' to be shared by Japanese people as a source of unity (Miyadai, 2002). Hence, he proposes prolongation of the 'Japanese-type' modernity with a meta-narrative as a form.

Many sociologists agree that the problem in contemporary Japanese society is 'the lack of recognition/acceptance' (Kitada, 2005; Osawa, 2008; Doi, 2009; Amamiya and Kayano, 2008; Miyadai, 2014). In an era when the universal 'image' of transcendental reference becomes flattened, the source to provide 'recognition' becomes fragmented. To survive this postmodern condition, sociologists search for the alternative provider of recognition and acceptance

for the identity loss. For Miyadai (2002), nationalism as a form is a possible prescription. Furuichi (2011) argues that it is a small community amongst the closest friends. However, these prescription would end up with the separation of 'our' community based on mutual recognition from the rest of the world.

The precariat activist Karin Amamiya argues that the young Japanese people are in need of '*ibasho*' (a home base) where they can feel safe. In the dialogue with Amamiya, the political theorist Toshihito Kayano suggests that they need "unconditional acceptance," like a mother gives to her child (Amamiya and Kayano, 2008). This claim of 'unconditionality' makes their arguments more ethical than Miyadai and Furuichi.

However, this brings another question: who provides this unconditional acceptance, and in what ways? Moreover, waiting to be "accepted" seems to be too passive. Thus, although Allison (2013, p.67) agrees with Amamiya that '*ikizurasa*' is the pressing issue in contemporary Japan, she is not supportive about the demand of unconditional acceptance, commenting that it reflects a Japanese culture of "dependence" on authority figures. Probably any argument that connects the alienation in contemporary Japan with a 'lack of recognition/acceptance' leads people to a dead end: to the self-subjugation to the authority which provides a safe place and acceptance.

While the liberal political scientists ignore the sociological analysis of the alienated subjectivity in a complex society, these sociological approaches to the Japanese postmodern condition seem to lack a political view. Both the prevailing political theories and sociological analysis lack the imaginary of

'politics in the postmodern condition'. Therefore my research attempts to theorise it.

This thesis pursues a completely new political imaginary, which does not suggest achieving the self-conscious self, or re-establishing simulative meta-narratives, or demanding some kind of utopian authority to provide unconditional acceptance. It also avoids celebrating the meaninglessness because, as seen in the previous chapter, people need some kind of meaning. None of these prescriptions seems to provide hope, as we examined in the previous chapter with many tragic attempts to articulate the outside.

The rest of this chapter attempts to map out the framework of politics in the postmodern condition. I investigate political theories based on post-structuralist concepts. Instead of presuming a rational subject who takes actions based on their solid interest or moral consciousness, they accept that the subject is embedded in a complex social nexus and their sense of value is highly affected by its external aspects. Although this claim undermines the conventional foundation of politics, I argue that there are a number of attempts which invent ways for such 'postmodern' subjectivity to become the agent of social change, instead of giving into nihilism.

3.2 Politics in the postmodern condition: Liberation from what?

3.2.1 Biopower and micropolitics

It seems that collective action for social change sounds unrealistic nowadays because we share no clear notion of 'who changes and how'. The *Zenkyoto* activist Kosaka (2006) recalls that he was unclear about who the enemy was

at that time (See Chapter 2), which marks a symbolic statement of political impasse in contemporary society.

In traditional radical theory, hegemonic power had been considered to exist outside the subject, and to control, oppress or exploit them. The hegemonic power was articulated in a single system or institution, be it the state power or the economic system of capitalism. Radical politics were illustrated as a project of emancipation from this hegemonic power (Call, 2002; Newman, 2007). It took the form of a counter-hegemonic struggle, which aims at the entire reversal of the power relations by establishing another hegemonic power (Day, 2005, p.8).

However, in the post-industry society, power relations become more complex. Factory workers were alienated from the product of their labour under industrial capitalism; yet there was a clear distinction between private time and labour time. They could live up to their own values in their private time. However, in the transition from the Fordist economy of mass production to the post-Fordist economy of decentralised production networks, now workers are forced in to flexibility, mobility and precariousness.

This brought unstable employment and change in the nature of work itself. The newly emerging 'immaterial labour' or 'affective labour' blurred the boundary between labour time and non-labour time (Hardt and Negri, 2004; Virno, 2004a). In a post-Fordist economy, not only the material production during the waged labour time are evaluated in the market; but every form of production in our lives, including knowledge, social relations, affects and DNA

code, are commoditised and are immersed in the values of the market (Hardt and Negri, 2004). The previous chapter examined how Japanese university students are already devoting a significant part of life into job-hunting (shukatsu) activity, accommodating themselves into the dominant narrative and acquiring communicative skills (See 2.3.3).

When the entire values of life are immersed in the capitalist norm, it is difficult to envisage the alternative, or even to imagine the outside of this power. The power in contemporary society does not operate directly from oppressive institutions; it rather exists in the capillaries of our everyday life, as Foucault's (1988) concept of 'bio-power' shows. It functions through the dynamic social relationships in our everyday lives, providing meaning, acceptance and legitimacy in our individual lives (Newman, 2007).

Foucault (1998) acknowledges that this power to construct identities and norms has been invented historically. Although there is nothing essential and authentic in our identities and the norms, they are presented as absolute, and they define certain people as deviant. Since biopower exists in capillary form and operates in every social relationship rather than being operated by a single institution, it is difficult to identify a target of subversion. How can we identify the source of this omnipresent power of nomination, and how can we liberate ourselves from it?

One answer is that, were the hegemonic power to be dispersed in our everyday lives, so would the struggles. Resistance in a postmodern society becomes pluralised, and each form of resistance is addressed in a specific

case in a particular situation (Call, 2002, p.76). In short, the capillary nature of power in postmodern society requires "micropolitics" rather than totalitarian revolution (Call, 2002). A simple attack on state institutions is ineffective, or perhaps harmful, because attacking one form of hegemony simply leads to its replacement by another hegemony, leaving the same power structure (Call, 2002).

However, the particularistic and localised struggles, or micropolitics, also seem to present a problem. Newman (2007) argues that micropolitics dismiss the old type of power: sovereignty. According to him (2007), sovereignty still exercises an overwhelming and monolithic power in contemporary society. Micropolitics, which is the affirmation of dispersed struggles, fails to challenge the fundamental problem of state capitalism (Newman, 2007). In fact, micropolitics can be seen as a reflection of the powerless fragmented subject in the neoliberal system, whose mind is occupied with protecting himself from the instability of society rather than changing society.

Such criticism of micropolitics corresponds to a common argument regarding so-called 'identity politics'. Since diversified identities in the post-industrial society have blurred the idea of a collective identity for political resistance, such as the Marxist revolutionary subject, the 'proletariat', new social movements pay more attention to particular subordinated identities such as women and ethnic minorities. Identity politics demands the rights of such subordinated identities. However, critical voices sometimes claim that such identity politics only seeks the inclusion of minorities into the system; hence, what it demands is a reform of the existing system, and it does not question

the structure of oppression (Melucci, 1996; Castells, 1997; Day, 2005; Papadopoulos *et al*., 2008).

The conventional revolutionist approach and the reformist approach "are both state-centred approaches" (Holloway, 2002, p.157). They presume the state as the authorising power to provide rights to individuals. Therefore, there could be an argument between different identities over who should be given rights and in what way. Identity politics operates within the framework of institutional politics, and may lead to "identity wars" in which the "oppressed groups are forced to compete for political mediation and representation" (Chesters and Welsh, 2006, p.132).

Demanding the recognition of identity from the existing system does not challenge the power to legitimate. On the other hand, post-structuralist theory provides a tool for "a systematic deconstruction of the claims to legitimacy of any institutional authority" (Koch, 2011, p.34); and it is "designed to decentre the production of language and truth to more accurately reflect the contingent and relative character of knowledge" (Koch, 2011, p. 33). Recognising the fluidity and instability of existing identities and norms is the first step to imagining the outside of the existing system. By questioning the power of nomination which gives a certain legitimacy to the fluid identities, we can open up a new way of thinking (May, 2005).

3.2.2 The concept of flight/becoming

Hence, it seems that post-structuralist micropolitics presents a new way of doing politics in order to challenge hegemonic power of nomination. Here,

micropolitics does not operate within the frame of the state, and it avoids both institutional reform and totalitarian revolution. As Holloway (2010a) explains in his book title, we need a political imaginary of "changing the world without taking power." Day (2005) notes that this new political thought engages in a "flight" from the hegemonic power, rather than modifying it or replacing it with another.

Deleuze and Guattari (1984, 1988) describe power in contemporary society as an "axiomatic." The axiomatic is not like a traditional authority which compels people to obey. It is not a 'code', which has a clear rule of domination or restriction. Yet axiomatic power creates a certain 'manner' to regulate relationships (May 2005). For Deleuze and Guattari, capitalism is a liberating force in one sense, because capitalism undermined traditional authorities and invalidated old codes. It released a flow of desire and fluidised social relationships. However, the flow was not completely free because the capitalist axiomatic regulates its flow. It directs people to follow a certain flow which serves its own purpose: a market system (Deleuze and Guattari, 1984, 1988). The state is the apparatus of legitimatising this axiomatic, and this is why replacing a state power with a new one does not mean liberation (Holloway, 2010a; Day, 2005; Deleuze and Guattari, 1988).

Instead, the tactics of flight enable a freer and more interactive flow of forces. Holloway (2010a) articulates two forms of power operation; "power-over" signifies a one-directional force imposed on another, while "power-to" is described as a communicative and creative force. He describes the resistance against the capitalist axiomatic as liberating the form of "power-to"

from the "power-over" (Holloway, 2010a, p.36). The axiomatic is still the "power-over", which is based on the legitimising process conducted by the state or other institutions. In contrast, "power-to" is the power of creation motivated by our desire.

For Deleuze and Guattari (1988), nomadic flight entails a tactic of "becoming minor." They consider majority-ness a constant in the homogeneous system, while the minority is a subsystem defined by the dominant system; on the other hand, becoming minor means the escape from the dominant system (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988, p.105). It is an action taken to escape categorisation. While the traditional revolutionary movement to overturn state power can be explained as the attempt at "becoming major" and of acquiring "power-over" (Holloway, 2010a), the capillary form of postmodern power requires the tactics of "becoming minor" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988) to ward off the power over us, defining who we are and how we live.

Holloway (2010a) acknowledges that it is the struggle of "non-identity." Rather than demanding the recognition of identity from the hegemonic power, this struggle questions and rejects the pre-existing identity legitimised by the power. In doing so, it negates the hegemonic power to define people, thereby undermining the power structure of legitimation.

Castells (1997, p.8) adds a more productive meaning to these tactics of non-identity. In his analysis, identity is classified into three categories. "Legitimising identity" is enforced by the dominant system, which works to maintain the prevailing practice. "Resistance identity" attempts to overturn this

devalued and subsidised identity, asking for protection or empowerment. While this struggle based on the "resistance identity" corresponds to identity politics, a third category, "project identity," describes a new building of identity by social actors, which transgresses a hierarchical, stabilised category of identity (Castells, 1997, p.8). This may be another signifier for the anti-essential, reflexive, collective identity in the postmodern era.

Hence, 'doing micropolitics' in contemporary society means that each person involves the flight from the particular identity, and invents and exercises a new way of living by establishing flexible collective identity.

3.3 Motivation and agency: Who wants social change?

3.3.1 Situationist theory and authentic desire

Hence, the next question to be asked is: who are actually capable of engaging in this resistance as flight? The sixties movement offers a good illustration of resistance based on this creative "power-to." According to Bourg (in Evren, 2011, p.6), the May 1968 movement in Paris was practising the new ethics of liberation, claiming that "freedom was not free enough, equality was not equitable enough and imagination was not imaginative enough." The Situationist International thoughtfully and playfully pursued the liberation of their everyday lives from the hegemonic "power-over," claiming in particular the autonomy of meaning and value.

For example, they encouraged a tactic called "détournement," which deliberately subverts or reverses the meaning used in the dominant discourses (Call, 2002, p.102). The tactics of flight operated in their everyday

lives. They challenged the axiomatic power which distorts their desire by articulating what to buy, where to go and how to use their time.

The situationists claimed that, in modern society, people were alienated not only from the goods they produced, as the traditional Marxist theory addressed, but also from their own experience and desires (Debord, 1983; Vaneigem, 1983). Consumer capitalism attempts to commoditise every aspect of our lives, even our leisure time. According to the aforementioned authors, people are now living in a spectacular society, in which their entire social lives are mediated by the commodity relationship. Hence, people's lived experience is falsified through the mediation of signs and symbols (Debord,1983; Vaneigem, 1983).

In a consumer society, people are rendered passive and powerless entities, free only to choose from the existing products on the market and the pre-articulated lifestyle and roles (Vaneigem, 1983). People have lost control over their lives, have lost their ability to value their own lives, and have been alienated from their real desires. Needing to fill this void in their values, people seek their meaning of life by following the pre-established scenario or trying "to assimilate roles and play them according to official norms" (Vaneigem, 1983, p.96). They try to achieve satisfaction by playing a role given by the dominant power, and end up strengthening the system. Vaneigem argues that this "survival sickness" (1983, p.123) causes frustration in the society of the spectacle, as it only provides people with boring stability without disparate passion. Between nihilistic submission and resistance, there is a "wasteland of the suicide and the solitary killer" (1983, p.136).

The sixties radical movement was the rejection of this system, claiming that they "don't want a world where the guarantee of not dying of starvation brings the risk of dying of boredom" as some of the graffiti in Paris '68 stated (Knabb, 2006). Analysing the hopeless cycle of self-subjugation, the situationists proposed resisting the spectacle society by following one's subjective will and creativity (Vaneigem, 1983). By creating the festive atmosphere, they intended to release the uncontained, collective pleasure which was supposed to become subversive energy for social change. Following Dadaism and Surrealism's path of destroying the petrified form of art, the situationists' tactics aimed to destabilise and deconstruct existing norms and to construct new situations.

That is why they offered improvisational practices of positioning themselves outside the familiar orientation, fixed representation and definition in search of lived experience (Plant, 1992). The situationists did not claim any universal foundation for their revolution; instead, the revolution to them was the accumulation of people's constant attempts to reject their impoverished everyday lives (Plant, 1992).

The situationists' vision is picked up in the later post-anarchist theory such as 'Temporary Autonomous Zone' (TAZ) claimed by Hakim Bey (1991). TAZ "is like a uprising which does not engage directly with the State" because it is rather "a guerrilla operation which liberates an area" and soon "dissolves itself to re-form elsewhere/elsewhen before the State can crush it" (Bey, 1991). According to Grindon (2004), Bey stands further away from the Marxist

discourse compared to the situationists because Bey's concept has accepted the postmodern logic of "suspicion towards meta-narratives." Bey (1991) describes TAZ as the perfect tactics with which to fight against the omnipresent power in the postmodern society.

However, the approach of the situationists and the neo-situationists such as Bey is problematic in several ways. The most fundamental question is: who are actually capable of, or willing to engage in, these tactics? They ignore the fact that not all people will "spend their days drifting about the street of Paris" (Day, 2005, p.164). Hence, Franks (2011, p.175) points out that Bey's nomadism influenced by the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari is a somewhat "elitist forms of resistance" which is suited to "economically independent individuals." Moreover, pure pleasure, which both the situationists and Bey identify as the revolutionary impetus, is what "everyone who gets caught up in capitalist production and consumption" is ultimately seeking (Day, 2005, p.165).

The situationists seemed to presume that the impetus of rebellion is inherent in each individual. Vaneigem (1983) seems to believe that every individual has free will and the desire for 'true life' even though they submit themselves to the spectacle commodity relations. However, is it really possible for the subject to desire the outside of representation in contemporary society?

The situationists may have overlooked the complicating nature of the hegemonic power in contemporary society. The capitalist axiomatic power does not deny or falsify one's desire itself. It simply channels our desire into a

certain value system, resulting in our identity and the meaning in life being shaped in this value system. Our desire for a meaningful life does not automatically encourage us to resist the axiomatic power. The problem is that we desire this hegemonic system to give us meanings, identities and even the sense of outside such as thrills and excitement. People desire their own repression. As Deleuze and Guattari acknowledge, what we should ask is: "Why do men fight for their servitude as stubbornly as though it were their salvation?" (1984, p.38)

3.3.2 Simulation theory

The situationists' assumption of the authentic desire for the true life was particularly problematic for 'postmodern' theorists such as Lyotard and Baudrillard, who believe that the distinction between the original and the representation has already been meaningless in contemporary society (Plant, 1992).

Baudrillard (1994) claims that, in contemporary society, we are surrounded by the empty simulacrum that has no reference to the reality. There is no essence behind the representation — and the representation itself has become fact (Call, 2002). Hence, it is not that the authentic desire is falsely represented by commodities, as the situationists claimed. Now we are living in the society of simulation, where the models/images without origins substitute the real (Baudrillard, 1994).

Baudrillard (1994, p.6) acknowledges the successive phases of the image as (1) the image reflects a profound reality; (2) it masks and denatures a

profound reality; (3) it masks the absence of profound reality; (4) it has no relation to any reality and becomes pure simulacrum. The first case is probably applicable to Yasuo Tanaka's novel *Somehow crystal* ([1981] 2013), in which the consumer goods are the "representation" of their feelings (See 2.2.2). The situationist critique of the "spectacle" implies the second as they claim that it falsifies true desire. However, what has seen in the contemporary Japanese society is close to the third and fourth. Okazaki's comic *River's edge* ([1994] 2000) illustrates the young generation who are endlessly chatting about empty gossip, which hides the absence of narratives to describe their pain in life (See 2.2.4). The analysis of Kitada (2005) and Azuma (2001) signifies that exchanging simulacra becomes the very objective of communication amongst young people in Japan (See 2.4.1).

The postmodern condition means the death of the real; we can no longer distinguish the 'true' needs from 'falsified' needs in our life, since every aspect of life has already been codified and commoditised (Baudrillard, 1994; Plant, 1992). Now our desire and meaning can only be identified through simulacra (Baurdillard, 1994; Plant, 1992).

Baudrillard's simulation theory is potentially subversive, as Call (2002) argues, because it kills all meanings; nothing can ever claim its authenticity and legitimacy, so we can freely create new meanings. Declaring death to all meaning is far more radical than encouraging a flight from the stable meaning. Baudrillard himself argues that affirming meaninglessness is liberating:

> If we could accept this meaninglessness of the world, then we could

play with forms, appearances and our impulses, without worrying about their ultimate destination (Baudrillard, 2001, p.128).

However, in this theory, nothing seems to be reborn after the death of meaning, whereas the situationists believe that the released desire for a 'true self' can become the driving force for creating alternative values. For Baudrillard (1993; 2001), the emancipation project is over. We are all liberated; yet what we had believed as a liberating experience was actually the void of meaning. The loss of authenticity and originality is potentially radical because legitimacy is no longer conditioned for creating new meanings (simulations). Then people can freely 'play' with forms which have lost their authenticity – but only if they desire it.

The problem, however, is how they desire it. What motivates people to create new meanings? How do people dare jump into the void and invent new simulations on their own when no one can tell how meaningful this act is? If the outside of this world is the meaningless void, people will prefer to stay inside, pretending that they believe old regime of signs, because at least these signs provide some kind of anchor. In such a case, accepting the meaninglessness would only bring stabilisation rather than mobilisation and new opportunities. The outsiders would remain outside, left isolated, as they are incapable of sharing their experience of suffering.

As has already been analysed in the first section in this chapter, Japanese society indicates that the simulacrum itself could become the legitimising authority. The philosopher Kojin Karatani (in Derrida *et al*., 1984) notes that

the authorities in Japanese society have traditionally been the "anti-constructed construction," which should be differentiated from the construction in Western society. Here, Karatani's term "anti-constructed construction" seems to have a similar meaning to today's use of the term "atmosphere."

This "atmosphere" is the simulated authority, which is absolutely difficult to deconstruct. Despite being an anti-essential simulacrum, it is accepted by Japanese people as the legitimate regime to bring order, harmony, identity and meaning in life. Declaring death to the authentic meaning does not necessarily mean liberation from the hegemonic power. In the death of meaning, we do not know how to value and affirm our own lives, and end up desiring the authority to tell us what is valuable.

It seems that people need meaning, and it is easier and safer to pretend to believe in obsolete meanings than face the void and create a new meaning as simulation. Moreover, when the simulacrum becomes the authority and operates its hegemonic power over us, how can we deconstruct it? We can no longer disprove it by saying that it is 'false'. If it is not the desire for the 'real', what motivates us to reject the present condition, and desire the outside of it? The theory of simulation significantly undermines the belief in the political subject who engages in an emancipation project based on his/her desire for the 'true life', or 'true self'.

3.3.3 Autonomist theory and the concept of 'multitude'

We have been examining a potential political agency in contemporary society,

who neither pursues revolution to take the hegemony nor seeks a reformist approach to the existing system, but who engages in a non-hegemonic struggle of "flight" in everyday life and involves the construction of alternatives.

This type of political agency is also sought by the autonomist Marxist tradition, most popularly acknowledged by Hardt and Negri (2000, 2004) who outline the struggle of the "multitude" against the neoliberal global hegemony "Empire".   For Hardt and Negri, Empire exercises regulative power through a networked relationship and dominates the world under the logic of the neoliberal system. The multitude is defined by them as "all those who work under the rule of capital and thus potentially as the class of those who refuse the rule of capital" (Hardt and Negri, 2004, p.106). Multitude, to them, is a new, flexible collective identity for social change, replacing a fixed identity such as the 'proletariat' in a traditional Marxist sense.

Hardt and Negri (2004, p.99) explain the concept of the multitude in contrast to the other form of collective identities; unlike the "people," which indicates the unified subject defined by the hegemonic power, "multitude" is a network of singularities, "a social subject whose difference cannot be reduced to sameness." Moreover, this "multitude" is distinguished from the completely fragmented and individualistic "mass." Neither a fragmented particular nor a unified whole, the multitude is described as the "plural singularity" (Hardt and Negri, 2004, p.99).

What connects each singularity as the multiplicity? Hardt and Negri assume

that the multitude shapes its collective identity on the basis of what its parts share, the "common." The "common" includes air, water, knowledge and information, which are now under the control of neoliberal regime of Empire. They argue that, because the multitude belongs to the network through which Empire operates its omnipresent power, the micro-political practices of the multitude can be unified to form a collective through this network (Hardt and Negri, 2000, 2004; Day, 2005). The struggle of the multitude are constructed "within Empire and against Empire" (Hardt and Negri, 2000, p.61).

However, the concept of multitude invites some questions. First of all, Hardt and Negri presume that the new collective subjectivity of 'multitude' will naturally emerge in the postmodern condition (Newman, 2007, 2011; Day, 2005). They argue that the multitude is a class concept (2004, p.103). Newman (2007) claims that they have the same tendency as traditional Marxism; just as Marx believed that the revolutionary subject, the proletariat, will emerge automatically from the capitalist system, Hardt and Negri believe that the global network society under the oppression of Empire gives people the motivation for revolt and a foothold for solidarity. Newman acknowledges that their argument ignores the process of subject formation, and therefore it is "the complete eclipse of politics" (Laclau, cited in Newman, 2007, p.184).

In post-industrial society where the fluid values of the network encompasses people's entire lives, almost everyone could be the multitude. However, being in the network does not explain "how this multitude comes together and why it revolts" (Newman, 2011, p.57). In Newman's view (2007, 2011), Empire generates a new division inside its expanded territory, rather than bringing the

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commonness. The emotional division within the multitude is demonstrated by Akagi's resentment that did not turn against the rich '1%' but against the upper side of 'the 99%' of ordinary people who protect themselves by sacrificing the poor.

Secondly, Day (2005, 2011) questions Hardt and Negri's description of the multitude having a static will of "counter-Empire." This signifies their covert tendency towards the struggle for hegemony, towards a totalising political project rather than everyday struggles of flight. However, considering the fluid and omnipresent nature of postmodern power, it is impossible to pre-identify the objective of "counter-Empire" as the basis of collective identity. The struggles of the multitude inevitably take place locally, with their own reason.

To sum up, although Hardt and Negri celebrate a fluid, spontaneous nature of the political subject named "multitude", they regard the motivation and direction of their resistance as a pre-determined constant. Their motivation for revolt is inherent to the system, and the target of their resistance exists separately from the subject (Day, 2005). Day argues that their political thought still entails the hegemonic orientation which aims at replacing one authority with another, legitimate authority (Day, 2005, p.152).

So, how can we describe the process of subject formation as the more flexible process, without presuming the pre-fixed objective and motivation? Day (2005) insists that another autonomist thinker, Paolo Virno, provides a different picture of the multitude. Virno's "multitude" is based on the logic of affinity instead of the logic of hegemony and the totalising political project. To

Virno (2006b, p.196), the multitude involves the "exodus," an engaged withdrawal from the State. People as the multitude never converge into a general will; what they share is a "general intellect" which plays a role as a "score," and the multitude is expressed as an "ensemble of 'acting minorities'" (Virno, 2006b, p.200).

Virno describes the characteristic of the multitude as "not feeling at home" (2004a, p.34). He argues that labour in the post-Fordist era has a communicative and performative aspect without a script or a vision of the end product. This nature has brought insecurity to people's lives. Therefore, in the post-Fordist society, people become opportunistic and cynical, trying to accommodate themselves to the ever-shifting values, and receiving an immediate self-affirmation.

However, for Virno, this subject-less subject is not what we should overcome. Virno argues that the multitude is a form of being, and it has ambivalence. People's sensitivity to contingency might make them opportunistic, powerless subjects; however, this same capacity can bring a new aspect to politics. Virno (2004a, 2006a) argues that its frivolity would form the radical political skills for the multitude to engage in the tactics of exodus.

3.3.4 New meta-narratives?

Another autonomist theorist, John Holloway, also reflects "the logic of affinity", according to Day (2005). Holloway (2010a) joins in the criticism of Hardt and Negri's assumption that the revolutionary subject is automatically born. Holloway identifies emotions and desires as the initial impetus for the radical

political agency. However, it is not a desire for the authentic life, as the situationists claim; it is a desire to reject the present condition, and it is more like an emotional burst of "No" and "that is enough" (Holloway, 2010a). Saying "No" is an attitude based on a particular experience; yet, simultaneously, it has the potential to form collective identity. Referring to the Zapatistas movement in Mexico, Holloway (2010a) acknowledges that many people took the Zapatistas' struggle for human dignity as 'ours'. People such as LGBTs, youths, migrants and workers took the energy of saying "No" from the Zapatistas movement and poured it into their own struggle in their place (Holloway, 2010a).

It seems obvious that Holloway rejects the totalising and coherent political projects. To him, the novelty of the Zapatistas movement is that they advance by "asking" (Holloway, 2010a, p.215). He acknowledges that we cannot articulate our goal in advance. Still, he does not totally deconstruct the motive and the objective for the multitude to share. The expression of "No" and the hope for "dignity" are two faces of a "meta-narrative," according to Holloway (2011). He offers a collective subjectivity based on the flexible, open-ended and non-hegemonic meta-narratives, instead of the presupposed meta-narrative to guide the multitude.

Holloway (2010a) acknowledges the difficulty of going outside the system of Empire, because the domination of Empire has already disempowered us. Thus, rather than reversing the power relations in the flexible network and winning power, he proposes a movement of 'negating' its power relations. This leads him to argue that our struggle is the rebellion "against our own

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complicity" by repeating "millions of experiments" (Holloway, 2010b, pp.256-7). Radical politics is never-ending practices, instead of pursuing a single correct answer.

Are these flexible meta-narratives of 'No' and 'dignity' enough for the postmodern subject to engage in the tactics of 'flight'? Holloway notes many examples of everyday struggle as the flight from capitalist values, including the one "[o]f the girl in Tokyo who says she will not go to work today and goes to sit in the park with her book" (Holloway, 2010b, p.5). Surely non-work is a radical flight. However, it is the most difficult everyday struggle in Japanese society, considering Akagi's (2007, 2011) implication that having a proper job is the minimum condition for being recognised as a fully-fledged citizen by society. Both the hegemonic authority and the ordinary citizen tend to consider a person without a job simply a 'lazy' person.

The girl's 'flight' from her job, or from a role which the dominant system provides, might be the challenge against the system. However, this is suicidal because the flight only makes her invisible and alienated. Why does she loaf on the job and take flight from the capitalist axiomatic to regain her human dignity, when it means that she is risking her job and, therefore, her dignity? Who dares take up these seemingly suicidal tactics of 'flight' and 'non-identity'?

We have been looking for a radical political agency involved in a struggle as flight from everyday life. However, the problem remains that most people may not be willing to be this subject. People are not forced to stay inside the

dominant norm. They have the option to take flight, but they choose to remain inside for their survival. As was seen in chapter one, in the recessionary Japanese society, people are even threatened by 'the risk of dying from starvation' if they step outside this norm and they therefore chose to stay inside the prevailing norm, where there is a risk of 'dying from overwork'. Sometimes it is neither the enforcement nor their own choices that cause people to remain inside. Work is just a ritual of everyday life which people 'accept'. In the previous chapter, we examined that the culprit in the Akihabara incident, Tomohiro Kato, commented that he had 'accepted' his precarious working condition, in which he was even alienated from his feeling of alienation.

Akagi feels hopeless about social change because he knows that no one inside the dominant norm will aid his resistance, regardless of the fact that those people are all part of the precarious "multitude." This unfortunate miscommunication among the multitude should be paid more attention. The "multitude," a possible radical agency in the postmodern era, is never formed as long as the majority of people continue to accept the axiomatic authority. It cannot be formed just because we are living in an interconnected network society. In addition, our desire for a better life does not necessarily take a political form. We have no coherent and sharable language in politics to identify the pain in life. We still cannot see the emergence of the political subject in such postmodern conditions.

3.4 Direction and teleology: Where to go?

3.4.1 Communicative rationality

A new political project of 'flight' invites the question not only of 'who does' but also of 'where to go' after rejecting the hegemonic power of identification.

This question seems to connect with the problem of political agency because, without knowing where to go, people cannot just take a step outside the dominant norm, even though they are threatened by the oppressive power. Post-structuralist theory acknowledges that the meaning and identity that bind people and devalue them are actually contingent and inauthentic. The simulation theory will radically disprove any authority figure. However, people voluntarily bestow authority of simulacra to secure their identities and roles. We are more afraid of incommensurable chaos than a life under the oppressive hegemony, and chapter two examined that the political predicament stems from this complicity of the postmodern subject.

There are several approaches to reassure some kind of universal narrative as a common ground for politics amongst fragmented individuals. Just as the Japanese liberal intellectuals proposed the project of 'achieving Enlightenment modernity' to political apathy in Japan, the project of 'saving Enlightenment modernity' by re-establishing meta-narratives is a common proposal in Western political philosophy to deal with the postmodern condition.

John Rawls (1999) redefines the concept of justice as "fairness" and establishes the principle of justice which he thinks is agreeable to diverse

people in a complex society. Rawls proposes his famous thought experience called "the veil of ignorance." Wearing the veil means having the condition of "non-identity," where people cannot know their identities, economic conditions and so on. Rawls (1999) insists that, under this hypothetical condition, people can make rational judgements based on the common interest, rather than on their own interest, and agree with the universal value of justice and general principle based on that.

However, articulating universal values and constructing general principle is not enough to deal with particular struggles, since it will inevitably become abstract and disembodied. As already examined, what Akagi (2007) criticises about the liberal approach is the laziness of those who merely preach the abstract languages of peace and human rights, when the promotion of this concept itself does not respond to his immediate struggle in life as one of the working poor.

Habermas is another notable figure to "defend and renew the legacy of the Enlightenment and modernity" (Newman, 2007. P.29). He provides universality to the procedure of decision-making rather than to the ultimate goal to be realised. In this sense, he may have moved away from the essentialist approach. Habermas outlines the universal theory of rational communication in the public sphere, where the subject engages in honest and free speech acts and achieves consensus (Habermas, 1990). Here, rationality is not internalised to the autonomous subject. Instead, what he proposes is "communicative rationality," which is retrospectively established intersubjectively, through the deliberation process in the public sphere (Call,

2002; Newman, 2007).

However both Call (2002) and Newman (2007) claim that this rational communication itself is essentialist in its process, although not in its goal. To ensure free speech acts, his theory presumes certain rules and procedures to be agreed in advance by the participants. This restricts the way of communication, and the diversity of the participants will be blunted (Newman, 2007). The adherence to rationality in the procedure excludes 'irrational' emotion from politics, despite it being a crucial part of human subjectivity (Newman, 2007).

Call (2002) is more critical of Habermas's trust in rationality as a fair ground for politics. According to him, fair decision-making through a rational process is impossible in an era when people are surrounded by advertisements and media-led discourses (Call, 2002). Our sense of value has been affected by the media spectacles before fair and honest political deliberation. It is easier for us to accept the value system promoted by mass media than to establish the legitimate value system to be retained through rational deliberation. In short, we cannot presume that individuals are motivated to engage in the rational decision-making process.

3.4.2 Politics of emotions and experiences

Politics have been predominantly thought to be within the frame of rational discourse. Political studies usually focus on institutional politics, and emotions have not received much attention in such politics. However, some recent research has re-evaluated the role of emotion as a significant mobilisation

resource for politics (Goodwin and Jasper, 2004). Social movements are seen as the arena for such 'emotional' politics. For example, ACT UP, a direct action group against the HIV/AIDS epidemic, successfully articulated the feeling of anger and channelled it politically against the government (Gould, 2004). What characterises today's anti/alter-globalisation movement (AGM) is their carnivalesque, festive style of protests (Hardt and Negri, 2004; Chesters and Welsh, 2006; McDonald, 2006), which also has brought emotional expression into the political field.

Emotional experiences enable people to imagine a collective subjectivity without rational consensus. In his analysis of AGM, McDonald (2006) acknowledges that collective identity is constructed through participation. He argues that there should not be a strict separation between emotions and reason, between body and mind. Instead, a body shapes cognition through its experience (McDonald, 2006). According to him, the conventional social movements have been using a grammar of disembodied representation, which identifies the purpose of the movement and controls its direction. In contrast, the contemporary social movements have employed a new grammar: a grammar of action and embodied experience (McDonald, 2006). This seems to resonate with Day's proposal for new politics with the "logic of affinity" instead of the conventional politics based on the "logic of hegemony" (Day, 2006).

These kinds of politics based on embodied actions, or the logic of affinity, do not represent a fixed message. Each participant brings his/her own particular reasons to be shared, and the movement works as an improvisation without

the entire blueprint for a society to come (McDonald, 2006). Rather than making a coherent and unified claim, this grammar of action allows a movement to be interpreted by society just like performance art. Its meaning and value are acquired through practice, in the presence of others (McDonald, 2006).

However, the question arises of how this eruption of emotions can become political actions without the Habermasian notion of 'rationality' that allows constructive deliberation to achieve consensus. Newman (2007) argues that the AGMs visualises a kind of unessential universality. Although the AGM emerges out of unpredictable, contingent, singular events in each particular region, they are, as a whole, projecting a universal narrative of anti-neoliberalism. Therefore, he acknowledges that the AGM needs a next stage to become a global political project for articulating "what the world should be" (Newman, 2007, p.189).

Here, AGMs are illustrated as a kind of a convertor, which translates particular, individualistic and incoherent voices into something intelligible, a universal political language of anti-neoliberalism. Newman seems to describe emotion as the initial impetus of the movement; however, that emotional language itself is not sustainable enough to retain a political project for social change. To him, AGMs need a unification process to be more politicised, in order to engage in radical politics for social change.

Newman's position seems to be well balanced. He (2007) contrasts the approach of Habermas with the claim of Lyotard; while Habermas seeks to

recuperate modernist rationality in discourse to ensure a social bond, Lyotard celebrates incommensurability and claims that all phrases have heterogeneous meanings. As mentioned earlier, Newman rejects Habermasian rationalism. However, he is also suspicious of Lyotard's celebration of difference and heterogeneity (Newman, 2007).

For Lyotard, the role of communication is to reveal difference and incommensurability. On the other hand, Newman (2007) considers that this would merely result in the absolutising of difference. This suggests the impossibility of reaching a consensus, and it seems unproductive as a political project. In the same manner, Newman (2007) is also doubtful about Foucault's anti-institutionalism and Deleuze's nomadic subject, because they would lead to an individualistic judgement. His stance is determined to offer the middle way of the rationalistic approach by Habermas and the individualistic and nomadic approach of the so-called 'postmodern' trend.

Newman agrees with the post-structuralist rejection of the Cartesian rational subject. Hence, Newman insists that politics "does not emerge on the basis of one's essential or pre-existing identity"; instead, people become political through the process of "de-subjection" or "dis-identification", which Newman explains as involving "a separation or a disengagement from one's established social identity or role" (Newman, 2007, p.88). This appears to resonate with Holloway's "non-identity" (2010a, p.151) and the politics of flight (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988).

However, for Newman, political action needs a certain coherence and anchor

for the subject (2007). He introduces a Lacanian subject, who finds the uncertainty of the self, or the lack of complete self-knowledge. In the theory of Lacan, a subject is not completely grasped because some part of it exists outside the individual's own understanding, and also because the external order (language) fails to signify it. This incomplete, "partial identification" drives the subject to fill this gap to act politically (Newman, 2007, p.87).

In Newman's view, political agency emerges between universality and particularity. In other words, political agency emerges when an individual is involved in a particular struggle in the pursuit of universality. Here, universality emerges retrospectively, as a result of particular struggles interacting and resonating with one another. Hence, social movements are creating "unstable universalities," an unpredictable goal which is yet to come and is only projected through a singular event (Newman, 2007). This universality might be described as justice, equality or human rights; it is something perfectible, although it is not articulable in advance.

His concept avoids any essentialist concepts such as the authentic self, the pre-fixed principle of justice or the rationalistic procedures, but it still offers some anchors for collective action for social change. To put it differently, although Newman accepts the 'postmodern' subject and politics of particular actions and emotions, he presumes that radical politics needs to establish a common ground to project a general will.

However, it remains unclear how this unessential universality might be established. Although I agree that the current global movements share the

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anti-neoliberal aspect, I am not sure whether everyone who hopes for radical social change necessarily shares this notion. Can multiple singularities ever achieve consensus over "what the world should be"? Even if nobody disagrees with abstract ideas such as human rights and justice, it is questionable whether we can agree on what should be done at a practical level. Therefore, is it really meaningful to assume some universality of the project? This raises one simple question: What if we do not assume any universality?

3.4.3 The concept of rhizome and plateaus

The politics of emotions and the grammar of embodied action seem to be key concepts for the political imaginary in the postmodern condition, where the source of oppression and the coherent political subject is unidentifiable.

Hardt and Negri declare that the movement of the multitude is necessarily carnivalesque. It is "the prose that opposes the monologue" and it thus "refuses to claim an already completed truth, producing instead contrast and conflict in the form of narrative movement itself" (Hardt and Negri, 2004, p.210). When we cannot describe a theme with any rationalistic language, emotions must be poured directly into politics, and grammars of action as embodied experience (McDonald, 2006) are utilised, in contrast to the familiar organisational politics with control, purpose and cognition. Holloway's (2011) meta-narrative of "No" and "dignity" seems to be understood as these embodied expressions.

In this carnivalesque movement, emotional expressions are not translated

into a coherent and cognitive political language. This virtuosic activism blurs the boundary between the political and cultural spheres and it therefore broadens a concept of political struggles (Chesters and Welsh, 2006). This carnivalesque movement probably cannot be illustrated as a convertor of chaos to coherence, but it is more like a disseminator of actions.

Using a concept of Deleuze and Guattari (1988), Chesters and Welsh (2006, p. 90) describe the actions in the AGMs as "plateaux," which is the "temporary stabilisation and heightening of collective intensities." Inside the movement, participants experience a number of encounters, networking, collective deliberation and capacity-building processes, and its resonance works as a "strange attractor" (Chesters and Welsh, 2006, p.91) to direct people to many different plateaus, forming a new network.

A plateau avoids "any orientation toward a culmination point or external end" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988, p.22). It exists as a node in the interconnected network in society. Deleuze and Guattari describe this network as a "rhizome," in contrast to the arboreal form within a hierarchy. They note:

> A rhizome has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, intermezzo. The tree is filiation, but the rhizome is alliance, uniquely alliance. The tree imposes the verb "to be," but the fabric of the rhizome is the conjunction, "and…and…and…" […] Where are you going? Where are you coming from? What are you heading for? These are totally useless questions (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988, p.25).

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The concept of a rhizomatic network and collective action as a plateau provides an alternative model to the conventional politics that are converging into some sort of meta-narratives to be perfected. It suggests that we will be motivated, and kept motivated, without assuming any universal references. The concept of a rhizome implies that we can still engage in radical politics in the postmodern condition, where we cannot articulate any 'authentic self' to be liberated and the final destination to be reached.

Since rhizomatic thinking provides no concept of beginning or end, it will invalidate the question of "where to go." However, the question remains as to how the alternative can be realised. In this rhizomatic view, the political project cannot be identified in the pre-fixed model; neither is it heading towards an unessential universality to be agreed upon through collective deliberation or emotional exprience. This abandonment of the building of a universal consensus may strengthen the postmodern incommensurability. Newman (2007) worries that it merely embraces atomised individualism, from which nothing creative will be generated.

Newman's position can be seen in the light of contemporary anarchism under the influence of post-structuralism, since he does not presume any pre-identifiable order either as the goal or as the procedure. However, there seem to be two approaches in this anti-essentialist politics. One approach presumes the convergence towards some sort of universality which is yet to come. Another approach, suggested by a rhizomatic view, rejects any convergence toward universality. Newman (2011, p.64) clarifies that this is the

ontological difference; while the former refers to "lack" and "transcendence," the latter pays attention to "abundance" and "immanence."

Newman (2007, p.189) acknowledges that radical politics needs a universal project to identify the alternative, or "what the world should be." However, this term "should" seems to be rejected in the latter approach. In Deleuzian philosophy, the alternative is described as 'how one might live' instead of 'how one should live' (May, 2005). Here, the question of life is illustrated as an actualisation of one form out of countless possibilities.

While an arboreal view describes the aspect of life as the movement towards the ultimate form of 'what it should be', a rhizomatic view describes life as endless encounters, connections and temporary assemblages, which Deleuze and Guattari (1988) call plateaus. The world is not composed of identities to be represented; rather, it is composed of "swarms of differences that actualise themselves into specific forms of identity" (May, 2005, p.114). Difference is never identified in a coherent language. It cannot be comprehended, but only felt through "palpation" (May, 2005, p.20). This seems to correspond with the carnivalesque movement which does not convey rational political messages, but co-create of new emotional experiences.

In this concept, 'postmodern' radical politics is explained as an experiment in actualising difference from many potentials. This enables a nomadic subject to engage in some meaning-making activities instead of degenerating it into an ever-fleeting entity without a name. According to this worldview, there is no

chaos outside the existing order. There is an anchor, which is nameless, formless, and more like an ever-changing network that includes ourselves.

3.5 Possible political imaginary in the postmodern condition

3.5.1 Deconstructed subject

Finally, I outline the framework of a new political imaginary in contemporary Japanese society, suggested by my analysis in this chapter. There are two different types of prescriptions for the postmodern political predicament. One is to separate the subject from the complex network and to reconstruct the self-conscious subject who can rationally design a new normative order to affirm our lives. The other is to accept the political subject under the influence of the capillary power but to supply the impetus for political engagement from the emotions and particular experience; s/he is loosely anchoring him/herself with the 'rhizomatic' network created by the experience of encounters.

The former type is most clearly addressed by the liberalist approach of saving (or 'achieving' in the case of Japan) modernity. Rawls' "veil of ignorance" tries to salvage an autonomous subject from the entangled social relationship and enable these subjects to rationally agree with the universal concept of justice. The "communicative rationality" proposed by Habermas may not be clearly categorised as the 'reconstructing-modern' project. However, he also tries to save a rational subject from the complex social nexus, so that he/she will be able to identify new norms and orders through communications.

However, from the post-structuralist view, it seems impossible for any individuals in contemporary society to separate themselves from the influence

of a networked society. As Call (2002) acknowledges, people are surrounded by advertisements that constantly influence our sense of value. Hence, the post-structuralist view discards the idea that the political subject must be rational. It proposes a heterogeneous, deconstructed subject rather than a self-conscious and rational political subject. This deconstructed subject finds his/her own way from the encounters and emotional experiences in the rhizomatic network.

What is notable is that this image of a deconstructed subject resonates with the subjectivity traditionally present in Japanese society. As was mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, Japanese culture is traditionally 'postmodern' because the subject is always deconstructed and embedded in the social relationship. A network composed of particular small narratives has been their anchor and the source of order. Their anchor has always been a simulative narrative created in the network.

To Japanese liberal theorists, this deconstructed subject is the very reason for political apathy in contemporary Japanese society. People become a passive entity who internalise the value system created in the social network to which they belong. Here, a network as the anchor operates a hegemonic power. People voluntarily authorise the value created in the network and internalise it as the absolute norm to follow. In a complex society, the norms emanating from the network became fragmented and fluidised, and they have brought insecurity to life. People chose to retreat into a small territory to secure their lives; however, this survival strategy sacrifices the people outside and also suffocates those inside.

Hence, it is understandable that Japanese liberal intellectuals, such as Masao Maruyama (1965), claim that the deconstructed subject can never be political. However, as I have repeatedly mentioned, the liberal political project of reconstructing the rational and self-conscious subject consequently looks almost impossible in a contemporary society. Hence, this chapter has outlined a new imaginary of 'postmodern' politics, which is scarcely argued by Japanese political theorists.

This chapter has articulated a deconstructed self as the potential political subject, rather than insisting on overcoming it. It asked how we can save this postmodern deconstructed subject from becoming a passive entity in a networked society, an entity whose members are only accommodating themselves to ever-changing norms.

I argue that post-structuralist knowledge indicates that although an individual is under the influence of the complex and fluid value systems, s/he can anchor him/herself to a rhizomatic network created by his/her emotions and encounters. More importantly, it is possible to do so without authorising the value created in the network as the absolute norm. In this sense, the 'immanent' trend of post-anarchism suits my purpose more than the 'transcendental' one, since a rhizomatic network encourages endless encounters, and it does not seek a convergence into the permanent stability.

In practice, it seems difficult to identify this ontological difference between 'lack/transcendence' and 'abundance/immanence' theory, because both reject

the concept of the self-conscious political subject and the pre-identifiable order for politics. However, the former tends to see that encounters and connections in the movement are important for realising some sort of complete form. Although I am aware that Newman emphasises that this universality should be unstable, any transcendental reference seems at risk of being treated as hegemonic authority.

On the other hand, a rhizomatic view considers connections and encounters as the temporary actualisation of difference. Thus, the encounters and connections in the rhizomatic network create nothing like a universal value that everyone should accept. Instead, it creates body experiences, new emotions and desires which motivate people from within.

3.5.2 Radical opening

The rhizomatic model of thought indicates that radical politics is still possible even though we cannot assume that any authenticity will be released or constructed, or even though we cannot become a rational subject who is independent of the influence of the complex network. A new political subject experiences encounters in a complex network, acquires new emotions and inputs for further political commitment.

However, this rhizomatic thinking is still not enough to explain how people might become political in the postmodern condition. The encounters and emotional experiences in a rhizomatic network do not necessarily bring creative results. Relationships with others may be destructive or dominative. Moreover, the encountering is a risky operation. In this complex society, we

cannot predict the impact of our action. A small encounter could have a fatal effect on an individual.

The insight of rhizome (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988) suggests that the outside of the existing order is not a meaningless void. However, the creative interaction and resonance in the rhizomatic network will never occur unless they are willing to interplay. A possible political subject at least needs to create an escape velocity to the proximate 'other' to connect and interact. The question remains as to how this initial opening occurs.

Akagi's hope of war (2007) is one imaginary of this opening; it is a very radical one, because he does not believe that people will voluntarily open themselves to the risky outside. He claims that war is a last resort to deconstruct the closed territory of those who desperately try to reassure stability by sacrificing other people outside.

If such a violent rupture is the only way of achieving the opening, it is too pessimistic. In addition, even though war would bring radical mobilisation, this does not mean that it would be permanently open. Society will be stabilised again, leaving different outsiders. Akagi (2007) himself knows that war is not the fundamental solution for this reason. What he really wants is not a destructive and once-and-for-all openness, but a society that is permanently open (See 2.4.3).

In fact, Akagi proposes a less violent way to achieve permanent openness and encounters. In his work, he briefly references a story from Kurt

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Vonnegut's novel *Slapstick, or Lonesome No More!* (1976, cited in Akagi, 2011). The people in this fictional society are supposed to form a family with those who have the same middle name. The point is that this middle name is randomly chosen by a computer. Akagi identifies his hope in this random system, acknowledging how a 'meaninglessly' enforced name can create affection and encourage mutual help (2011, pp.370-374). What Akagi sees in Vonnegut's novel is 'institutionalised' random encounters rather than the violently forced opening brought about by the catastrophe.

Be it violent catastrophe or institutionalised randomness, Akagi's argument presumes some external power, which is beyond human control, intention and reasoning. This resonates with the language of post-structuralist political theory; for example, Newman argues that the beginning of the political subject is caused by a 'rupture' of the self. In a similar sense, Day introduces Simon Critchley's concept of "infinite responsibility" at the heart of his affinity-based politics, and explains it as "always being open to the invitation and challenge of another Other" (Day, 2005, p.18).

Critchley (2007) argues that the encounter with the incomprehensible other is the beginning of ethics. From this argument, we can connect the imaginary of radical opening with ethics, rather than that of war or 'institutionalised' randomness. Ethics is not something identifiable in advance as principles. It is something that each individual creates through the encounter with the others. Day (2005; p.177) notes that the postmodern subject will rely upon "ethics of shared commitments based on affinities rather than duties based on hegemonic imperatives." Ethics will take the 'postmodern' deconstructed

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subject out of the hopeless desire for hegemony and absolute reference, and instead enable them to ask how we "might" live, rather than how we "should" live (May, 2005).

Summary and further directions

I started this chapter by describing how the postmodern condition brought difficulty for us to hope for social change. In post-industrial complex society, almost everybody constitutes "the multitude" in Hardt and Negri's sense (2000, 2004), as they are penetrated by the fluid global hegemony. However, in reality, it is extremely difficult for us to venture outside this established norm.

The hegemonic power is no longer exercised through tangible institutions. Often, the power operates within our choice of what to buy and how to spend our time. It operates within our desire for a stable, fulfilled and meaningful life. In such a condition, it is difficult to identify the source of frustration and express the hope of changing. Most people find themselves being powerless entities merely to accommodate the ever-shifting norm.

This chapter has outlined a new political imaginary which is different from conventional politics with fixed identity, reason, intention, purpose and totalising ideology. Deleuze and Guattari's rhizomatic thinking (1988) provides a new vision of politics in which a political subject remains deconstructed and penetrated by the influence of complex network, but still motivates the self for political commitment with its own desire, and keeps experimenting with new potentials without any authoritarian reference. The last part of this chapter questioned how to open the self to others, to make rhizomatic connections

with them, and to continue engaging in politics. As Day (2005) notes, the post-structuralist politics requires ethics for radical openness, and this ethics of opening will be the key concept for overcoming the politics of hegemony.

From the next chapter onwards, this thesis examines politics after the Fukushima disaster and outlines its potential as a new political imaginary. The Fukushima nuclear accident is the imaginary of war and disaster which violently brings a radical opening to the subject. Although I do not insist that the disaster in general constitutes a necessary part of the re-imagining of a new form of politics, it is evident that this Fukushima nuclear disaster has mobilised significant number of Japanese people to political engagement. This political engagement still continues in 2015, four years after the accident. I examine this politics after the Fukushima disaster and articulate the protesters' sense of agency and ethics emerged from the mobilisation. This helps me to envisage a new political imaginary in the postmodern condition, which is the ultimate objective of this thesis.

Chapter 4 Methodology

Introduction

Chapter two argued that, in contemporary Japanese society, people's hope for a fulfilled life can no longer be described in political language. The majority of people accept the authority of the hegemonic power because it provides them with a stable identity and meanings, while the minority's desire for social change sometimes takes a violent imaginary. In the postmodern condition, a subject is entangled in a complex social network. The source of the oppression is no longer clearly identified, and people have difficulty in sharing a universal narrative for politics. Chapter three argued that, in such an era, our possible resistance takes place in the sphere of everyday life, saying 'No' to the particular difficult conditions we face, and collectively searching for a better form of life through encounters with other people. Contemporary social movements are often seen as the spaces for such encounters. I argue that they provide new political practices without advancing an idea of a self-conscious political subject replete with a set of universal meta-narratives. Instead social movements are laboratories (Melucci, 1996, p.223) for the creation of new forms of subjectivity and new patterns of relations that give rise to novel and creative political imaginaries.

This research focuses on the anti-nuclear movement after the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear accident as one such political practice. This chapter firstly explains why I chose this movement as a case-study (4.1). The Fukushima disaster highlights the complexity and precariousness of life in contemporary society, and I consider that the protesters in this movement are responding to

it politically. The next section (4.2) explains my epistemological position in social movement studies. My pursuit of a new political imaginary in the postmodern condition cannot be explained within the framework of conventional social movement studies, which tries to identify a general model of successful mobilisation. Instead, my search considers that social movements are the process of creating a knowledge of new political practices. Based on these arguments, my data-collecting methods and limitations are addressed (4.3), followed by a clarification of my position as the researcher (4.4).

4.1 Choosing a case-study

My research conducts a case-study of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement in Tokyo. According to Snow and Trom (2002, pp.158-160), studying a case in a social movement is meaningful under the following conditions: (1) when the case is normal and therefore representative of the lager social movement; (2) when the case highlights the critical character of the movement; or (3) when the case shows the negative and extreme case. My case-study fits the second category. It is important to note that my analysis never represents the general characteristics of the entire post-Fukushima activism or the politics of disaster. I consider that the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement in Tokyo has a critical implication for politics in the postmodern condition, and the purpose of this research is to highlight its aspects.

There are several reasons why I consider this movement to be important. First of all, the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement has become the largest

social movement mobilisation since the 1960s. It marked the awakening of 'apolitical' Japanese citizens. In one sense, this disaster also resonates with the imagination of an 'outside' which Tomohiro Akagi (2007) addresses as the last resort for social mobilisation. Therefore, it is important to examine how this unexpected opening impacted people's perceptions and brought about mobilisation. Opinions are divided amongst Japanese sociologists as to whether the disaster has changed Japanese society (Furuichi, 2011; Kainuma, 2012), and whether the "endless everyday life" (Miyadai, 1998, See chapter 2) has ended.

Secondly, the Fukushima disaster confirmed that we are living in "a risk society" (Beck, 1992), where rational calculation with pre-given variables will not necessarily guarantee the certainty of life. We cannot calculate the risk of a nuclear disaster from the objective data, because it is a very rare case. We cannot compare this incalculable risk with the benefits obtained from nuclear energy. Once the accident occurs, it threatens the lives of people and future generations over a vast area. Talking about nuclear energy in post-disaster Japanese society inevitably invites a lot of questions: Should we give up this incomplete technology before it causes another fatal disaster? With what alternative energy might we replace it? What will happen to the local economy which has been depending on nuclear energy?

The Fukushima disaster exposed the precariousness of life in a complex and interconnected society. The fundamental question is probably as follows: How can we make decisions in a complex risk society when we are uncertain about the results of our (in)action? Or, more broadly, what kind of knowledge do we

need to live well in this era? To 'do politics' in contemporary society requires us to face many contradictions and ambiguities, and thinking within the scope of institutional politics is not sufficient. I believe that the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters are practising a new way of doing politics in such a difficult condition.

The case-study in my research focuses in particular on the protesters in the Tokyo area. People in Tokyo are the victims of the accident in one sense, because they were not notified by the government that the radioactive contamination had reached Tokyo soon after the disaster, despite the government possessing detailed data about this. However, they are not purely victims of the disaster. The Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant, located in a depopulated rural area in northeast Japan, was generating energy for the Tokyo area. This signifies another entangled social relationship between the city and the local community, in which Tokyo people were those with the power over other, politically weaker and more marginalised people. Moreover, the Tokyo protesters are sometimes described as irresponsible 'outsiders' who protest against reactivating nuclear plants located outside of their region. The protesters in Tokyo have consistently been asked who they are and why they are making their claims. I believe that their ambiguous identity reflects the complex nature of contemporary society.

4.2 Approaches to social movement studies

4.2.1 Popular social movement theories

Social movement research became popular due to the proposal of "resource mobilisation theory" in the 1970s, which sees social movements as rational

acts rather than a mere outcome of social dysfunction (Klandermans and Staggenborg, 2002). McCarthy and Zald (1977) proposed an examination of social movements' organisation and the availability of their resources, such as money, labour and media effects, to identify the successful mobilisation factors in social movements. This model theory was further developed by the suggestion to examine the political opportunities in different countries and times (McAdam *et al*., 1996).

These theories enabled the consideration of social movements as political actions rather than irrational deviance. However, their focus is mainly on the structural aspect and they do not examine the subjective aspect of how people get involved in politics. Hence, these theories are criticised for their dismissal of culture, identities and emotions (Melucci, 1996; Goodwin and Jasper, 2004).

The concept of the 'frame' is commonly used to examine the cultural dimension of social movements, asking how people make sense of their actions (Melucci, 1996; McDonald, 2006). In this theory, actors in social movements are not only utilising the given opportunities but are also "actively engaged in the production and maintenance of meaning for constituents, antagonists, and bystanders or observers" (Benford and Snow, 2000, p.613). The framing analysis added a new dimension to social movement studies, as McAdam *et al*. (1996, p.5) explain: "mediating between opportunities, organization and action are the shared meanings and definitions that people bring to their situation."

Although the framing analysis explains the subjective aspect of social movement mobilisation, it is not sufficient to answer my question about how people might become political. Frame analysis identifies which frame is effective for social movement mobilisation; for example, Benford and Snow (2000, pp.619-620) acknowledge that the frame must create "resonance" in people, and the "credibility" of the frame and the frame articulators is important for mobilisation. However, they seem to treat framing as a matter of strategic choice and do not mention how these effective frames might be established.

Alberto Melucci (1996, pp.292-293) addresses the subjective factors for mobilisation as follows. People need 1) a collective identity, or a kind of solidarity, a 'we'; 2) the identification of an adversary; 3) the definition of purpose; and 4) an object at stake in the conflict. Conventional social movement studies presume these as preconditions. However, in chapters two and three, I argued that it is difficult for the postmodern subject to articulate these factors in advance.

The normative social movement theories mostly focus on collective action within the institutional politics, using already existing resources, collective identity and clear purposes. In other words, these theories do not pay attention to the movements that challenge the dominant beliefs and symbols, such as countercultural movements (Goodwin and Jasper, 2004). What I am examining as a new way of politics in the postmodern condition is exactly this kind of movement which the conventional social movement theories fail to examine.

Melucci (1996, p.182) argues that, in the contemporary society, exploitation can be defined as "the deprivation of control over the construction of meaning." As chapter two explained, we subjugate ourselves to the hegemonic power of identification because we consider that, outside of this hegemonic power, we become powerless entities who cannot affirm our own values. Akagi (2007) implies that, once people are assigned a negative meaning by society, it is difficult to make a new frame to counter it. Now the operation of meaning-creation is the predominant power 'over' us. The oppressed people in the post-modern condition often have no access to mobilisation resources, political opportunities and, in particular, the ability to construct cultural framings. We need to find politics in such a condition.

4.2.2 Social movements as knowledge practice

Resource mobilisation and political opportunity theory has an aspect of "political reductionism" (Melucci, 1996, p.198), since it treats social movements as organisational action in the institutional political arena, utilising the resources which have already been used in politics. It is not enough to examine how people without such mobilisation tools establish a collective identity and articulate the source of their sufferings to become political actors. Although the framing analysis focuses on the subjective aspect of social movements, it presumes that social movement actors have access to effective frames, and it does not pay much attention to the postmodern condition where people are deprived of the ability to achieve meaning-creation.

This is why the examination of emotions (Goodwin and Jasper, 2004) has become crucial, as I have already noted in chapter three. It expands the definition of politics and social movements. It allows us to view social movements not as the actor within institutional politics, but as the process of ordinary people expressing their everyday emotions, interacting with other people and finding a new way of doing politics outside the formal political arena.

If we see social movements not as organisational action with a fixed interest but as the processes of each participant establishing his/her identity, claims and practices, then what kind of knowledge will be constructed by researching one case of social movement? The conventional social movement theories have sought general criteria for successful mobilisation. However, when studying the complex dynamism in one movement, with a particular focus on emotions which are fluid and diverse, it is difficult to establish an 'invariant model' of movements (Goodwin and Jasper, 2004). Hence, what kind of knowledge can we create?

Another approach to social movement research considers that the movements are the subject of knowledge production rather than the object of knowledge (Chesters, 2012). Social movements are not mere phenomena whose objectives and strategies are to be interpreted and analysed by researchers. Within social movements, each actor is generating new meanings, values and practices. Chesters (2012, p.147) acknowledges that social movements have the "capacity to develop alternative political imaginaries" and establish "knowledge about how to actualise these imagined

possibilities." It is more ethical for social movement researchers to explore this knowledge, which is generated "by" social movements, than to construct knowledge "about" social movements through their own frameworks (Chesters, 2012, p.148).

In conventional social movement studies, researchers are recognised as the knowledge producers, while the participants are treated as data resources to be interpreted by the researchers or to yield some meaning. In contrast, this new perspective considers that social movements themselves produce knowledge. This blurs the distance between the people observing (researchers) and the people being observed (protesters). The researchers involve the process of knowledge construction which they are examining. This means that the researcher becomes one variable of changing reality, as Melucci (1996, p.395) claims that that "[r]esearchers must also participate in the uncertainty."

This approach might have a problem of generalisation and validity. Snow and Trom (2002) insist that although a case-study in social movement research has difficulty in conducting statistical generalisation, it is able to achieve theoretical generalisation, such as establishing a grounded theory, and extending and modifying existing theories. However, putting researchers into the movement they are examining may cause evidential problems in establishing generalisable knowledge; the analysis may become either very subjective or extremely complex to describe objectively.

As a new proposal for contemporary social theory, Stones (1996) addresses

'sophisticated realism' based on the complex ontology, which opposes both the reductionism of 'sociological modernists', who believe they can obtain truthful knowledge about the complex social reality, and the 'defeatist postmodernists', who do not distinguish real from fiction as they abandon the attempt to provide any evidence for their claims. Stones (1996) accepts the complexity of society where multiple perspectives co-exist; however, he insists that this condition does not necessarily bring the inability to produce coherent knowledge. What the complexity of society entails is the limited knowledgeability, or the incompleteness of evidence. For Stones, it is possible to grasp reality with evidence and to construct knowledge, although it is imperfect. The knowledge will "typically be provisional, fallible, incomplete and extendable", and the goal of such knowledge is neither to obtain absolute truth nor to celebrate relativism without constraints; the goal is "epistemic gain" (Stones, 1996, p.38).

My thesis includes several steps for establishing this knowledge as "epistemic gain." It includes the description "about" the post-Fukushima social movements in chapters five and six, although my focus is upon the subjective matters such as emotions and identities of the protesters. However, that is not my primary aim. In my research, objective identifications about the movement are treated as provisional, and they are extended through a process of dialogical engagement between myself, those I have interviewed and the reflexive process of articulating the political imaginaries that subsequently arise. Through this approach, this thesis ultimately aims to elaborate a new political imaginary in the postmodern condition.

I consider the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements to be a process in which ordinary Japanese people are becoming political and experimenting with new political practices. This has a significant implication for my pursuit of new forms of politics. Chapters seven and eight are devoted to this exploration, using the theoretical framework established in chapter three. At this stage, my concern is the knowledge possessed "by" social movements.

This knowledge is not a complete representation of the real world which is extracted by the researcher, as the sociological 'modernist' claims. I believe that this type of knowledge is constructed out of a resonance in social movements, where countless attempts were made by different actors including the researchers themselves. In other words, the knowledge is generated in the intersection between the protesters as the producers of practical knowledge, myself as a researcher pursuing universal knowledge from it, and the many theorists to whom I refer in this thesis.

4.3 Fieldwork plan and methods

4.3.1 The process of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements

A huge earthquake hit Northeast Japan on 11 March 2011, and a resulting tsunami killed nearly 16,000 people and left more than 2,500 people missing. This disaster caused the meltdown of three nuclear reactors at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant. This third event displaced 150,000 people from their homes and left about 600 square kilometres of land uninhabitable. This disaster was measured as the most serious level (level 7) on the International Nuclear Event Scale, which was as critical as the Chernobyl accident in 1986.

The government and TEPCO (Tokyo Electric Power Company) failed to provide prompt information after the nuclear accident with regard to the scale of damage, contamination and the long-term impact on the human body. This led people to believe that their lives had been disregarded. Between spring and autumn 2011, several anti-nuclear rallies were held in the Tokyo area. Tens of thousands of people joined them, demanding the closure of all nuclear plants in Japan. These actions were combined with countless local actions nationwide.

The movement further expanded in June 2012. By this time, all nuclear reactors had been temporarily shut down for inspection. However, the government decided to restart the Ohi nuclear reactors in west Japan to secure a sufficient energy supply for the summer. More than 100,000 people surged to the weekly protest staged in front of the Prime Minister's official residence (the *Kanteimae* protest) in June and July 2012, and the anti-nuclear movement became a national phenomenon. In response to the pressure exerted by the citizens, the Prime Minister at that time, Yoshihiko Noda, held a meeting with the organiser of the *Kanteimae* protest in August 2012. Although the meeting ended without agreement, it showed that a huge mobilisation could impact on the formal political arena.

However, the phase changed in December 2012 due to the snap election called in the lower parliament. This ended the regime of the centrist Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) and reinstated the centre-right Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), which had been in office throughout most of the post-war period in Japan, and which was more positive about reactivating the

nuclear plants. The election showed that stopping the nuclear reactors was not the immediate issue for the majority of Japanese people.

For the anti-nuclear protesters, the situation in the formal politics has worsened since 2012. The LDP government has solidified its hegemony through two other general elections in 2013 and 2014. The anti-nuclear movements have become far smaller than 2012 and are mostly maintained by the middle-aged and the older generation. However, the anti-nuclear movements have inspired many other collective actions since 2012. The anti-nuclear protesters joined the protests against racism, poverty and the government policy. This new activism has channelled younger generations into politics, and another huge mobilisation occurred in the summer 2015, against the LDP government's reinvigoration of military diplomacy.

4.3.2 Fieldwork term

The post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement has experienced several phase transitions: from the initial mobilisation in 2011 to the temporary decline, its re-ignition in the summer of 2012 and positive feedback from the formal political arena, and then several defeats in the general elections since the end of 2012. Since I was living in the UK for most of this period, the fieldwork was limited to (1) two months from March 2012 to May 2012, (2) another two months from November 2012 to January 2013, and (3) the follow-up period from February 2014 to June 2015, when I returned to Japan.

Since my research focuses on subjective aspects, such as the emotions and identities of the protesters, qualitative research methods were utilised. In

particular, in-depth interviews with the protesters played a significant role. Although the interviews with the demonstration organisers partly served as the key informant interviews from which to obtain knowledge about its members, history and strategies, all interviews were primarily intended to investigate the respondents' personal experiences. I focused in particular on how they describe their collective identity to raise their voices, what kind of objectives or goals they have in their minds, and how their experience of mobilisation has affected their perception of society and sense of agency.

(1) First Fieldwork

The first fieldwork was conducted from the 11th March 2012, the first anniversary of the disaster, to the 6th May 2012, the day after which all the nuclear reactors in Japan were shut down for inspection. This period represented a sort of 'off-season' for the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements. It came after the first mobilisation caused by the initial shock of the accident in 2011, and just before the second huge mobilisation of the *Kanteimae* protests at the end of June 2012. However, this does not mean that people were totally inactive. There were several small anti-nuclear demonstrations organised in Tokyo, and the participants were continuing with their activism, which contributed to the second outburst of the movement a few months later (Oguma, 2013).

The first period of my fieldwork ended on the 6th May 2012. This was the day after all the nuclear plants in Japan had been shut down for inspection. Although most protesters knew that the shut-down was temporary, they celebrated the moment when Japanese society became 'nuclear-free' for the

first time in 42 years.

(2) Second fieldwork [11 November 2012- 13 January 2013]

The post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement became significantly enflamed after my first fieldwork, approximately between the end of June and August 2012. In particular, the *Kanteimae* protest, which has been held every Friday since March 2012, suddenly mobilised over 100,000 people in June and July. This was due to the Japanese government's decision to re-start the Ohi nuclear reactors in western Japan. This was the first resumption since the Fukushima disaster. This incited huge anger among the public because they believed that hardly any accident prevention measures had been taken in the operation of these nuclear reactors. Once the newspapers and TV news had reported the *Kanteimae* protest, the number of participants sharply increased.

Since this huge mobilisation occurred after my first fieldwork, I conducted online observation and prepared the second fieldwork to follow up the situation. This was actualised between November 2012 and January 2013. In this fieldwork, a significant number of my interviewees were recruited from the largest anti-nuclear action, the *Kanteimae* protest.

The principal objective of the second fieldwork was to examine the change in perception among the protesters through their experience of huge mobilisation. The movements were broadly reported by mass media. Many politicians, intellectuals and cultural figures visited the *Kanteimae* protest and gave speeches. In August 2012, even the Prime Minister (at that time), Yoshihiko Noda, had a meeting with the organisers. Following the *Kanteimae*

protest, similar kinds of anti-nuclear protests spread nationwide. The pavement in front of the Prime Minister's official residence has become a space for political protests, such as against inequality and poverty, or the free trade scheme with the United States.

Another issue in this second period was the snap general election held in December 2012. This became an important opportunity to examine the attitude of the protesters to formal politics. The result was a shocking defeat for the anti-nuclear protesters, as the voters handed power to the conservative Liberal Democratic Party, which has been pursuing a pro-nuclear policy in post-war Japanese society. The latter half of my second fieldwork was devoted to examining the reactions of protesters to this 'defeat'.

(3) Follow-up period [February 2014 - June 2015]

Supplemental fieldwork was occasionally conducted from February 2014 to June 2015, as I was staying in Japan at that time. I conducted the second set of interviews with my former interviewees to determine whether there had been any change in their perceptions, feelings and ways of acting. By this time, the anti-nuclear protesters had also joined the counter-racist actions and the anti-government movements, which attracted more media attention than the anti-nuclear movements. I joined these actions and conducted brief interviews to find out whether there were any differences between the anti-nuclear movements. I found that the discourses in these movements were quite similar to those of the anti-nuclear movements, which is why I use the term 'post-Fukushima activism' in the later chapters. In addition, another snap election was held in December 2014, which gave me another chance to

examine the relation between activism and formal politics.

4.3.3 Research subjects

In planning the fieldwork, I distinguished three types of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters to interview: independent activists, demonstration organisers (including staffers), and demonstration participants.

The first cluster is what I call the independent 'activists'. They act independently rather than as members of an organised group. This cluster includes the precariat activist Karin Amamiya and Hajime Matsumoto, one of the members of the anarchist collective *'Shiroto no Ran'* (amateur revolt), which organised the first large-scale anti-nuclear march in Tokyo in April 2011. Both Amamiya and Matsumoto were active before the Fukushima disaster (See chapter two). Although Matsumoto is often mentioned as a 'member' of *Shiroto no Ran*, this *Shiroto no Ran* is actually the name of the recycling shop he owns. *Shiroto no Ran* signifies the young people around him, most of whom are aged around 30 and are engaged in the alternative community movements.

The second cluster is what I call the 'organisers'. They belong to a certain anti-nuclear group or are involved in the movement as staffers. In particular, I focused on two groups: Metropolitan Coalition Against Nukes (MCAN) and Nuclear Free Suginami (NFS), or *Datsu Genpaptsu Suginami* in Japanese.

● MCAN

MCAN is an umbrella network of anti-nuclear groups and activists in the Tokyo

area, and it was founded in 2011. Most of the member groups were newly established after the Fukushima disaster. For example, *TwitNoNukes* was founded by music-loving young people who were loosely connected on Twitter. It organised street demonstrations in Shibuya, the cultural centre of Tokyo. Another member group, *Energy Shift Parade,* has more affinity with environmentalism and seeks sustainable energy to replace nuclear energy. There are also groups that have been active since before the Fukushima disaster. *Tampopo-sha* is an environmental organisation founded after the Chernobyl accident; it has been providing information on the nuclear plants and radiation to the general public. On the other hand, *No Nukes More Hearts* had been spreading the anti-nuclear message in their events with live music since 2007. The core members of these groups are loosely connected in the MCAN network, and they provide the expertise. According to one member, Yasumichi Noma (2012), MCAN is a mere provider of protest spaces rather than taking the initiative in the anti-nuclear movements.

MCAN was chosen as the target group in my research because it organised the first-anniversary memorial anti-nuclear rally (Tokyo Big March) on 11 March 2012, which successfully mobilised 15,000 people. At the end of March 2012, MCAN started organising the protect actions in front of the Prime Minister's office every Friday. This is called the *Kanteimae* protest, and it has become the most popular anti-nuclear protest since June 2012. However, at the time of my first interview (March 2012), none of its members imagined that the anti-nuclear movements would become such a huge phenomenon.

- NFS

NFS is a local anti-nuclear group in the Suginami area of Tokyo. NFS was chosen because of its 'carnivalesque' demonstration held in February 2012. Both Amamiya and Matsumoto joined this demonstration and expressed their praise online, which convinced me that NFS entailed some non-hegemonic message. NFS mainly organised demonstrations and events in its local community. The members were a good mixture of local shopkeepers, office workers, entrepreneurs, local politicians, writers, translators and so on. Their ages also varied from a junior high school student to former student activists in the 1960s. Their general meetings were open to everybody and broadcast online. By participating in their meetings and making online observations while I was not in Japan, I was able to follow how they make decisions and prepare their actions, and how their perception has been changing through their experience in activism.

The third cluster of my fieldwork research is the 'participants'. In the first fieldwork, most of them were recruited from the anti-nuclear demonstrations: MCAN's "Tokyo Big March" and TwitNoNukes' "Twitter Demo". There were also several occupants in front of the offices of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry. This small anti-nuclear camp named "*Tento Hiroba*" was established in September 2011 by relatively elderly protesters, and it is still functioning in 2015. As it has been providing a space for dialogue amongst the protesters, I visited it and conducted some interviews. The recruiting process for these interviewees was random, which was different from the 'activists' and the 'organisers' categories.

To identify the motivational factors, I asked questions such as whether they had any previous experience of activism, what kind of image they used to have of activism, how they felt when they found out about the disaster, what made them join the first action, how they would describe their ideal society, what their friends and family said about them joining the movement, and so on.

4.3.4 Role of typology

Since contemporary social movements are often described as a mere outlet for dissatisfaction or space for deriving excitement (See 2.4.4), it looked worthwhile comparing the motivations between the 'activists/organisers' who make a serious commitment and the 'participants' who may have joined only once. However, the initial typology of these three clusters became less significant later in my fieldwork.

This is because the initial question of whether the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement was a mere safety valve became unimportant. My first fieldwork was conducted in a slack period of the movement and I found most of the participant as passionate as the 'activists' and 'organisers'. Most of them responded that they had been joining anti-nuclear actions once a week, or had joined 'countless' actions since the Fukushima disaster. Regarding the motivational factors, I could not find a clear distinction between these categories. I became more interested in each protester's motivation to keep participating, and the process of deepening commitment.

Although the typology provided the methodological frame for sampling, the

responses from my interviewees show that it fails to reflect empirical reality. Against this rigid categorisation, the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement is fluid; some protesters join as a participant, become skilful during mobilisation, and eventually start organising an action.

For example, the interviewee Kaori Nawa is categorised as 'the NFS organiser' in my thesis, which reflects her attribution at the time of my first interview in spring 2012. However, she began as a 'participant' who took part in *Shiroto no Ran*'s protest event in April 2011 without any previous experience of activism (See p.162). Then she became a staffer in NFS, where she expanded her expertise. Later she organised smaller demonstrations in her own residential area. NFS itself was recognisable only in a short period. By the time of my second interview, some became MCAN staffers. Other started acting independently, such as the case of Mizuki Nakamura (See p.202).

Establishing a category at a certain point of the movement cannot grasp the fluid reality of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters. Instead of making comparison or evaluation based on fixed types, my research focuses on changes in identity and perception of the protesters during the experience of the disaster and collective action. Examining the motivations which pushed them onto the street and to maintain political commitment provide more significant implications to consider how people can become political in a complex society.

4.3.5 Methods

● **Interviews**

Semi-structured interviews became a primary data collection method in my fieldwork. Semi-structured interviews allow the respondents to explain their experiences, interpretation of reality, thoughts and memories in their own words (Blee and Taylor, 2002). Their open nature also enables the interviewee to digress or to be probed through interaction, which provides the researcher with new themes for analysis (Blee and Taylor, 2002). Frequently during my interviews, what I had initially considered an insignificant conversation later turned out to be a crucial theme. Hence, I tried not to disturb the interviewees' flow even when they diverted my questions.

In the cases of the activists and the organisers, the potential interviewees were deliberately chosen based on my examination of the group's meetings, documents, web pages and twitter accounts. However, there were several cases where I recruited them directly during the mobilisation and conducted brief interviews. This includes follow-up questions with the same person after the initial interview. For the participants' interviews, the potential interviewees were randomly chosen during the anti-nuclear mobilisations, although particular attention was paid to balancing gender and age. In total, 146 samples were collected.

Because of the movement's expansion and the huge media attention it was receiving, it became significantly difficult in my second fieldwork to set up formal interviews with MCAN organisers. Therefore, I set up informal short interviews with many different members on specific topics. These data were

analysed together with their formal publications, comments at the talk events, and tweets.

The interview length depended on the availability of the interviewee; formal interviews with the activists and organisers took between one and approximately four hours. Informal interviews with the participants took around 5-30 minutes.

Table 1: List of samples

	Group / Event	1st	2nd	Follow-up	Total	
Activists		4	3	3	10	
Activists Total						10
Organisers	MCAN	4	7	1	12	
	NFS	11	4	1	16	
Organisers Total						28
Participants	MCAN's Tokyo Big March	14	0	0	14	
	Twitter Demo (TwitNoNukes)	4	4	0	8	
	Tento Hiroba	4	0	0	4	
	Kanteimae Protest	0	35	21	56	
	Anti-poverty protests	0	2	0	2	
	Anti-government protests	0	0	8	8	
	Electoral campaigns	0	0	6	6	
	Other demonstrations	0	4	6	10	
Participants Total						108
Total						146

● **Direct observation**

Direct observation is a common data collection method to be combined with interviews as part of a triangulation approach (Blee and Taylor, 2002). In my fieldwork, it included anti-nuclear marches, rallies, and regular meetings of the activist groups, mainly those of MCAN and NFS. In most cases, direct observations were utilised as a supplemental tool to identify the problems and the immediate issues they faced in the movements. The information collected

was later used to construct my questions in the interviews. However, the observation of NFS meetings was an exceptional case. Their meetings were open and frequent enough to conduct detailed analysis on their decision-making process.

- **Indirect observation**

Indirect observations were conducted through online materials, such as Youtube and Ustream, which report on the marches, rallies and general meetings of the organisers, activists' talk events and so on. Indirect observation has been conducted since February 2012, one month before my first fieldwork. Like direct observations, this method was utilised as a supplemental tool to identify the potential interviewees and to devise questions for the interviews. When I was staying in the UK, this indirect observation became my primary method for the follow-up data collection.

- **Document analysis**

Document analysis was utilised mainly to investigate the comments of scholars, economists, politicians and cultural critics, who often stimulated an intense debate with the anti-nuclear protesters. I checked their tweets and blog posts, paying particular attention to the discrepancies in perceptions between the intellectuals and the ordinary citizens. As I scarcely had a chance to meet them and directly clarify their intentions, these comments were carefully compared to their other formal publications. In addition, the Twitter accounts of the protesters were observed on a daily basis and analysed to identify their concerns with the anti-nuclear movements.

4.3.6 Sampling and its limitations

The interviewees were chosen through different sampling processes. In the case of the 'activists/organisers' categories, initial contact with them was made through emails, in which the background information of the project was provided. An effort was made in this process to establish a trustful relationship so that they could feel safe to give an honest opinion at the interview. Thus, in some cases, several emails were exchanged to clarify the aim of the interview. At the meeting, the interviewees were asked permission for the use of audio recording and for publicising their name. This excludes some organisers who were recruited directly at the protest event. In this case, oral consent was sought and these interviews were conducted in off-record situations.

In the case of those in the 'participants' category, interviewees were identified and contacted during the anti-nuclear mobilisations. This recruiting process made it difficult to build a trustful relationship between the researcher and the interviewees. For the purpose of providing an unpressured environment, the interviews were conducted under the anonymous condition. Because of this sampling process, the biographical data of the 'participants' categories was limited. Most of the respondents in the 'participants' cluster were unable to track their commitment levels since the day of my interview.

Regardless of such limitations, the persistence of the movement and the dynamism inside this movement were still examined through both direct and indirect observation and documentation, as well as the narratives of the interviewees. Also, the interviews with some 'activists/organisers' were conducted several times, which allowed me to trace their change in

perception and commitment levels.

4.4 Ethics

4.4.1 Interview consent

The in-depth interviews with the protesters were conducted with the approval of the Committee for Ethics in Research in the University of Bradford. The recruitment of the interviewees excluded children under 18 years of age and any potentially vulnerable groups. The privacy of the interviewees was protected by the following procedure.

In the case of independent activists and organisers, written informed consent was obtained at the meeting, including their consent to be identified by name and the use of audio recording. It was explained to the interviewees that recorded media would be stored and used only by the researcher, using a personal computer; data would not be stored or distributed online and they would be destroyed at the end of the project.

For the interviewees categorised as the participants and some organisers who were contacted during the mobilisations, oral consent was obtained before the interview. The interviews were conducted without being audio-recorded and in conditions of anonymity with identification only of age and gender. In all cases, the personal data were under the control of the researcher. Data analysis was also conducted by the researcher herself.

4.4.2 The researcher's position

At the beginning of my fieldwork, I regarded myself as an observer who stood

outside the protesters' circle. At that time, I was unsure whether my research would remain in the realm of descriptive analysis and critical engagement with the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement, or whether it would also employ a more speculative approach. I made no assumptions about this movement, i.e. whether it is 'political' or not, subversive or not, etc. I began by broadly searching for the motivational factors.

However, by listening to the protesters' voices in the first fieldwork, I was reminded that I, too, was a part of Japanese society that had experienced the crucial moment after the disaster. I asked myself what I could do for my society, and what I could to do as a researcher to make a contribution to my society. During the second fieldwork period, I identified myself more clearly as an anti-nuclear protester as well as a researcher. I decided to develop my research from a mere description of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements to a more theoretical exploration and elaboration of the knowledge implied by this movement.

Since joining the movement as a protester, I have come across many emotions, and these emotions have brought new research questions and themes. The resonance between my own experience, the voices from my interviewees and the knowledge from the literature eventually sharpened my question: How can 'we' together make our society better in such an era? I never abandoned my identity as a researcher because I always tried to elaborate the knowledge constructed within this movement. However, I also did not try to separate myself from the protesters, because both I and the protesters are searching for a better way to live, and to make society a better

place. Thus, my thesis employs the mixed use of the terms 'they' and 'we'. 'They' are the protesters whom I observe, interview and learn from; yet when I argue a new political imaginary implied by the post-Fukushima activism, I chose to use the term 'we', because there is no separation between the protesters and me - we are all constructing a new knowledge and experimenting with a new political practice.

Summary and further directions

This chapter explained the epistemological and methodological approach used in this thesis. The post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement was chosen as a case-study to explore a new political imaginary in contemporary society, because it is a strong political response by Japanese citizens who realised the precariousness of their life in complex society.

The conventional social movement research mainly pays attention to the strategical dimension of movements, articulating a model for (un) successful mobilisation. On the other hand, my research assumes the social movement as an experimental laboratory where collective identities, political demands and desires are generated through actions. Here social movement is not treated as a mere data from which the researcher constructs knowledge about it; instead, I consider that the movement itself is the knowledge producer of how people may become political. My research intends to describe this knowledge generated by the post-Fukushima activism.

The fieldwork was divided into three periods between 2012 and 2015, and Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 146 protesters in Tokyo.

Among them, in depth interviews were conducted with the independent activists and staffers of demonstration organizing group (MCAN, NFS), while random sampling and short interviews were conducted with the participants of street protests.

My main concern were their identities, motivations for joining/continuing the protest, and their personal process of change through mobilisation. These interviews are analysed in the coming chapters five and six, and I suggest that the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement implies a new political agency and ethics in postmodernity.

Seeing the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement as a knowledge producer questions the conventional division between the researcher as the observer and the protesters as the observed. While I retain the position of observer in chapters five and six in order to conduct descriptive and critical analysis of the movement, this distinction become less important in my pursuit of a new political imaginary in chapters seven and eight. Here I participate in the ongoing movement for co-creating a new way of doing politics. Chapter eight examines the nature of this knowledge, since it seems that this knowledge neither belongs to 'scientific' knowledge of objective description and modelling, nor suggests the principles of moral judgement. I argue that it is 'affective' knowledge based on a dynamic, open-ended ontology.

Chapter 5 Fieldwork Analysis I:
New political agency in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement

Introduction

After the Fukushima nuclear disaster in March 2011, Japanese society experienced the biggest upsurge of activism since the 1960s. This chapter conducts an analysis of my interviews with the protesters in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement in Tokyo, as they seem to signify the emergence of a new political subjectivity.

Following a brief overview of the development of this movement and its reputations (5.1), the motivational factors of the protesters are examined in detail (5.2). The disaster revealed the precariousness of life in a complex society, and feelings of shock, confusion and anger brought Japanese people onto the streets. In particular, the protesters regret that their political apathy shielded the nuclear plants from critical attention. This has evoked their sense of responsibility for political commitment, and it constructs a new subjectivity without any shared ideology or preset identity.

Another novelty of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements is the diversity of actions taking place both inside and outside institutional politics (5.3). The protesters explain their action as a 'vessel': a place for a variety of people to gather and interact. Each vessel takes a different approach to politics; some pressurise the government from the street, while others try to change their way of living.

The final section examines the relationship between activism and formal politics (5.4). The results of several elections since 2012 have revealed the gap between the protesters and those people outside the movement who remain apathetic. The protesters' confidence in activism may solidify their actions and their 'emotional' language may converge into coherent political terms, which may render their actions closed to people outside. However, I argue that the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement also includes the anarchistic current which rejects this solidification.

5.1 Overview of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements in Tokyo

5.1.1 Process of the movements

Immediately after the disaster on 11 March 2011, several people started to take protest actions outside governmental institutions and TEPCO's offices in Tokyo. Those actions were mainly organised by unionists and experienced activists (Oguma, 2013).

On 10 April 2011, the anarchist collective *Shiroto no Ran* organised an anti-nuclear march in Koenji area, Tokyo. According to its spokesperson, Matsumoto, it was organised in 10 days and advertised through Twitter, blogs and flyers (Interview, 6 April 2012). They expected around 500 people to attend; however, 15,000 people gathered. Their carnivalesque demonstration with music encouraged political actions by 'ordinary' people, who identify themselves as 'non-political', and the anti-nuclear movement spread nationwide.

Shiroto no Ran's subsequent action in June 2011 successfully actualised a

few hours of liberated space in the centre of Tokyo. The square was occupied by tens of thousands of anti-nuclear protesters. The activists, scholars and musicians gave speeches and performances, which the political scientist Gonoi (2012, p.9) describes as "the realisation of a Temporary Autonomous Zone." Although *Shiroto no Ran* stopped organising large-scale demonstrations after September 2011, the anti-nuclear demonstrations had become common phenomena by then, and they have been organised by ordinary citizens as well as experienced activists and well-known cultural figures.

The protest in front of the Prime Minister's official residence, or the *Kanteimae* protest, has been held every Friday night since March 2012. It is organised by the Metropolitan Coalition Against Nukes (MCAN), whose members identify themselves as an umbrella network of the anti-nuclear groups and activists in Tokyo. Most of its member groups were established after the Fukushima disaster by people from various backgrounds, such as office workers, the self-employed, mothers and artists, aged mainly in their 20s, 30s and 40s.

Only 300 people gathered at the first *Kanteimae* protest action, and their number remained at around 1,000 protesters during April and May 2012. Meanwhile, all Japanese nuclear plants were temporarily switched off in May 2012 in order for inspections to be carried out. Despite the fifty-four nuclear reactors which had already been built out of economic necessity, Japan spent over a month as a 'nuclear-free society' until the end of June 2012, when the government decided to re-activate the Ohi nuclear plants in west Japan, forecasting a potential electricity shortage during summer.

People were enraged by the government's decision, criticising the inadequate investigation of the cause of the Fukushima disaster and fearing the vulnerability of the Ohi nuclear plants to potential earthquakes. More than 100,000 people besieged the protest space at its peak in the summer of 2012. It also attracted significant attention from politicians. Several MPs gave speeches there, and even then the Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda held a meeting with the organiser MCAN.

Nevertheless, the snap general election held in December 2012 became the turning point of the anti-nuclear movement. Despite the huge upsurge in the movement in the summer of 2012, the Japanese people favoured the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), the 'old regime' that had long been promoting nuclear plants. [13] This result contradicted statistics persistently indicating that approximately 70% of Japanese people want a nuclear-free society sometime in the future. In addition, the voter turnout at this general election was the lowest in post-war Japanese democratic society.[14] This indicates that the post-Fukushima activism did not have a significant impact on the overall atmosphere of 'apolitical' Japanese society.

On the other hand, the weekly *Kanteimae* protest still continues in September

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[13] The LDP had been ruling Japanese politics since its formation in 1955 (except for a brief period of coalition government). In 2009, Democratic Party Japan (DPJ) achieved a historic regime change, and the Fukushima disaster occurred under this DPJ government. The result of the Lower House election in December 2012 ended the three-year reign of DPJ government.

[14] The voter turnout for the Lower House election in 2012 was 59.32%. It dropped further in the 2014 election to 52.66% (Nikkei, 2014).

2015, although the mobilisation has become much smaller. The pressure of the anti-nuclear movement makes it harder for the government to re-start the nuclear plants having shut them down for inspections. Two of the Ohi nuclear reactors had been in operation since July 2012; however, they were shut down again for inspection in September 2013, and Japan experienced a nuclear-free period of almost two years until August 2015.

In addition, the MCAN's *Kanteimae* protest encouraged Japanese activism in general. Many anti-nuclear protesters have joined the protest actions against poverty, racism and governmental policies since 2012. In particular, due to the Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's apparent militarist diplomacy seeking to re-interpret the pacifist Constitution and lift the ban on collective self-defence, the space in front of the PM's office was once again occupied by tens of thousands of protesters shouting 'No wars'. In between July and September 2015, the atmosphere there has become similar to the *Kanteimae* anti-nuclear protest in the summer in 2012.

5.1.2 The reputation of the post-Fukushima social movements

As was argued in chapter two, civil activism in Japan had been stagnant since the so-called failure of the student movements in the 1960s and 1970s. Thereafter, its prosperous economy successfully established the legitimacy of the dominant system and norms, and the majority of citizens remained distant from political action.

However, in post-disaster Japanese society, the silent nation appears to have regained its political voice. Several researchers have articulated the novelty of

the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement in its leaderless nature, its loose connection of people with diverse identities, and its mobilisation through social media (Gonoi, 2012; Oguma, 2013). The post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements are described as the emergence of a new form of democracy along the lines of worldwide social movements in 2011: The Arab Spring, the M15 movements in Spain and the "Occupy" movements (Gonoi, 2012; Oguma, 2013). The TV media reported that the movement successfully appealed to ordinary people who did not identify themselves as 'political'.

On the other hand, the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements have also received some criticisms. The sociologist Hiroshi Kainuma (2012) comments that the anti-nuclear movements in Tokyo ignore the fact that the nuclear industry is deeply embedded in the local economy in Fukushima, as it has been providing employment opportunities for people in a depopulated area. According to Kainuma, the social movement in Tokyo has adopted a simple narrative such as "nuclear energy is bad" in order to "invent a hope and to get a catharsis" (2012, pp.109-110). The protesters were merely "consuming" catharsis; thus, he believes that the movement will soon be forgotten.

The political scientist Kazuto Suzuki (2012) casts doubt on the legitimacy of Tokyo people's right to oppose the restarting of the Ohi nuclear reactors, as the Ohi plant provides electricity outside the Tokyo area. In his view, they are outsiders with no right to intervene in its decision-making process.

Criticisms have also come from inside the movement. The activist Seiji Uematsu (2012) insists that the anti-nuclear movements should have two

aims: to close all nuclear plants and to care for the victims of the Fukushima accident. He considers that many anti-nuclear protesters in Tokyo are failing to focus on the people in Fukushima (Uematsu, 2012).

Some people even dismiss these social movements as apolitical. With his observation research on the anti-nuclear movements in 2011, the sociologist Noritoshi Furuichi (2011) expresses his impression that the movement is working as a convenient outlet for these participants' everyday dissatisfaction. It only satisfies the protesters themselves, who derive excitement from the protest event. Hence, he implies that the anti-nuclear movement serves to stabilise the dominant system rather than change society (Furuichi, 2011). This claim is not new. It has been made repeatedly with regard to carnivalesque movements (Grindon, 2004; Bogad, 2005), questioning whether these movements are challenging the social order or merely serving as a safety valve, as "a licensed affair in every sense, a permissible rupture of hegemony" (Eagleton, 1981, p.148, cited in Grindon, 2004).

Tomohiro Akagi, who announced that his hope for social change was 'war', also commented negatively on the street protests taking place in Ohi town, when the government decided to restart the Ohi nuclear reactors. In Akagi's eyes, this action was initiated by the outsiders who "wield" the discourses of justice, but in truth they "are doing nothing but enjoying for themselves" (2012a). Although he actually joined the *Kanteimae* protest once, he has remained critical of it and comments that the protesters were "legitimating themselves" by endlessly repeating slogans with many people (Akagi, 2012b). He claims that the protesters "have no consideration for people who would

suffer when the nuclear reactors stopped" (Akagi, 2012b).

These criticisms share the same assumptions: the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters are using the catastrophe for their own purpose, be it releasing their stress, experiencing some excitement or undergoing catharsis. These polemics believe that the protesters are merely exploiting the tragic narrative of the nuclear accident from their safe territory, which is safely protected from the precariousness of life. Thus, for these polemics, the "endless everyday life" (Miyadai, 1998; See 2.3.1) has not ended even after this disaster. Miyadai (2014, p.46) concludes that the value that emerged after the disaster is just another 'mood'.

The writer Yo Henmi (2012) considers the catastrophic event of the earthquake, tsunami and the Fukushima disaster to have been a significant deconstructor of meaning for many Japanese people. No language can describe the event since the destruction was so huge. However, Henmi (2012) discovered that many Japanese people were desperately trying to fill the void with pre-constructed simple narratives supplied by the mass media and the government, such as 'stay strong against the tragedy' and 'encourage the people in Tohoku area'. For him, the catastrophic event of 3/11 has changed nothing. People are still the passive consumers of pre-made and worn-out narratives made in the dominant system.

Considering the results of general elections, Henmi's views seem very much to the point. For most Japanese people, the "endless everyday life" probably continues even after the disaster. Hence, what of the post-Fukushima

anti-nuclear movement? Does this movement signify a change, or is it part of "endless everyday life"? Are the protesters trying to change society, or are they exploiting tragedy, which only endorses the logic of the dominant system? These are controversial questions among scholars; therefore, my fieldwork research starts by examining the motivation of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters.

5.2 Motivation and discourses of the anti-nuclear protest

5.2.1 Motivation for the protest

The initial motivational factors of the post-Fukushima protesters were the main concern of my first fieldwork which was conducted between March and May 2012. This was a rather slack period between the first huge mobilisation by *Shiroto no Ran* in 2011 and the second outburst caused by MCAN's *Kanteimae* protests after June 2012.

Due to the nature of this period, most of my interviewees identified themselves as fairly active protesters who joined/supported actions many times after the disaster. They said that what initially motivated them was anger with the government and TEPCO (Tokyo Electric Power Company), which kept failing to provide sufficient information about the disaster. In their eyes, the government and the company appeared to be intentionally hiding the seriousness of this accident. The fact that the radioactive contamination actually reached the Tokyo area increased people's fear and anxiety. This emotional turmoil prompted some people to take action, as one *Kanteimae* protester describes: "I went out to the street because I did not know what else to do" (Interviewee 1).

However, those were not the only emotions they expressed. There was another reason for the protesters in Tokyo to be seriously concerned about the Fukushima nuclear disaster, which occurred more than 200km away. The Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant, built in the rural depopulated area of north east Japan, was generating energy for the Tokyo area. This awakened their sense of regret.

> We had depended on these nuclear plants during the era of economic growth, and never questioned the risk until this disaster happened. That regret brought me here (Interviewee 2).

Among the older generation, some showed regret for their oblivion, saying that they had been anti-nuclear protesters "after the Chernobyl accident" but had failed to maintain their support for the movement (Interviewee 3; Interviewee 4). Yet, this feeling is also shared by younger generation. A protester in her 20s commented:

> I realised that unless we take some action, nothing will change. Now I have a sense of emergency because I found that the accident happened during our reluctance to act (Interviewee 5).

Hamanishi (2012) points out that, in Japanese society, the tendency has been to perceive society as stable and absolute (system/domination perspective), in which the citizens become a powerless entity with the ability only to maintain it. People were not to question the system or authoritarian figures.

However, the Fukushima disaster questioned their long-held "system/domination" perspective and provided an opportunity to take the "actor perspective" (Hamanishi, 2012). Here, a society is considered the outcome of the actors interacting with one another.

As Hamanishi (2012) analyses, most Japanese people probably did not consider themselves political agents before the disaster. In particular, an issue such as nuclear energy requires highly technical knowledge and tends to be considered the realm of experts. However, the Fukushima disaster reminded people that they are part of the on-going construction of society, and they cannot, or should not, disconnect their private lives from its process. They found that their non-commitment was actually the commitment to give silent approval for their earthquake-prone country having more than fifty nuclear reactors. Hence, the demonstration organiser, Nao Izumori, even expresses a sense of guilt.

> My immediate reaction was anger against all the lies [which the government and TEPCO told them]. But it may be senseless. Rather, I feel sorry for children. We have no way of mending it. I am also to be blamed. I am [as sinful as] TEPCO and the government (Izumori, Interview, 5 April 2012).

Now the protesters felt that they needed to actively engage in its construction of society with their own knowledge. Another demonstration organiser, Yumi Nakamura, states that from her experience of the Fukushima disaster and the anti-nuclear movement, she learned that "we cannot be the customer of

society" (Interview, 15 March 2012).

5.2.2 The political language of emotion

The first upsurge of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement was triggered by the anarchist collective '*Shiroto no Ran*'. They are loosely connected young people in their 30s, who run recycle shops, bars and community spaces in the Koenji area. They had been organising humorous demonstrations and small street parties since the 2000s (See 2.4.4).

Its spokesperson Hajime Matsumoto explains in his interview (6 April 2012) that what motivated him to organise the anti-nuclear demonstration was the "overwhelming mood of self-restraint after the disaster." The mass media were dominated by prayers for the victims of the disaster, and Matsumoto felt uncomfortable in an atmosphere in which nobody could talk openly about how critical the nuclear accident in Fukushima had been. "I thought that I must destroy that," Matsumoto says;

> Many Japanese people are too patient. It leads them either to a huge explosion after a long silence, or to do sneaky things behind people's back. A society becomes unhealthy unless we accustom ourselves to speak out when we feel frustration. [...] Although election is one way of participating in politics, it doesn't take place so often. We need to express anger or pleasure as soon as something happens (Matsumoto, Interview, 6 April 2012).

The language used by *Shiroto no Ran* for their anti-nuclear demonstration

was in fact as simple as "(nuclear energy is) dangerous and dreadful." Several protesters who joined this demonstration later recalled that this action encouraged ordinary people to raise their voices. For Kaori Nawa, this was her first experience of joining demonstrations, which eventually led her to organise demonstrations in her local community as a member of Nuclear Free Suginami (NFS). She explains that, before joining *Shiroto no Ran*'s action, "everyone was thinking that 'my little voice does not change anything' or worried that 'our message won't be accepted by society." However, when she saw the crowd of 15,000 people gathered for the event, she felt encouraged, because she knew "such a huge amount of people share the same feeling with me" (Nawa, Interview, 25 March 2012).

Shiroto no Ran articulated a new political language for ordinary people. It is a language based on emotion, which enables them to express instantaneous reactions to what is happening now. The *Kanteimae* protest, which triggered the second upsurge of the anti-nuclear movements in 2012, also provided a space for expressing emotions. In March 2012, just before the start of the *Kanteimae* protest, one member of its organising body MCAN, Taichi Hirano, explained how they would expand the movement:

> Many people still avoid talking about the nuclear energy issue with their family, friends and colleagues. We are fragmented. I hope that, by sharing our feelings, each individual will be more active and the movement will be sustainable [...]. We need to create the atmosphere to express our opinion freely (Hirano, Interview, 25 March 2012).

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In fact, the role of emotions in politics has been reconsidered in recent years. In particular, collective actions do not always entail a rational interest, clear target and cognitive action plan. Analysing the American direct action group ACT-UP, which is tackling the HIV/AIDS epidemic, Deborah Gould (2004) argues that it successfully channelled people's normative grievance into radical anger towards the government. According to her, an individual's primitive impulse cannot be 'felt' until it is named, amplified and legitimatised. ACT-UP breached the 'emotional norm' which demarcates what is an 'appropriate' feeling to be expressed, and articulated anger as radical political language (Gould, 2004, pp.170-171).

Nevertheless, this new political language of emotions was partly the reason why several Japanese intellectuals have hesitated to support the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements. While the distinguished philosopher Kojin Karatani joined *Shiroto no Ran*'s demonstration and celebrated "a society with demonstrations," the sociologist Kainuma acknowledges that there are also racist demonstrations in Japanese society, and asks "is a society that has social movements really that good?" (Kainuma, 2012, p.114). The critic Hiroki Azuma also comments that the emotional politics of the *Kanteimae* protest are nothing but "leftist populism" which "generates nothing" (Twitter, @hazuma, 14 July 2013).

Some emotions in particular are seen as problematic. The fear of radioactive contamination was often criticised as irrational and anti-scientific. Government officials claim that the extreme fear of radiation will invite inappropriate behaviour, such as refraining from buying Fukushima foods, which have

proved to be harmless, and creating *fuhyo-higai*, the economic damage caused by rumours.

Sometimes this discourse of *fuhyo-higai* is also used to describe psychological damage — expressing anxiety that Fukushima may be seriously contaminated would be inappropriate, because it could hurt the feelings of people living there. Such criticism of the expression of extreme fear comes from inside the anti-nuclear movement as well as outside. There were often arguments between protesters concerning whether the movement should exclude those who express extreme fear, in order to render the movement more sophisticated.

Does this mean that anger may be appropriate for politics, but not fear? Are some emotions appropriate and others not? At what point does the citizen's emotional rejection of the dominant narrative by the government and scientists become a reasonable counter-discourse rather than an irrational reaction? It would appear to be difficult to draw such a line.

For some, the protesters' demand for the closure of all nuclear plants already sounds irrational. The economist Nobuo Ikeda (2012) denounces the protesters' anti-nuclear demand as "foolish" as it merely ends up damaging the domestic economy and making Japan "poorer." Intellectuals often insist that saying 'No' without proposing an alternative is irrational. However, what the protesters regret is precisely the fact they did not say 'No' to nuclear energy because they are not experts and are thus unable to suggest an alternative.

Ulrich Beck (1992) points out that the citizen's criticism of modern scientific technology does not signify his/her ignorance. Rather, it indicates the inability of modern science to provide clear answers to the problems we face in post-industrial society. The impact brought by modern scientific technology is so huge and complex that rational calculation cannot guarantee complete prediction. Although "scientific rationality" still provides probability, it needs to be evaluated by the values of each society, which Beck (1992, p.30) calls "social rationality" in deciding how much risk they will accept. The Fukushima disaster revealed the limited ability of "scientific rationality" to provide a certain guideline for life in a complex society. The emotional language of the citizens seems to provide a different perspective on political decision-making in such a condition.

5.2.3 New grammars of action

John Holloway acknowledges that saying "No" is a positive and creative behaviour, since rejecting someone's decision carries "a drive towards self-determination" (Holloway, 2010a, p.218). It does not offer a single "Yes" to be replaced with what was rejected. However, what lies ahead is "many Yeses." Holloway (2010a) claims that there are many possibilities which are yet to be known, and we can advance only by asking. The alternative is generated through our action, and saying "No" is the first step for its engagement, which shows our acceptance of responsibility for creating alternatives.

Political action motivated by personal emotion may not necessarily be

irresponsible and short-lived. Goodwin *et al*. (2001) point out that some emotions such as love and compassion, which are often based on human relationships, are long-lasting while anger and surprise, which mainly stem from events or information, may be reactive and short-term. This seems to suggest that interactions with other people ensure a foothold for what might otherwise appear to be superficial emotion.

In the case of the Fukushima disaster, the initial emotions generated by the event seem to have been personal anger or fear. However, through the physical experiences of mobilisation, they were eventually coupled with other feelings such as regret at non-commitment or concern for other people, which might have become more sustainable political resources. One *Kanteimae* protester explains that, while he often forgets about the nuclear accident in everyday life, the protest space provides him with an opportunity to listen to the people from Fukushima. He describes how their voices "permeate" his heart, reminding him of "the pain of those who suffer the accident" (Speech by a male *Kanteimae* protester, 9 May 2014)

It may be this embodied experience that generates sustainable emotional engagement. As McDonald (2006) notes, we cannot make a strict distinction between emotion and reason, or between body and cognition. As was argued in chapter three, McDonald (2006) insists that embodied actions shape cognitive thought. This indicates new political thought and practices, which are not entirely based on a cognitive plan.

These arguments remind us of the importance of a physical space. Although

the recent social movements, such as the Arab Spring and the Occupy movements, are often studied for their effective usage of social media, their implications for political thought lie in their creation of the physical space for encounter, interaction and learning (Hardt and Negri, 2012). In the case of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements, although Twitter played an important role in circulating information about protest actions, the activists seemed to feel that it had a limited appeal to people outside the protesters' circles (Noma, 2012; Misao Redwolf, 2013). Oguma (2013) concludes that the social media are more of a tool for strengthening an already established network.

While the Occupy movements and the Arab Spring maintained the public space in which people actually stayed and lived for weeks or months, what the *Kanteimae* protest provides is the two hours of open space every Friday night. Its action mostly consists of people repeating simple slogans and giving short speeches, and there is little opportunity for dialogue between the participants. Nevertheless, many protesters in my second interview explained that, through their participation, their interests were broadened into related problems, such as social inequality in the neoliberal economy. The space of the *Kanteimae* protest provides an opportunity for expanding knowledge and gaining motivation for further actions. These grammars of embodied action (McDonald, 2006) may explain why this new activism based on emotions is persistent and disseminative.

5.2.4 New form of collective subjectivity

The emotions expressed by the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters are

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quite complex, and they also indicate their complex identity. Many protesters expressed their anger towards the government and TEPCO, which did not provide sufficient information about the accident. They felt that their lives had been neglected, and they felt betrayed by those whom they had trusted:

> I have listened to what my parents said, my teachers said and lived a decent life, but what was that for? Now you have to think with your own brain. People might still think that the government will protect us, but actually they don't (Interviewee 6).

This identification of themselves as victims of untrustworthy institutions became the source of strong anger and the motivation for political commitment. At the same time, however, the protesters also showed a sense of regret at being accomplices in the disaster. They felt that their indifference to politics had allowed their country to build many such nuclear reactors. They also found that their everyday lives in Tokyo had been founded on the risk to Fukushima people, who had accepted the nuclear plants.

The protester in the local anti-nuclear group *Datsu Genpatsu Suginami* (Nuclear Free Suginami, NFS), Mizuki Nakamura, considers that the Fukushima disaster revealed a "hidden structure" in which "the local areas are sacrificed" (Interview, 13 January 2013). Similarly, a young *Kanteimae* protester comments:

> The disaster revealed that Japan has messed up. I have been thinking that this is a peaceful country, but it was not. It was like (the

film) 'The Matrix'. I found out that the world is a fiction and I have believed the fake peace (Interviewee 7).

Their lives had been proceeding in a fake peace based on the hidden exploitive structure. This structure was probably not clear before the disaster because of the entangled social relations in contemporary society. The relation between political minority and majority is not as clear as it used to be. It seems that many people could not find their political identity to raise their voices; however, the Fukushima disaster has changed this context. The NFS member Kaori Nawa signifies the emergence of a new political identity in post-disaster Japanese society.

> Traditional leftist movements focused on minority issues, such as claiming the right of ethnic minorities or *Buraku* people (descendants of a feudal outcast group), but I felt awkward for joining these movements. Although I was not quite rich, my life was blessed. My sympathy for minority people somehow sounded hypocritical. However this nuclear disaster seems to change a ratio of this majority – minority relations. The incident disclosed that we actually are the "99%" who are left out, just as the Occupy movements insist. I realised that we can raise our voice as the 99%, regardless of who we are (Nawa, Interview, 25 March 2012).

Nawa's identification of herself as part of a minority is insightful. Deleuze and Guattari (1988) explain the concept of majority and minority with its distance from the hegemonic power, rather than its size or attribution of a particular

identity group. In this concept, the protesters were a "minority," whose lives had been exposed to fragility and uncertainty. This "minority as the 99%" is not based on a pre-existing solid form of identity. Hence, it may be close to what Castells (1997, p.8) describes as "project identity."

As was examined in Chapter three, Castells (1997) distinguishes this new form of identity from what he calls "resistant identity," which aims at subversion based on a fixed identity. Although this "resistant identity" had played an important role in the political struggles of those with subjugated identities, the entangled relationships in contemporary society cannot always allow us to have such a clear collective identity to form a resistance. People are fragmented with different interests and, like the people in Tokyo and Fukushima, they are unconsciously trapped in exploitive power relationships, regardless of the fact that most of them belong to "the 99%" of people whose lives are precarious.

Castells' "project identity" (1997, p.8) is a new building of collective identity, which is not based on pre-existing attribution. The post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters found that now their lives have become precarious. They have unwittingly become accomplices to what threatens their own lives and those of others. In this condition, what motivates them is their desire for change or the emotion to say 'No' to the system in which they live now. The Fukushima disaster was the experience of "deterritorialisation" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988). They found that what they had believed to be a stable and fair system was unstable and unjust. Instead of going back to the fabricated stability, they decided to seek an alternative.

5.3 Political practices in the post-Fukushima activism

5.3.1 Democratisation movement: the *Kanteimae* protest

The post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements include different types of actions; the demonstrations and rallies are organised by trade unionists, well-known cultural figures and ordinary citizens. There are also many study groups and film events nationwide. However, my particular focus is on the citizens who started questioning their method of political commitment and way of living through the experience of disaster.

The *Kanteimae* protest is the biggest post-Fukushima anti-nuclear street action, which has mobilised many 'non-political' citizens. It has been held every Friday between 6pm and 8pm since March 2012 by an organiser called MCAN. They state the objective of their action very clearly: to pressurise the government by visualising the voices of as many people as possible (Noma, 2012; Misao Redwolf, 2013). Hence, it has applied the least burdensome form of protest, i.e. standing and chanting together. Simply 'being there' matters a lot. Protesters form a long queue on the pavement stretching back from the Prime Minister's official residence (*kantei*) or gather around the National Diet nearby, repeating a simple slogan such as 'No to Nuclear energy' or 'No to restart (the reactors)', while volunteers give short speeches in-between.

The *Kanteimae* protest is known as a 'well-mannered' protest which rarely produces violent confrontations with the police. Maintaining a peaceful space is their priority in order that ordinary people might find it easy to join (Misao Redwolf, 2013). It is designed as the antithesis of the Japanese student

movements of the 1960s and 1970s, whose ideological orientations caused violent infighting between sects. The *Kanteimae* protest has overturned this infamous image of activism by rejecting the discourse of ideological, violent and anti-hegemonic revolution of the 1960s and replacing it with that of non-ideological, non-violent and normative reform. MCAN addresses its protest as a 'single issue' anti-nuclear action.

My first interview with MCAN members took place on 25 March 2012. Although MCAN had not yet started the *Kanteimae* protest, it had just co-organised a demonstration on the first anniversary of the 3/11 disaster, together with a traditional activist group. During the interview, the MCAN members explained the discrepancy between their stance in activism and that of the traditional activists. In particular, they felt that these traditional activists "over-react" against the police.

> It seems that they have two enemies – the nuclear proponents and the police who represent the hegemony. But we think there is no use in fighting against the police. We want to expand our movement safely without any arrests, and their way does not fit with our aim (Misao Redwolf, Interview, 25 March 2012).

Another MCAN member, Yasumichi Noma (2012), also insists that MCAN does not recognise the police as the hegemony against which to fight. The strategy of the *Kanteimae* protest is well articulated in MCAN's reaction at the event on the 29th June 2012, when the mobilisation reached its peak. The unexpected size of the crowd eventually overflowed from the pavement and

occupied the entire street. Suddenly, what appeared was a liberated open space in which the organiser MCAN saw the beginning of chaos. It called off the protest before the scheduled end and persuaded the protesters to withdraw.

For MCAN, the success of the movement rests on the continuous visualisation of people's anger. They strategically choose conformity to some extent, as it best appeals to ordinary people who tend to equate activism with violence. It also precludes the police from prohibiting their action on the street (Noma, 2012). Most participants have eventually internalised MCAN's policy, which has allowed the action to continue for more than three years.

The *Kanteimae* protest successfully attracted ordinary people with these 'normative' and 'reformist' frames. Its expansion shows how the ordinary citizen has come to feel empowered through mobilisation. The *Kanteimae* protest started with only 300 people. The independent journalists and the participants themselves kept publicising their actions online, eventually catching the attention of the major media. Finally the TV reports triggered a huge mobilisation. One MCAN member commented that she now believes that the ordinary people can make their action meaningful (Interviewee 8).

Anti-nuclear movements are primarily categorised as what Melucci (1996, pp.34-5) would call a "claimant movement." In such a movement, people make demands based on a pre-formed identity and try to realise them through the existing political system. The *Kanteimae* protest surely has this aspect. As MCAN claims, it is a single-issue action to pressurise the government to

abandon nuclear power.

However, it also has an aspect of what Melucci (1996, p.35) calls a "political movement," which changes the manner of people's political participation. The *Kanteimae* protest brought politics into the sphere of everyday life. The newly mobilised protesters have become accustomed to raising their voices when representative politics become dysfunctional.

The MCAN members consider the *Kanteimae* protest a 'democratisation' movement. It sends the voices of ordinary people into the 'windless' formal political arena and creates discord. At the very early stage of the *Kanteimae* protest, Misao Redwolf had already remarked:

> I would like to make a new standard of political participation. […] It is time to throw away the democracy as the dead-letter. Democracy should not be something given to us, but we need to seize by ourselves (Misao Redwolf, Interview, 27 April 2012).

There is no doubt that this action encouraged Japanese activism as a whole. The MCAN-style action, which utilises people's anger to counter the overwhelming power, has become popular in the later social movements. While the *Kanteimae* protest and the anti-nuclear movements in general have become smaller and are now largely maintained by elderly people, these newly emerged movements are supported and organised by the younger generation, including university students and teenagers.

For example, many anti-nuclear protesters have joined anti-racist actions since 2013. These actions aim to physically disturb the racist group *Zaitokukai*,[15] whose members march in the streets making abusive hate speeches against Korean people. This opposition was initiated by several core anti-nuclear organisers such as Yasumichi Noma, and it gained support from teenagers who love Korean culture. By the nature of their aims, these counter-racist actions are more confrontational than the 'polite' *Kanteimae* protest. However, they share the same political attitude of visualising simple anger against hegemonic power: in this case, against the racists who proclaim majoritarian power based on their nationality.

In the formal political arena, the centre-right Liberal Democratic Party won both the Lower and Upper House elections in December 2012 and July 2013. The LDP government is actively reforming the Japanese post-war regime by introducing the state secrets protection law and trying to lift the ban on collective self-defence which has been prohibited by the pacifist Constitution of Japan. Against this right turn, the anti-nuclear protesters and counter-racism activists quickly developed anti-government views and started organising demonstrations as a newly formed group, Tokyo Democracy Crew (TDC). In addition, university students formed a group called SEALDs (Students Emergent Action for Liberal Democracy) are actively organising direct actions against the government in 2015.

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[15] Its full name is *Zainichi Tokken wo Yurusanai Shimin no Kai*, which means 'Association of Citizens against the Privileges for Koreans in Japan'. Their objective is to eliminate the 'unfair privileges' which they believe that Korean people in Japan enjoy.

5.3.2 Criticism of the *Kanteimae* protest

As was seen, the *Kanteimae* protest brought a sense of agency to 'non-political' Japanese citizens, showing them that their voices have power. However, when the anti-nuclear movement created a groundswell in the summer of 2012, the movement was criticised on the grounds that it was proclaiming a new authority and suppressing minor voices. When one anti-nuclear author declared at the gathering that the slogan 'No nuclear energy' had become the "nation's voice," one conservative newspaper published a critical column:

> A minor voice to support nuclear energy is denounced as un-Japanese. If such a day comes, it is more terrifying than radiation (Sankei Shimbun Newspaper, 2012).

In particular, since the *Kanteimae* protest aims at making the public anti-nuclear sentiment into a dominant opinion in order to pressurise the government, its hegemonic orientation was also problematised from inside the movement. In fact, establishing an effective frame in the movement means constructing a new dominant norm, and it could end up by denying diversity inside the movement. Hence, in my interview, the activist Seiji Uematsu warns:

> Misao (Redwolf, of MCAN) shouts her slogan in front of the Prime Minister's office. She tries to represent herself as a strong subject […]. MCAN still has the language of the old movements and power-based culture. They consider politics as power-versus-power. Why can we

not express ourselves as the weak who yet never give up being ethical? (Uematsu, Interview, 3 January 2013)

Uematsu insists that social movements without a totalising ideology should avoid a hegemonic nature. To him, such non-ideological movements inevitably require people "to wander, waver and become entangled" (Uematsu, personal email to the author, 8 January 2013).

One participant in the *Kanteimae* protest also expresses her disappointment at MCAN's controlling tendency. She was joining the protest when the mobilisation reached its peak in June 2012 and MCAN called off the action:

I felt it strange that they [MCAN] told me to go back. I wanted them to respect our choice. I wanted them to ask us what we wanted to do, because we are proud of ourselves acting on our will (Interviewee 1).

The activist Kengo Matsunaga finds that the *Kanteimae* protest lacks the space for dialogue. Although the participants are able to give speeches, they are restricted to a few minutes and mostly end up by presenting their own opinions.

Now the anti-nuclear protesters just insist on their claim and they are not interested in other voices. The nuclear proponents just pursue their own interest and do not listen to other voices. They are not at the same table. This situation does not solve anything (Matsunaga, interview, 4 December 2012).

That is why Matsunaga started to organise a gathering after the *Kanteimae* protest, which he called a 'general assembly' after the Occupy movements. Matsunaga was inspired by this movement in 2011 and the idea of the 99%. He had already organised a demonstration to show solidarity with them. At the time of my interview in December 2012, his general assembly was a small meeting of between five to ten people. However, Matsunaga seemed unsure about whether this type of forum suits Japanese activism.

> I thought that it was too early to do the Occupy movements in Japan. Maybe it will not expand until we have more and more people unemployed. […] For me, this is like an experiment (Matsunaga, interview, 4 December 2012).

As his somewhat pessimistic view indicates, his 'assembly' trial ended after about six months as no one showed up for the meeting. The attempt at dialogue costs time and effort. The reason why the *Kanteimae* protest has become so popular is probably because it is the easiest action to take. Although the *Kanteimae* protest removed barriers to political participation, the adherence to normative and easy political action may have a binding effect.

These criticisms of MCAN and the *Kanteimae* protest, such as its hegemonic orientation, controlling tendency and lack of diversity, are all important and very much to the point. However, the critical role of this action in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements should never be dismissed. The *Kanteimae* protest introduced and legitimised emotions as new political

language to counter the dysfunctional representative politics. MCAN's effort to frame its action as non-violent, normative action changed the old image of activism and brought political action into people's everyday lives.

In addition, it should be noted that the organiser MCAN does not completely control the space. When the *Kanteimae* protest started, it consisted only of simple chanting and short speeches. However, as the movement expanded, the participants brought diversity to this action. Now some play instruments and others sing. There is a cyclists' protest around the area and a 'guerrilla cafe' provides refreshments for the protesters.

More importantly, the normative and repetitive *Kanteimae* protest is one mode of action among many others in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements. The organiser MCAN itself is a mere network of different anti-nuclear groups and individuals, and they all have different attitudes to politics except the one basic claim of 'No Nukes'.

5.3.3 Broadening the political: Nuclear-Free Suginami

It can be said that the Fukushima disaster gave people an opportunity to reconsider a way of political participation, and the *Kanteimae* protest is one response to that. However, it is not the only political reaction to have emerged from the disaster. The Fukushima disaster also forced people to reconsider their way of life, since they found that it was not only TEPCO and the government that supported nuclear energy. In the very narrative of their own lifestyles, the protesters found a blind approbation of economic growth and convenience that excused the existence of nuclear energy.

At the anti-nuclear rallies and marches in 2012, I often heard a song entitled 'human ERROR', played by the Japanese rock band Frying Dutchman. It contains a strong message against nuclear power, and the protesters seemed to have been emotionally connected with this song. As well as criticising the state, electric companies and mass media, its lyrics also contain a critique of civilisation:

> You can buy a house, but you can't buy a home.
>
> Money buys you a watch, but it can't buy you time.
>
> You can buy a book, but you can't buy knowledge.
>
> You can buy a bed, but you can't buy sleep.
>
> Money pays the doctor, but it can't cure disease.
>
> Buying electricity destroys nature.[16]

The Fukushima disaster was the moment when the protesters reconsidered how and for whom they use their money, how and with whom they spend their time, and what they value the most in their lives. This tendency is particularly apparent in the local community-based anti-nuclear group *Datsu Genpatsu Suginami*, or Nuclear-Free Suginami (NFS). NFS was founded in January 2012 in the Suginami area of Tokyo, and the group joined the MCAN network later. Its members are a broad mixture of people such as local shopkeepers, office workers, entrepreneurs, local MPs, writers, translators, students and

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[16] Frying Dutchman (2011) "human ERROR". The song was originally written in Japanese. English subtitles are taken from their YouTube video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q5p283KZGa8

former student activists from the 1960s.

Their first action was a local demonstration in February 2012; this was more like a carnival with a Karaoke machine and a mobile bar, whose characteristics were adopted by the anarchist collective *Shiroto no Ran*, which has its base in the same Suginami area. In fact, both Hajime Matsumoto of *Shiroto no Ran* and the precariat activist Karin Amamiya joined this action. Throughout the year 2012, NFS organised several local demonstrations and community gatherings. To prepare these actions, they held general meetings which were open to everyone and also broadcasted live online.

They describe their meetings as 'chaotic' as the participants frequently change their opinions after hearing the passionate voices of others. During my participation, I sometimes witnessed the entire plan being reversed by one participant's remark. It was not logic but passion that persuaded people. In addition, they often proposed actions that sounded almost absurd. I thought it was a joke when they decided to seek TEPCO's permission to let them use the TEPCO-owned sports ground to hold a local anti-nuclear event.

NFS members identify themselves as *Uzomuzo*, meaning a swarm of people who are insignificant.[17] This term was originally proposed at their meeting by the translator and peace activist Kayoko Ikeda, as a Japanese translation of the term "multitude." Ikeda articulates the NFS protesters as the "multitude" in

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[17] The term Uzomuzo literally consists of four Chinese letters 'U' 'ZO' 'MU' 'ZO'. ZO in this sense means figure, U means existence and MU means non-existence.

Hardt and Negri's (2001, 2004) sense, because NFS is "formless" and "they never talk about maintaining their organisation" (Ikeda, Interview, 30 March 2012). The Japanese term *Uzomuzo* is often used by the hegemonic power to look down on 'useless' people. The NFS protesters changed the meaning of this term into something creative rather than something devalued.

Seeing NFS as *Uzomuzo* may explain what Hardt and Negri (2004, p.99) call the "plural singularities." According to them;

> Singularities interact and communicate socially on the basis of the common, and their social communication in turn produces the common. The multitude is the subjectivity that emerges from this dynamic of singularity and commonality (Hardt and Negri, 2004, p.198).

NFS members act together on the basis of what they share in common (desire for a nuclear-free society), but their identities remain different. Their demonstrations welcome all kind of people including right-wing activists. Nao Izumori, who played the role of the moderator at the NFS meeting, explains:

> Of course everyone can join us. [...] If someone with a Japanese national flag says that [he/she protests against nuclear power because] we should not spoil the land of the emperor, I will just respond 'well, I don't think so, but come in anyway'. Our demonstration is nothing but an empty vessel (Izumori, Interview, 5 April 2012).

As a moderator at the meetings, Izumori comments that it is enjoyable for him to observe how the voices of the participants "create peculiar swells and eventually construct one decision" (Izumori, Interview, 5 April 2012). To him, a chaotic meeting attended by various people is a space to create swells; no one can predict its outcome.

Unlike the *Kanteimae* protest, which aims to put pressure on the government, NFS considers its action a communication tool, to think together and to create a new way of living. For example, NFS invented an idea called *Demo-wari*, or 'demonstration discount'. They asked local bars and shops to support their actions by providing a discount for the protesters. Originally, the intention was to make their demonstrations more beneficial both for the protesters and for the local community, because local shops might attract the excited protesters after the demonstration. However, they discovered that this was also an attempt to regain control over their money. Directing the flow of money into their community rather than into large corporations might form part of the resistance to the dominant economic system.

While MCAN limits its activities to effecting a change in representative politics, the target of NFS may be the power in everyday life that normalises a certain social relationship and a way of life. In this sense, it may be close to what Melucci (1996, p.35) calls an "antagonist movement" that questions the dominant system. In other words, their struggle forms the "exodus" from the state form and the current mode of production, which instead pursues democracy based on community experience (Virno, 2004a, 2006b).

The Suginami area represents the foundation of this community-based politics; the first nationwide anti-nuclear movement started from Suginami in the 1950s, initiated by mothers who stood against nuclear weapons testing (Oguma, 2013). On 2 June 2012, both old and new anti-nuclear activists gathered and adopted the "appeal of the residents for a nuclear-free society." The activist Karin Amamiya and *Shiroto no Ran*'s Hajime Matsumoto joined this meeting, commenting that the appeal would show the government that "we are no longer obeying you."

5.3.4 Action as a 'vessel'

It seems that MCAN and NFS have quite different tactics. Nevertheless, their fundamental worldviews are similar. Both sets of members believe that their actions work as a "vessel." Inside the vessel is a variety of people with different identities and interests, but they all come together in one vessel for one purpose: to shut down all the nuclear reactors.

The MCAN staffer Taichi Hirano notes that the *Kanteimae* protest is a vessel that belongs to no one. To him, "it is supposed to go out of the hand of the creator" and the role of the organiser is nothing more than the "occasional maintenance" to ensure that this vessel does not break (Hirano, Twitter@ fancy_karate, 25 June 2012). His remark indicates that no one can control the trajectory of the movement. It depends on the resonance between various people inside interacting with one another. Noma (2012) emphasises that MCAN is a practical maintainer of the protest space and its members never discuss their political ideologies.

The NFS members also call their action a vessel, albeit probably in a different sense. The NFS staffer Yumi Nakamura believes that their chaotic meetings work as a vessel where people "propose their plan, call for volunteers and create action together" (Y. Nakamura, interview, 15 March 2012).

While MCAN's vessel (the *Kanteimae* protest) unites the emotional language of the protesters in order to present it as a coherent political message, the voices in the vessel of NFS remain incoherent. Nao Izumori was the first person to use this term 'vessel' at their meeting, when they were preparing the next action after their first successful demonstration. This remark indicates that he could not identify what NFS really was and what it was capable of:

> This group is...well it's not a group, is it? This is Uzomuzo's... I'm not sure what this is. Anyway, I think it is a mere vessel. Can we have one unified will and engage in politics? Another group is already doing that. Then, what we can we do with this vessel, which is not a group, which does not have leaders? Well, let's continue what we have been doing. Say whatever we want to say in the meeting, and make a decision after long discussions, because that is democracy in Suginami (Izumori, NFS meeting, 26 February 2012).[18]

Perhaps this is the difference between a vessel for representation and a vessel for creation. In the NFS vessel, people celebrate different colours of

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[18] From the author's indirect observation of NFS meeting online. Recording is available at: http://www.ustream.tv/recorded/20710353 (Accessed 9 October 2015)

individuals because this generates creative new patterns. On the other hand, in the *Kanteimae* protest individuals possess power precisely because they lose their colour. Anyone can join the vessel, as long as they abandon their colour in order to represent a strong united voice of the multitude.

Yumi Nakamura is the core staffer of both NFS and MCAN, and she successfully distinguishes the nature of these two actions. According to her, MCAN is "a hard vessel" (personal communication, Twitter, 6 August 2012); inside are diverse and fluid people, but as a claimant/political movement, the expression of the vessel must be coherent and normative. Thus, it needs some kind of regulation. MCAN may not be the leader of the *Kanteimae* protest, but it must at least be a manager of this vessel to make it acceptable both to the formal political arena and to Japanese society.

On the other hand, NFS-type action is what Nakamura considers a "soft vessel," which is more open to diversity. Another NFS member emphasises that heterogeneity is the strength of NFS:

> The attempt of unification inevitably sets up taboos. In NFS, the participants freely propose what they want to do, and the person who proposes must engage in that project. It is like a building that is constantly expanded and extra parts added. Sometimes maintenance will be needed, though. [Interviewer: Who does the maintenance?] Everyone does (Interviewee 9).

The NFS member and local politician Akira Harada even insists that they

need people who are "beyond their comprehension" (Harada, Interview, 10 April 2012). The appeal for their first demonstration clearly states this tendency:

> Toward a nuclear-free society, we, the multitude in Suginami area, will keep raising our voice doggedly, and connect with anybody indiscriminately![19]

NFS is a formless vessel to which people add their colours. It corresponds to Deleuze and Guattari's concept of "rhizome," which they describe as the conjunction of "and…and…and…" (1988, p.25). The rhizomatic connections never converge at a single point. It always explores a new arrangement, while the arboreal form is heading toward the fixed meaning of "to be." In fact, NFS meetings celebrate contingency, and they do not necessarily reach agreement. Rather than finding a consensus over what they should do together, each participant expresses their desire on what they want to do, and those who share this passion offer help.

What they value is the energy and passion for the commitment. Izumori comments: "we need to say goodbye to the people with all talk and no action" (Interview, 5 April 2012). In their meeting, I noticed that two principles simultaneously coexist. The first is that the person who proposes the action must make a commitment to it. However, this seems to be supplemented by a hidden second principle that no one ever blames the person in charge even if the action fails. These two principles allow them to create many actions as

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[19] From NFS Website. Available at: http://www.mcri21.com/uzomuzo/calls/

experiments.

The formless nature of NFS made this 'vessel' almost invisible one year after its first demonstration. By the time of my second interview in late 2012, the members of NFS were acting independently rather than as NFS; some were helping the *Kanteimae* protest as staffers of MCAN, others had joined the alter-globalisation movement, and others were organising small gatherings at the local level. As Yumi Nakamura describes, "NFS is always changing, not staying at the same place" (Interview, 19 November 2012).

For the NFS member Kaori Nawa, the actions in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement are something like an "inn": "people meet there, exchange information, and go different places" (Interview, 25 March 2012). This is reminiscent of Deleuze and Guattari's (1988) other concept, the plateaus. In the rhizomatic network of social movements, each action creates a temporary "swell," from which something new emerges.

5.4 Activism and representative politics

5.4.1 The 2012 general election: Setback of the movements

As was seen above, the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements attracted many Japanese people who used to be indifferent to politics, and their non-ideological commitment seems to create a new way of doing politics. However, the movement still remains within a limited circle. Even after the upsurge of the movement in the summer of 2012, one interviewee described how the outside of their circle was like "another planet" where people still believed the dominant narratives in which the protesters had already lost faith

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(interviewee 10). Another protester expressed her disappointment at hearing her friends say that they were "too busy with their jobs, housekeeping and childrearing" and had "no time for thinking about politics" (Interviewee 11).

The biggest setback for the anti-nuclear protesters was the Lower House general election in December 2012, in which the centrist government of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) was replaced by the pro-nuclear, centre-right Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), which has been ruling for most of the post-war period in Japan. The results of this election seemed to contradict a report claiming that almost 70% of the Japanese people hope for a nuclear-free society sometime in the future.

The media analysis shows that people's disappointment in the DPJ government produced a landslide victory for the LDP.[20] This DPJ government ended the LDP's half-century reign in 2009 with the support of the Japanese people, who hoped for political and economic reform. Nevertheless, the political reform promised by the DPJ to overcome the old-style bureaucratic decision-making eventually became bogged down, and many people found the DPJ's facilitation for economic recovery to be poor (Yamada, 2012).

The DPJ government did not satisfy the anti-nuclear protesters either. It was this DPJ government that decided to restart the Ohi nuclear reactors in the summer of 2012. However, to the protesters, the DPJ government seemed a

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[20] According to the opinion survey conducted by the Yomiuri newspaper and the Nippon TV (NTV, 2012), 55% of the respondents stated that the victory of LDP was due to 'disappointment' with the DPJ party.

much better choice than the pro-nuclear LDP, because the former at least responded to the anti-nuclear movement by announcing a 'new energy strategy', which aims at achieving a nuclear-free society by 2040.

After the election, many of the anti-nuclear protesters in my interviews analysed how the LDP's landslide victory could have occurred in the overwhelming anti-nuclear atmosphere. The main argument focuses on three factors: the undemocratic electoral system, the strategic failure of the anti-nuclear side, and public indifference.

First of all, criticisms of the electoral system were commonly heard. The Lower House general election combines the first-past-the-post voting system and the party-list proportional representation system. The protesters claimed that the former system amplified the LDP victory; the actual number of votes they achieved shows that the LDP did not receive overwhelming support. [21]

This is a common criticism of first-past-the-post voting in general. However, the problem with this system is the amplification of the majority's vote. This does not explain why the majority's desire for a nuclear-free society was not reflected in their voting behaviour in the first place.

The second aspect identified by the protesters is the strategic failure to represent the anti-nuclear will. Although the 'Japan Future Party' (JFP) was

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[21] LDP obtained 227 out of 300 seats under the first-past-the-post voting system, which means that they won 79% of the total seats. However, the actual percentage of vote they achieved was 43%. Under the party-list proportional representation system, LDP was supported by only 27.62％of the voters (Kurebayashi, 2013).

newly established by anti-nuclear politicians to reflect public opinion against nuclear power, it had insufficient time to become publicly known and establish trust. This was a snap election and the anti-nuclear citizens were scarcely able to prepare for it. The newly-built JFP gave the impression of being a mere scratch party.

The most fundamental reason, however, seemed to be that, for most Japanese people, abolishing nuclear plants was not the immediate issue. The political scientist Atsushi Sugita commented that it was "presentism" that encouraged people to vote for the LDP, which was prioritising the economic recovery (Sugita, Talk event, 22 December 2012).[22]

Furthermore, the voter turnout in the Lower House election in December 2012 was 59.32%, the lowest in history.[23] This shows that many Japanese people are still indifferent to politics *per se*. Misao Redwolf summarises the general election of December 2012 that, "although the majority of Japanese people hope for a nuclear-free society, there are different layers of willingness" and the movement needs to channel the modest hopes of the general public into politics (Misao Redwolf, MCAN's talk event, 6 January 2013). After this election, MCAN started distributing free leaflets to the general public to provide basic information about nuclear energy; i.e. whether it is cost-effective, whether any alternative energy sources are available, and so on.

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[22] The comment was made at the talk event '*Shinseiken ni dou taijisuruka*' (How to tackle the new government?) on 22 December 2012, held in Tokyo.

[23] It dropped further to 52.66% in the 2014 lower house election.

The NFS staffer Mizuki Nakamura has expressed her shock at finding that many Japanese people had not changed after the disaster. They still maintain the same value system as they had before the disaster. She feels that "people still think that affluence is the happiness," and "they just think that they are happy there and now" (M.Nakamura, Interview, 13 January 2013). Hence, she also emphasises the importance of local actions.

> Doing demonstrations is not enough. Now the participants have become fixed. There are still few people who can transfer their thinking into actions. We need more casual space such as cafes and local events, where we can talk [about society and politics] (M.Nakamura, Interview, 13 January 2013).

Although these activists remained positive about planning new actions to appeal to the general public, it was clear that the general election of 2012 highlighted the gap between the protesters and those people outside the movement. For the protesters, the Fukushima disaster meant the experience of "deterritorialisation" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988). The disaster destabilised their identities and narratives which they had taken for granted. Facing feelings of shock, anger and regret, the protesters have been cultivating a sense of responsibility and developing their political practices. However, for many people, the initial shock caused by the 3/11 disaster has already become a thing of the past. One protester expresses her confusion as follows:

> People think that some sort of sacrifice (such as re-operating the risky nuclear reactors) is necessary to maintain economic growth. People

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are willing to protect what they have already got. How do we make

them open their hand clenched so hard? Do we persuade or do we

make a deal? It is very difficult to explain a value that cannot be priced

(Interviewee 1).

5.4.2 The 2014 Tokyo governor election: the division within the movement

The elections have not only revealed the gap between the protesters and

those outside the movement but have also highlighted the different attitudes

of the protesters toward representative politics, which have sometimes

seemed almost irreconcilable.

The collective action as a 'vessel', such as the Kanteimae protest and NFS's

demonstrations, is a non-ideological action in which people do not necessarily

accept the entire blueprints of movements. Various people with different

identities and worldviews have joined the vessel of NFS, which allows NFS to

create new political practices in everyday life. Various people have joined the

vessel of the *Kanteimae* protest which allows it to pressurise the government

from beyond the bounds of electoral politics.

Nevertheless, elections are still absolutely important for the protesters

because it is governmental policy to maintain nuclear power. Hence, in the

Lower House general election of 2012, almost all the interviewees expressed

their strong willingness to vote for an anti-nuclear candidate, and many of

them engaged in the electoral campaign. On the other hand, there was no

united campaign under the banner of the anti-nuclear movement. MCAN

declined to nominate a particular candidate for whom to vote as this would have divided the movement.

There is an ambiguous relationship between the anti-nuclear movements, whose strength is diversity in a vessel, and electoral politics, which needs one united political will. This caused a critical rupture in the movement in the Tokyo Governor's election in February 2014. This was more than a mere local election for the anti-nuclear protesters in Tokyo, since Tokyo Metropolitan Government is a loyal stakeholder of TEPCO. On this occasion, the protesters in Tokyo had a huge argument over whether they needed a unified anti-nuclear candidate to counter the LDP-supported candidate.

There were two major anti-nuclear candidates with very different natures. Kenji Utsunomiya was a lawyer who had been working on behalf of debtors. Morihiro Hosokawa was a former Prime Minister and retired politician. The former had the image of a leftist grass-roots candidate, while the latter was tagged with another former Prime Minister, Junichiro Koizumi, who used to be known as a neo-liberalist reformer in LDP.

The anti-nuclear protesters were divided over which candidate to vote for. The Utsunomiya supporters claimed that the anti-nuclear issue was merely another issue in the election, and that the problem of poverty was more urgent than realising a nuclear-free society. The opposing side recognised Hosokawa as a more electable candidate than Utsunomiya and argued that Hosokawa would be able to have a greater impact on national politics.

The campaign eventually turned into a framing war. Utsunomiya supporters described Hosokawa's side as single-issue environmentalists who would shake hands with the neo-liberalists. On the other hand, Hosokawa's supporters claimed that they had greater political awareness because they were concerned with making a larger impact on national politics while the Utsunomiya supporters cared only about a local issue.

The social movement organisers were powerless to mediate in such a situation, as they were mere providers of a 'vessel'. Although some cultural figures collectively announced their support for Hosokawa as a candidate more likely to win, this did not impress most protesters who were accustomed to the leaderless social movements.

The result of this election saw the LDP-supported candidate win with more votes than both Utsunomiya and Hosokawa combined. Thus, the failure of the anti-nuclear movement to nominate a single candidate did not directly affect the result. However, the dispute definitely created a huge rupture in the movement; the MCAN organiser Misao Redwolf comments that it "made me absolutely sick. [...] For the first time in my life, I was thinking about withdrawing from actions" (Twitter@MisaoRedwolf, 27 September 2014).

Their arguments seemed almost irreconcilable as they had different levels of trust in representative politics. The Utsunomiya supporters emphasised the term 'democracy' in their electoral campaign and articulated their intention to 'reform' representative politics in order that the true representatives of citizens might be elected. As a result, Utsunomiya came second in the electoral race,

gaining more votes than the Hosokawa-Koizumi alliance. Most of the Utsunomiya supporters considered this a positive result as it seemed to confirm that their activism was workable in representative politics.

> This electoral campaign proved that this was the movement of reclaiming democracy and expanding it. [...] We believed the one [Utsunomiya] and just advanced with that belief (Hirano, Twitter@fancy_karate, 9 February 2014).

On the other hand, the Hosokawa supporters seemed to be less interested in claiming Hosokawa as their legitimate representative. They saw Hosokawa as more of a tool to create discord in national politics. One of Hosokawa's supporters, Misao Redwolf, insists that choosing the Hosokawa-Koizumi alliance would not have led to the acceleration of neo-liberal society because "Koizumi is a populist, and he just follows the strongest flow that the citizens create" (Misao Redwolf, interview, 16 April 2014). It almost seems as though the Hosokawa supporters do not believe in elections for actualising democracy; they are utilising the election as a simulacra, not as the legitimate process of democracy.

5.4.3 The 2013/14 general election: solidification of the movements?

At the national political level, the Upper House general election took place in July 2013, and the voters again favoured the LDP. This meant that the LDP had obtained overwhelming hegemony in both Lower and Upper houses of parliament.

However, the anti-nuclear protesters seemed positive after this 2013 general election. The main reason was that the nuclear opponents won two out of five seats in the Tokyo area, and these two newly elected MPs were fresh faces -- one is Yoshiko Kira, a woman in her early 30s from the Japanese Communist Party,[24] and the other is Taro Yamamoto, an actor and activist who once lost in the Lower House election in 2012.[25] A similar hope was seen in the Tokyo Governor's election in 2014, in which the Utsunomiya supporters felt that citizens had the power to impact on representative politics. This positive feeling among the protesters was maintained in the Lower House elections in December 2014 as well.

This 2014 general election came completely out of blue. After gaining power in the 2012 general election, the Prime Minister Shinzo Abe had been promoting his controversial policy to lift a ban on collective self-defence and to enact a state secrets protection law. Nevertheless, his cabinet was enjoying a relatively high approval rating of around 50%, mainly due to his economic policy. Abe insists that his government has successfully awoken Japan from the long period of deflation. However, the government decided to postpone an increase in the consumer tax rate from 8% to 10%, which was originally scheduled for 2015. The consumer tax had already risen in April 2014 from 5% to 8%, thereby causing a slump in consumption in the Japanese economy. Standing at the turning point of his economic reform, he called a snap election in December 2014 to gauge public support for his economic policies. At this

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[24] Kira is a familiar figure for the *Kanteimae* protesters as she has been present ever since the protest began.

[25] It is rare in Japanese society for celebrities to speak about politics. Yamamoto became a symbol of the anti-nuclear side in the two general elections he contested.

election, his LDP again won overwhelmingly. The LDP has not only maintained its power but now also holds two thirds of the seats in the Lower House together with its coalition partner, the Komei Party.

Despite this situation, several protesters made positive remarks in my interview at the *Kanteimae* protest, conducted five days after the election. The points mentioned by these people were as follows. The Japanese Communist Party won 21 seats, having previously held only eight. In Okinawa, where 70% of the US military bases are concentrated, the LDP lost all four seats. Although the LDP won overwhelmingly at the national level, it ended up with three fewer seats than before. "LDP losing seats is, although it is only three seats loss, a victory" (Noma, talk event, 20 December 2014)[26] — this was the typical discourse from the post-Fukushima protesters, which confused outsiders.

The critic Hiroki Azuma concludes that what the post-Fukushima protesters claim to be the critical defects of the Abe government, such as its nationalistic stance, are not at all significant for the ordinary people who hope only for a stable economy and, hence, stable politics (Azuma, talk event, 20 December 2014)[27]. This view of Azuma is highly relevant; just as the 2012 general election did, this 2014 election shows the gap between those inside and outside of the movement. Moreover, this gap might have become even wider.

[26] From the author's indirect observation. This remark was made by the anti-nuclear/anti-racist activist Yasumichi Noma in the talk event titled "*Han heito no ronri to awaremi no rinri*" (The logic of anti-hate and the ethics of compassion) held at Genroncafe, Tokyo, on 20 December 2014.

[27] This remark by Azuma was made at the same event with Noma, listed above.

One *Kanteimae* protester honestly comments:

> The result [of the 2014 election] was expected, but still I was disappointed. I mean, after all this time, still so many people voted for LDP. Now I spend more and more time with those who are already interested in politics, and avoid those who are not. [...] We complain about current political situation, and think what should be done, but this is always between those who already share the same view. It never goes out of this circle. It's irritating (Interviewee 12).

By this time, in 2014, the protesters have broadened their experiences in activism. They are confident that their actions have an impact on society. Through these actions, they have deepened their sense of responsibility for commitment, which has encouraged them to take further actions including engagement in electoral campaigns. Political terms such as democracy have become important to them, and even the ideologies of political parties no longer sound empty.

Although Hosokawa's supporters in the Tokyo Governor's election had a slightly cynical view of representative democracy, they made a commitment anyway. They may have taken the pessimistic view that elections cannot represent their will, but they were still hopeful enough to believe that they could make use of this system.

Perhaps we can say that, for the protesters, the conventional political terms were recuperated by their embodied experience of direct action. Yet this may

also mean that their initial language of emotions (Goodwin *et al*., 2001) or the "grammar of embodiment" (McDonald, 2006), which mobilised many ordinary people, seems to have become something solid and sophisticated in the frame of institutional politics.

On the other hand, on the outside of all these resonating "plateaus" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988, p.22) or what the protesters call "vessels," there are many people who have not shared this experience, and they may find this sophisticated political language to be detached from their lives. Those people may find the sophisticated discourse of the post-Fukushima protesters empty and disembodied, just as those protesters used to avoid politics because the conventional political language sounded empty.

Just after the 2014 election, the critic Azuma expressed a feeling of unease with the discourses of the post-disaster politics.

> In recent days, people tend to celebrate the attitude to keep talking hope and to advance with that hope. They say that that is the attitude of a responsible and mature individual. However, I think that this tendency makes society stifling. What is not possible is not possible. We can just give up with it, and we might be able to make the alternative way (Azuma, Twitter@hazuma, 15 December 2014).

Although he did not mention it, this clearly indicated the tendency of the post-Fukushima protesters who passionately encourage people to vote. These protesters believe that being nihilistic is irresponsible, and we need to

construct hope in order to continue political commitment. On the other hand, Azuma takes it as the prohibition of the expression of despair, which is an inevitable feeling in life.

When the Fukushima disaster "deterritorialised" the protesters' stable beliefs and identities, they took to the streets in order to ask people around them and themselves what they might be able to do. They walked by "asking," as Holloway (2010a, p.215) describes the Zapatistas movement. However, the question now is this: What will happen to the movement once we find the language to narrate a hope? Do they stop asking and instead start solidifying it? Does the language of emotion lose its fluidity, and is it polished into the solid, authorised language of formal politics?

5.4.4 Beyond elections and representative politics

It seems to me that some of the 'emotional' language initially created in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement has become sophisticated and has been poured into formal politics. However, some language remains open and stays outside of it. For example, *Shiroto no Ran* and NFS create the anarchistic current of this movement. They stand up when they feel tempted, and they show little interest in institutionalising it. Although *Shiroto no Ran* organised the highly influential anti-nuclear demonstrations in 2011, it subsequently withdrew from this role as demonstration organiser and put more effort into creating a space for encounter in their local community. In my interview, Matsumoto even commented that he was "fed up with" organising demonstrations (6 April 2012).

Similarly, NFS was only active for a year, and its members soon moved on to different actions. One of the core members of NFS, Mizuki Nakamura, shows her discomfort at the attempt to solidify. My second interview with her was conducted in January 2013, which was less than a year after the first demonstration. By this time, she had already left NFS and had started her individual actions such as organising community markets and film-viewing events. She says:

> Honestly, I am not interested in NFS at this moment. Now people (in NFS) start arguing 'this action is not what NFS is like', and talking as if NFS is an established brand. That is not what I wanted. When we started, we all had strong emotion. Our action was an eruption, and it is difficult to create that eruption regularly (M.Nakamura, Interview, 13 January, 2013).

Their attitudes seem to trace the principles that James Williams extracts from Deleuzian philosophy. The first principle he suggests is to "connect with everything" that can bring about change (Williams, 2013, p.5). This is precisely stated in NFS's appeal for their first demonstration: "connect with anybody indiscriminately" (See 5.3.4). Their attitude also fits the second principle proposed by Williams (2013, p.5), which is to "forget everything". Williams acknowledges that although we "connect with everything" for new creation, we should forget them before its connections are solidified. This is an insightful suggestion, which allows us always to try new connections and keep asking.

These indiscrete attempts at connection and disconnection cut into the solidified language and actions and rearrange them into something new. Here, even the electoral system becomes something different. In fact, although Matsumoto appeared in the 2012 electoral campaign to speak on behalf of the candidate Taro Yamamoto, his intentions did not lie in the frame of electoral politics:

> I do not trust the electoral system, though at least I go to vote to show my will that I do not want some bad guys to win. For me, the election and demonstration is the same. We cannot change society by elections, but we can use the opportunity to show that we are in fever. It would be better if by chance we win (the election), but the important thing is to create a fever (Matsumoto, interview at the electioneering event, 15 December 2012).

Matsumoto himself once stood as a candidate for the Suginami ward assembly in 2007. Although he was not elected, Matsumoto explains that his intention was NOT to become a politician but to create a public open space legitimately (Matsumoto, 2011). Under the guise of an electoral campaign, Matsumoto transformed the square in front of Koenji station into a space for a street party with rock music and dance. Matsumoto admits in his interview that he "was looking down on the electoral system" (Interview, 6 April 2012). His action was close to what the situationists would call 'détournement' (See 3.1.1), as he was hijacking the electoral system and rearranging it with a totally different objective.

Although his intention lies completely outside formal politics, and although he seems vastly unconcerned with electoral democracy, his action has an impact on it. Akira Harada, a young local politician in the Japanese Communist Party and also a member of NFS, explains the shock he experienced when he encountered *Shiroto no Ran*'s 'politics'.

> At the end of 2011, Matsumoto said that one-year anniversary of the disaster was coming in few months, and we MUST stop nuclear plants BY THEN. I was shocked, because in our case (of the political party), we tend to think that the problem lies in deep structure of our society and we need a long-term strategy. Our schedule is always well planned in advance. But he was different. I felt that we need that strong passion to stop nuclear plants (Harada, Interview, 10 April 2012).

Actually, Harada stood for the same local election in 2007 when Matsumoto 'used' it. Harada recalls that time:

> I thought that it was terribly rude to use the election for a live performance, but actually it looked attractive. *Shiroto no Ran* is the movement to fill the gap between those who are serious about politics and those who are nihilistic. They are involving people whom nobody could mobilise (Harada, Interview, 10 April 2012).

Their action and discourse remain open and fluid, and they will never be

institutionalised. It is a strength of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement to have this creative current, which cuts into the closed political system and language and reshapes it so that it "fills the gap," as Harada addresses.

Summary and further directions

This chapter examined the political agency of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements by focusing on the motivational factors of the protesters. The Fukushima disaster marked the experience of deterritorialisation, and the protesters encountered strong emotions such as anger and fear. This emotional turmoil took them into the streets to collectively search for a way to react to it.

The post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements imply that political commitment does not necessarily require a totalising and coherent discourse. Although their emotional language was criticised as being inconsistent and reactive, I argued that the protesters' sense of regret at the past indifference brought them a strong sense of responsibility for social commitment and constructed a new political subjectivity beyond pre-determined identities.

Rather than having a social movement organisation to facilitate the movement, these protesters consider that a social movement provides a "vessel" or a space for people to interact together and create powers for change. While MCAN's vessel (the *Kanteimae* protest) works by putting pressure on the government by representing people's unified will, NFS's vessel has the more creative role of collectively inventing a new political practice outside formal politics.

The post-Fukushima activism has not succeeded in having a positive impact on formal politics. The elections revealed the gap between the inside and the outside of the movement. While the protesters deepened their sense of responsibility through mobilisation and expanded their political commitment, many Japanese people did not share these experiences, and they remain apathetic. I argued that the protesters' confidence in activism will render their language and action stiff and closed. However, it should be noted that the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement includes an anarchistic current whose actions and discourses remain fluid, allowing them to fill the gap.

Meanwhile, the fundamental question posed by these elections remains unanswered in this chapter. While the protesters accepted the experience of deterritorialisation and started reconsidering their political practices and their way of life, the majority of Japanese people seemed to have returned to the normal and are trying to protect their own stable territories. During my fieldwork, I often asked myself what makes this different attitude. It seemed that, behind their political commitment, the protesters share a certain culture and ethics. This is my main topic in the next chapter.

Chapter 6 Fieldwork Analysis II:

Ethics of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters

Introduction

The last chapter argued that the Fukushima disaster brought the experience of "deterritorialisation" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988). The Fukushima disaster destabilised what the protesters had previously believed to be a stable life and exposed them to the uncertainty and precariousness of life. Therefore, this event was a radical openness just as Tomohiro Akagi had hoped for with his imaginary of war (2007). The experience of deterritorialisation seemed to promote the re-emergence of activism in post-Fukushima Japanese society.

However, the previous chapter also indicated the difficulty of "deterritorialisation." Although the anti-nuclear movements became national phenomena in the summer of 2012, the result of the elections seems to indicate that many Japanese people have returned to life as normal. As Akagi claims with his imaginary of war, the event of radical opening may be once and for all; whoever becomes the winner of the war will try to cement society, creating other outsiders (Akagi, 2011, p.241). Akagi's pessimistic view implies that, although 'the 99%' of us are now facing the precariousness of life in contemporary society, the collective political subject for social change, which Hardt and Negri (2004) identify as the "multitude," will never be formed because some of the 'upper side' of the '99%' usually close their territory to protect what they have now.

On the other hand, my argument in the last chapter indicates that the

post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters may be the exception. The protesters are forming a new political subjectivity to say NO to their previous way of living, in which their precarious lives were fragmented and each of them became the powerless entity who is only capable of protecting their own life by closing their own territory from an outside.

The simple question I posed at the end of the last chapter is as follows: What makes this difference between the protesters and those who returned to the dominant norm? The problem of this question is that seeking to identify invariant factors in social movement mobilisation, in particular by examining psychological factors such as emotions, seems to lack plausibility. Rather than identifying the objective criteria of what makes people go back or remain open, this chapter reframes the question as 'how we might stay open' and examines the ethical practices of the protesters as possible examples.

The first section argues that the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements signify a new form of relationship with others (6.1). Their actions are not motivated by the moralistic sense of obligation to act 'for' the people with subjugated identities. Rather, the movements are the struggles of those people who have experienced deterritorialisation. Using the framework by Critchley (2007), I argue that the attitude of the post-Fukushima protesters in accepting this radical openness is ethical as it forces them to keep feeling, thinking and acting for a better society.

The second section examines the protesters' sense of the self (6.2). Through the Fukushima disaster, they realised that individuals are always insufficient

to know what should be done and they tend to be forgetful. With the concept of humour (Critchley, 2007), I examine the protesters' exploration of how such incomplete subjects act ethically. Although their actions seem to be motivated by their own desires, these desires are not self-contained, as they already internalised otherness within them and their desires are generated as such intermingled selves.

This led me to further explore their concept of life (6.3). While many young Japanese people in contemporary society seem to struggle to perfect the self into a recognisable form to make their lives meaningful, the protesters describe a fulfilment of life without signification, which I examine with Deleuze's concept of a life (2001). Here, a sense of satisfaction is obtained when a 'dissolved' self becomes part of a movement and engages in a collective process of changing society as an assemblage.

The last section argues the meaning of these post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements in contemporary Japanese society (6.4). The protesters' emphasis on the embodied experiences and their awareness of social complexity shares a lot with the *Zenkyoto* movement of the 1960-70s (Kosaka, 2006). While *Zenkyoto* adopted ideological terms to theorise their politics which led their movements to an impasse, some anarchist actions in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement reject any attempts to solidify their political actions and discourses. In the conclusion, however, I state that, to maintain the fluidity of this movement, it actually needs some kind of theorisation as a new political imaginary, which will become my final endeavour in chapters seven and eight.

6.1 New form of ethics after the disaster

6.1.1 From obligation to interaction

The post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement has often been criticised for being unethical rather than ethical. As noted in the previous chapter, Akagi (2012a, 2012b, See 5.1.2) comments that the emotional reaction of the movement's adherents offered no comfort to the people in Fukushima. This criticism is also voiced from within the movement.

It seems that such criticism was based on the simple equation of social movements with 'identity politics', in which the people with subjugated identities are fighting for their own recognition. In this view, the people in Fukushima are the minorities whose voices should be prioritised over majoritarian Tokyo people. Hence, the activist Seiji Uematsu insists that the anti-nuclear movements in Tokyo must represent the voices of the Fukushima people (See 5.1.2). He claims that the representation and amplification of the minor voices is an ethical attitude, and by failing to do so the anti-nuclear movements in Tokyo could be reduced to taking selfish actions (Interview, 3 January 2013).

Prioritising the voices of Fukushima sounds fair, and there is no doubt that what Uematsu suggests is an ethical attitude. However, this type of ethics is difficult to practise due to the nature of complex society, where we face the difficulty of representation. There is no united voice of 'the Fukushima people'. An anti-nuclear activist in Fukushima, Ruiko Muto (2013), acknowledges a "division" among the Fukushima people, between those who have left their

homeland because they were afraid of radiation, those who have stayed there but are still concerned about radiation exposure, and those residents who do not care about it. They also have divided opinions about nuclear energy. The voices of 'the Fukushima people' can never be represented in general; there are only many different choices and different necessities.

People have diverse values in contemporary society, and the complex nature of society makes us difficult to agree with whose voice should be prioritised in politics. The post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement attracted many people in Tokyo because it was the expression of their own anger rather than representing the anger of Fukushima people. This does not mean that their political demand reflected the interests of the Tokyo residents; quite oppositely, their anti-nuclear demand signified the rejection of the identity of Tokyo residents whose lifestyles were supported by risky nuclear energy generated in Fukushima. Hence, it is the struggle of "non-identity" (Holloway, 2010a, See 3.2.2). It also proposes a different type of collective identity, which Castells (1997, p.8) calls a "project identity" to distinguish it from the pre-fixed "resistant identity." The protesters are building a new collective identity based on their own emotions when they faced the disaster.

It may still be controversial to claim that their political actions based on their own emotions are 'ethical'. In fact, some Fukushima people have expressed discomfort with the anti-nuclear actions in Tokyo because they feel that the protesters in Tokyo are insensitive to the complex feelings of the Fukushima people about nuclear energy. In one TV program, those two parties had a dialogue, and the MCAN member Yasumichi Noma responded to the criticism

from the Fukushima people;

> If we all try to avoid hurting someone, we will inevitably shut our mouths. We will have a totally quiet society where nobody hurts but everybody is completely suppressed. We need to accept some pain to establish a ground for earnest discussion (Noma, NHK-ETV, 6 December 2012). [28]

His view seems to be at odds with ethics in the conventional understanding. Although this sounds quite individualistic, the implications appear to be important. In a complex society where our interests are entangled, we may unwittingly disturb the interests of other people and possibly hurt someone. If we avoid hurting anybody, we cannot say anything or take any actions. Rather than caring for the most disadvantaged people and speaking for them, Noma insists that it is more important to create a place where everybody speaks with their own voice, and he believes that the *Kanteimae* protest works as such a place.

Hajime Matsumoto, an activist in *Shiroto no Ran*, expresses a similar individualism. When invited to a charity event for the 3/11 disaster, Matsumoto was asked what he could do for Fukushima. He answered as follows:

> If you ask me what I can personally do for Fukushima, I don't think that I can do something. Talking about a society in general, I think

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[28]   From the author's observation of NHK-ETV (2012), *Fukushima wo Zutto Miteiru TV*. (Broadcast on 6 December 2012).

that we should stop following what we are told. The nuclear promoters and LDP are maintaining the prevailing power because many of us follow them without critically thinking. I hope that more and more people start acting on their own will, and turn their backs on those who give us orders. That is why I am creating a free space in *Shiroto no Ran*'s action. […] I think that we need this kind of space everywhere, including Fukushima (Matsumoto, talk event, 23 December 2012). [29]

Matsumoto does not insist that his political action is 'for' the Fukushima people; rather, he talks about his desire. Nevertheless, this does not sound selfish. He believes that what he is doing for himself will resonate with the lives of other people, including those in Fukushima, and help create a new potential.

As the previous chapter examined, Noma and Matsumoto have quite different approaches to politics. However, what they share is this new form of political agency in contemporary society. They do not try to represent what they consider the most legitimate voice in politics. They admit their inability to speak and act for other people; yet they still remain open to the unknown others and to interaction with them in a public space. Their attitudes and claims should not be judged in the typical opposition of individualism versus altruism. Each person takes action with his/her own experience and emotion,

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[29] From the author's online observation of the talk event with Matsumoto, Misao Redwolf and the film producer Hitomi Kamanaka. It was held in Tokyo as part of "Fukushima Charity Festival" on 23 December 2012.

but it goes beyond self-contained action.

6.1.2 Deterritorialisation as the beginning of ethical awareness

Sociologists such as Furuichi (2011) and Kainuma (2012) indicate that the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters in Tokyo are using the tragedy of the disaster for their own ends. According to Kainuma (2012), the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements simplify the complex economic relations around the nuclear industry and establish "a false hope" of a nuclear-free society in order to rediscover their orientation.

However, my arguments in the previous chapter show that the impetus for their initial action was a sense of confusion, fear and anger. The protesters gathered in the streets because they felt betrayed by what they had trusted. They felt that their lives were threatened, but they "did not know what else to do" (Interviewee 1). In this sense, they were less hopeful than Akagi, who at least identifies his 'hope' as war. For him, war would bring some meaning and the opportunity for social change. In contrast, what the Fukushima disaster brought was the void of meaning. The protesters realised that, "unless we take some action, nothing will change" (Interviewee 5). The MCAN member Ryo Takenaka, who is of the same generation as Akagi, criticises him as follows:

> Akagi is not hopeless enough […] I don't believe that we can actually achieve what we want. But I am doing this protest because I cannot rely on somebody else to do it. I am doing this because I have no hope (Takenaka, 28 December 2012).

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The protesters may be more 'hopeless' than Akagi; unlike Akagi, they cannot wait for someone or something to change society drastically or bring some meaning. The Fukushima disaster is a mere point of "deterritorialisation" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988) for the protesters, from which the all previous meaning has gone. Unless they take action, nothing meaningful will emerge. Another MCAN member, Norimichi Hattori, claims that they are protesting because they "gave up on giving up" (Interview, 11 January 2013).

Thus, we might say that they are not gathering under the one 'hope' of a nuclear-free society. What they share is a sense of despair that they cannot disconnect themselves from the precariousness of life entailed by the present system. This has motivated their political engagement even though they do not know the correct way of doing so.

Simon Critchley (2007) notes that a traumatic experience demands ethics. The traumatic experience "comes from outside the subject" without warning and "leaves its imprint within the subject" (Critchley, 2007, p.60). In this event, people are exposed to unavoidable otherness and have their subjectivity split by the demands of the incomprehensible other. Using a framework derived from the work of Levinas, Critchley argues that ethics is generated through people's attempts to respond to its demand, although this demand of the other can never be fully comprehended by the subject who responds.

The experience of deterritorialisation may not necessarily be a catastrophic event in society. In my interviews, several activists mentioned more personal

experiences as the motivation for their social commitment. The MCAN core member Misao Redwolf talked about her experience of mental distress. When she was in meditation, she "saw" the scenery of the forest in old Japan and "heard the voice of the ancestor" (Interview, 16 April 2014). For her, the experience of deterritorialisation connected her mind to the past, and led her to take action to protect the historical land from the construction of nuclear reprocessing plants.

In the case of the activist Kengo Matsunaga, it was the death of his father. His loss made him reconsider his life. His pain at losing a family member turned his eyes to the suffering happening around the world, in particular the victims of the Pakistan earthquake in 2005, because it happened at almost the same time as his loss. "Luckily or unluckily, I just realised them [the pains in the world]. Then how do I live with them? I just decided to face it" (Matsunaga, Interview, 17 May 2014). He resigned from a large, well-regarded company where he had worked for 18 years, and started travelling around the world.

These personal stories remind us that most of us have probably had the experience of deterritorialisation in our lives. In such stressful times, we accidentally allow radical otherness to intrude into our lives, and we are asked how we might live with this. Some may choose to face it, while others may try to eliminate it, forget it and return to the normal.

6.1.3 Fear of oblivion and the role of places

The post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements are also criticised on the grounds that their emotional reactions are temporary and the movements will

soon be forgotten (Kainuma, 2012). In my interview, the protesters themselves seemed to be well aware of their own oblivion; in fact, that seemed to be one reason why they embraced activism.

The organiser Kaori Nawa recalls that when she saw the explosion at the Fukushima nuclear plants, she felt that she "had been a part of this." She felt that the accident was a result of her oblivion about the past wars and nuclear disasters which had shocked her once but were soon forgotten:

> These memories [of wars and disasters] sometimes came back to me, but I was soon distracted by busy everyday life, and I justified it. However, when I saw the explosion, I swore that I should never repeat this [oblivion]. If I bury what I feel now into everyday chores, I will not be able to hold my pride. Then I started Twitter, because I thought that by publicising my opinion with my name, I can force myself to think (Nawa, Interview, 17 Dec 2012).

In addition, at the anti-nuclear rally three years after the accident, a woman in her 20s explained her motivation to participate as an "admonition against myself who tends to forget" (Interviewee 13). Had she done nothing at all, the memories of 3/11 and the Fukushima disaster would have soon disappeared; thus, she forced herself to feel by mobilising her body at the rally.

This fear of oblivion seems to be the important component of ethics, as well as the experience of deterritorialisation. The precariat activist Karin Amamiya explained her motivation for engaging in activism by recalling her experience

in Iraq. As was mentioned in chapter two, Amamiya was one of the 'battlefield hunters' who were desperate to feel a sense of living. In 1999, she joined an inspection tour to visit Iraq "out of curiosity" (Amamiya, Interview, 19 March 2012). There she learned about the serious damage to the health of Iraqi children caused by depleted uranium used in the Gulf War. Then, one shocking thought came to her mind:

> I thought that [once I go back to Japan] it would be possible to stop thinking about this and live my life peacefully. It would be easy for me to spend my life pretending that these things have never happened. Then I felt terrified about that. I know that I can be indifferent to any movement. That is why I force myself not to be (Amamiya, Interview, 19 March 2012).

Her shock at seeing war-torn Iraq was transformed into the fear of her own indifference. Amamiya's 'fear against the self being indifferent' is similar to that of the post-Fukushima protesters described above.

It appears that activism provides them with an opportunity to recall their emotions and their responsibility to keep on thinking. The disaster may be a 'once and for all' opening, and people tend to forget. However, these protesters are mobilising their bodies to the protest space in order to remind themselves of their responsibility for social commitment.

The journalist Makoto Uchida comments that the ethics in post-Fukushima society require us "to be in charge of our initial feeling of hatred toward

nuclear energy," which we had when we first saw the Fukushima accident. He believes that people mobilise their bodies to the *Kanteimae* protest every Friday to "engrave" a sense of responsibility internally (Uchida, Talk event, 22 December 2012).[30] Maintaining this place is meaningful to them as it is a place for them to practise ethics. In that condition, ethics might be as simple as to 'be open', i.e. 'not to forget'. Hence, one protester describes the *Kanteimae* protest as being like a 'live coal', from which the flame can be recovered when the time comes (Interviewee 6).

6.1.4 Language and embodied experience

The encounter with other people in activism itself entails an ethical aspect, as it forces the subject to keep feeling and thus keep thinking. However, the problem is that these embodied thoughts will eventually become general concepts and will be closed to real experience. As examined in the previous chapter, the protesters' 'embodied' political action based on their anger, confusion and regret tends to become more institutionalised later, thus generating less resonance with those who did not share the same experience.

The last section of the previous chapter suggested that not all the currents in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement are heading towards convergence and solidification, because the anarchistic movement such as *Shiroto no Ran* rejects any institutionalisation. Moreover, I met several protesters who were trying to reinvigorate the once solidified and disembodied political language with new actions.

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[30] The comment was made at the talk event '*Shinseiken ni dou taijisuruka*' (How to tackle the new government?) on 22 December 2012, held in Tokyo.

Since language aids an abstraction of experience, their affective politics of emotions might be easily disembodied when they frame their action in cognitive terms. Therefore, I asked some of my interviewees whether they had a particular political slogan in demonstrations that they hesitated to chant, and how they reacted to it. The NFS member Kaori Nawa said that, in her early days of activism, she felt uncomfortable with the slogan '*Fukushima Kaese* (Give us back Fukushima)' because "Fukushima is not mine" (Interview, 17 December 2012). She thought that she had no right to recite this phrase together with the Fukushima people, who must have suffered enough to claim it for themselves.

However, she later had an opportunity to visit Fukushima, where she met evacuees from the contaminated area and spent some time with them. Through this encounter, the slogan "Give us back Fukushima" started to have meaning for her. Now she shouts this slogan, thinking about "my home and my land", and expresses her anger "together with the people in Fukushima" (Nawa, Interview, 17 December 2012).

Another protester told me that she had hesitated to demand '*Hairo*' (nuclear decommissioning) when protesting. This is because she actually had an opportunity to listen to the decommissioning crew. She remembers that one worker confessed to feeling uncomfortable with the anti-nuclear protesters shouting 'Hairo', because he felt that the protesters blindly expected him to do his job with the serious risk of radiation exposure. Hearing this story, she thought: "I cannot demand nuclear decommission without thinking about

those who are going to do it" (Interviewee 1). Her bewilderment led her to study the problem of low-wage labour and poverty.

> The society might need some people to stay poor because we need someone to do risky jobs (such as nuclear decommissioning). Without knowing the reality surrounding them, without seeing them, I cannot demand 'hairo' (Interviewee 1).

She even visited the site where the administration evicted homeless people. She needed to witness the people who may be affected by her political claim and share the pain with them. This shows how the experience in activism recuperate the disembodied political language through action and reconnect politics with ethics.

6.2 The concept of the self and the other

6.2.1 Disaster and the ambiguity of the self

In the previous section, I argued that although the post-Fukushima activism relies on personal experiences and emotions, this does not mean that the protesters' politics are self-satisfied or self-enclosed, because they are open to the 'outside'. However, the openness does not always bring blessings. The encounter with otherness may deconstruct one's sense of identity, and few people are willing to undertake it. The resonance between my action and that of other people will not necessarily generate a creative relationship. Moreover, the previous chapter also examined the difficulty of 'keep opening'. The confidence in activism may solidify their political discourses and affective emotions may be lost. Hence, it is important to investigate what makes people

open to the otherness, and what might motivate people to remain open.

It appears that the Fukushima disaster has brought a sense of ambiguity of the self. The disaster revealed the fact that although we tried to eliminate the risky otherness from our own territory, it is actually impossible to completely protect ourselves from the risky otherness.

Nawa believes that although most of us are 'the 99%' of those whose lives are precarious, "there was something in society which prevented us noticing that we are the 99%." Thus, people were forced to compete:

> [Before the disaster] I made my effort to acquire whatever I can reach. A house. Good education. I forced myself to be independent. I guess that I wanted my place in the upper side of the 99% (Nawa, Interview, 17 December 2012).

However, the disaster showed the fluid and open nature of our world — "the disaster showed that even the value of immovable property loses its value." (Nawa, Interview, 17 December 2012). The disaster revealed that our lives go beyond our intentions, no matter how hard we try, except for those in the top 1%. The effort to protect the self-contained life is almost meaningless in such a society. Nawa also comments that, before the disaster, she was living her life based on what she believed to be right. However, she now believes that "it was not enough" because she had "never involved other people in it" (Nawa, Interview, 17 Dec 2012).

One's reason, imagination and morality are limited. Therefore, rather than perfecting themselves, they chose to explore a better way of life as an assemblage. We do not know the right way or the ultimate goal; therefore, we need to be open to connections with others, obtain a response from them and proceed through the resonance. This is to walk by "asking", as Holloway (2010a, p.215) describes the Zapatistas movement.

This 'incomplete' subjectivity is illustrated by Deleuze and Guattari (1984, 1988) through the concept of "machinic" assemblage. They describe the world as being composed of a series of machines that are "plugged into one another" (Marks, 1998, p. 49). The subject as machine is like a nodal point of social relationships, and it does not have an essential, pre-determined identity. One's identity is not self-sufficient and it is always open to being coupled with other machines. It can be said that the activism in post-Fukushima Japanese society is such a "machinic" assemblage of people who are incapable to know the entire picture in advance.

6.2.2 The role of humour and redemption

This acceptance of incompleteness seems to be what Critchley (2007) describes as humour. According to him, humour is one way of preventing us from being exhausted by our responsibility to remain open to the outside (Critchley, 2007, p.78).

In his interpretation of Levinasian philosophy, Critchley notes that the exposure to the radical outside is the beginning of ethics. However, this ethics of radical openness entails a huge burden, since it significantly destabilises

the subject's identity. How can the ethical subjects live up to the 'infinite responsibility' of being ever-open? Critchley (2007) explores several ways: we may need a healing project for the split subject by providing catharsis; otherwise it may require an anesthetisation of the pain by giving a heroic fate. However, he ultimately abandons these projects and proposes that the ethical subject should possess "humour" rather than masochistic self-flagellation.

According to him, humour is explained as laughing at the "inauthenticity" of the self; in other words, it is a self-ridicule of "endless inadequacy of (one's) action" to the demand of the other (2007, p.78). Critchley argues that humour reduces the burden of infinitely responding to the other, because one's responses are never required to be adequate.

This celebration of humour is seen in the anti-nuclear actions of NFS. One member emphasises the importance of "looseness" (Interviewee 9). In his view, the student movements of the 1960s and 1970s failed because the activists pursued the "pureness" of their motivation and objectives. As a result, a hierarchy was established in accordance with their pureness; some radical groups conducted purges and other students exhausted themselves through strict discipline. He argues that this pureness is impossible to achieve because we "cannot be absolutely right." Then,

> Probably what we can share is the 'looseness' derived from the perception that we are not perfect and everyone has something for which to be blamed. Humour could be the expression of this looseness (Interviewee 9).

Rather than blaming themselves for being imperfect, probably what they seek is a 'loose' way to exercise their responsibility. A Kanteimae staffer who also joined the NFS demonstrations, Kazumasa Kawaguchi, posted on Twitter:

> Time passes. Every day, many things happen and the life goes on. I thought that I must not forget about those who are suffering from the disaster. I must not let it pass. I told this to the people in the disaster-hit area. The reply was "it is OK to forget. You can forget, and you can remember again" (Kawaguchi, Twitter @kazsoul, 2 July 2013).

People will forget about the disaster because they are not perfect. However, they at least make an effort to be ethical by opening themselves up to unknown encounters and making connections with them. Unlike an ideology-led movement, in which the moralistic subject tries to achieve the ideal self or society, these post-Fukushima protesters started from the recognition that people are imperfect, lazy and forgetful, but they are still capable of acting ethically.

In particular, the NFS movement tried to make this infinite responsibility enjoyable. For example, NFS's marches had a mobile karaoke machine and a bar. NFS was often criticised for pursuing mere enjoyment by using the anti-nuclear discourse as a means to the ends of the carnival. However, enjoyment may be the means for them to cope with the responsibility that post-Fukushima Japanese society requires.

The acceptance of inauthenticity may also enable the movement to be open to the people outside. After the 2012 election, which revealed a gap between the protesters and 'ordinary people' outside, Kaori Nawa commented that she "won't be angry about 'indifferent' people," because "that is me the last year" (Interview, 17 December 2012). She knew that individuals tend to close their territory and become indifferent to the other, because she used to be like that. However, she is now doing what she had never thought about before the disaster. Instead of showing her disappointment for these people outside the movement and separating herself from the 'apolitical' people, she expressed her hope for sharing her experience in activism with them. Her experience of seeing herself changing after the disaster encourages her to keep believing that people will change.

Once people accept incompleteness, ethics no longer asks them to be perfect. It only asks them to be ever open to others and to keep responding. In this kind of movement, the boundary between right and wrong or inside and outside becomes vague. What remain are endless encounters, connections with others, and thousands of acts of forgetting and remembering, through which we shape ourselves and a better society.

6.2.3 Desire of the dissolved self

Critchley's argument imply that the openness and the acceptance of inauthenticity seen in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement compose an important part of ethics. This form of ethics does not provide the coherent principle that works as the foundation of their decision-making. Rather, their

ethical actions are improvised at the intersection between themselves and a particular event that elicits strong emotions. In this sense, many protesters claim that they are motivated by their own emotions and are taking action 'for themselves'.

This term 'action for themselves' is misleading and gives the impression that their action is unethical. As the sociologists Furuichi (2011) and Kainuma (2012) explained, the actions 'for themselves' can be interpreted as exploiting catastrophe, using it to pursue their self-interest.

However, their discourse of the 'action for themselves' does not seem to imply an action to achieve their own interests. For example, one female *Kanteimae* protester comments as follows:

> Why am I here...? It sounds negative if I answer that it is 'for self-satisfaction' [...] but I come here because I want. I feel comfortable for myself being here, being a part of this movement. I have the same feeling when I am doing the volunteer work [at the disaster-hit area in North East Japan]. Sometimes nobody is there; I have no communication with the local people. It is freezing and exhausting...yet I feel good...satisfying. I feel good not because I am doing for the other people. I am doing for myself (Interviewee 14).

Their identification of the self as being a part of the movement, without any recognition from other people, is shared by many *Kanteimae* protesters. They

often identify themselves as "plus-one" of the protesters (Interviewee 15, 16)[31] or "a tree" on a mountain (Interviewee 17, 18). They describe themselves as an entity without signification.

If they say that they feel satisfied with their social engagement as no one, then it seems unlikely that they are exploiting the movement for their self-interest, be it for achieving catharsis or excitement. Rather, it almost sounds as if their satisfaction is achieved when their sense of self is "dissolved" (Deleuze, 1994) in the movement.

Their selfhood is not independent. However, neither is it completely embedded in the collectivity of the movement. It seems that its individuality exists, but it is intermingled with other people, and it is inseparable. We can examine this dissolved subjectivity in the words of Misao Redwolf. She refutes the criticism that the anti-nuclear movement in Tokyo is "selfish":

> They criticise that Tokyo people do not take the part of the Fukushima people. But this claim exactly separates Tokyo and Fukushima. They are not feeling the Fukushima people (Misao Redwolf, Interview, 16 April 2014).

Here she seems to distinguish two different types of ethical relationship that the protesters in Tokyo might have with the people in Fukushima. One is an obligational relationship in which the protesters rationally recognise the pain of the Fukushima people and act for them. Yet, for Misao, this separates the

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[31] Precise Japanese is '*Atamakazu wo tasu*'.

protesters from the people in Fukushima, while her actual identity is inseparable from them. Her pain is indiscernible to the pain of Fukushima people, and she takes action based on her own pain. Thus, Misao declares that she engages in the anti-nuclear movement "for herself," who "has to live in this system" and who "never hopes the neo-liberalists will control [her] life" (Interview, 16 April 2014). What she is expressing is neither the desire of a fixed independent self nor the desire of the other. She talks of the desire coming out of her life, in which her selfhood is entangled with the lives of others.

Another interviewee at the *Kanteimae* protest, a male in his 30s, visited Fukushima after the disaster because he thought that he "has to know the people there." He ate and slept together with the people there. He explained that, through that experience, "my identity expanded. The problem of them has become mine" (Interviewee 19). At the time of my interview, he was wearing a white protective suit with the messages of the Fukushima people on it. He told me proudly that now he "has Fukushima on his back." It seems he meant that he is neither representing the Fukushima people nor speaking for them; he is living with them. This identity expansion is also examined in those who tried to reactivate political language with their action to feel the pain of other people.

6.3 Emergence of the politics of life

6.3.1 Two concepts of life

As I have been arguing, in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement, people are not only practising a new way of political engagement but also

experimenting with a new way of relating to other people, and a new way of living. A young *Kanteimae* protester states that this movement is "for protecting children and lives"; therefore, it is "primitive politics" rather than "politics based on ideology" (Interviewee 15). In fact, the protesters share the notion that the anti-nuclear movement is a matter of "life"; thus, it is a more fundamental issue than the conflict between political theories such as left versus right.

Several protesters in my interview commented that the Fukushima disaster had changed their idea of how they want to live their lives. For example, one protester insisted that "prioritising economic growth cannot protect our lives" (Interviewee 20) and another protester emphasised that "we should not be wealthier by depending on something uncontrollable" (Interviewee 21). The slogans 'protect lives' (*Inochi wo mamore*) and 'protect children' (*Kodomo wo mamore*) are common at the anti-nuclear demonstrations, as are 'no to nuclear plants' (*Genpatsu iranai*) and 'no to restart (the nuclear reactors)' (*Saikado hantai*).

This term 'life' may sound like an embodied meta-narrative for politics in contemporary society. However, we need to be careful lest even such a seemingly universal slogan as 'protect lives' sounds empty to certain people. Tomohiro Akagi claims that the anti-nuclear protester's discourse of 'life is more important than money (economy)' is a utopian statement of middle-class people, whole lives are already stable. He ironically comments that those people "will be fine" even if the economy shrinks as a result of the abolition of nuclear plants, because "it is only the poor people who suffer from the

damage of an economic shrinkage" (Akagi, Twitter @T_akagi, 22 Jun 2012). He implies that the anti-nuclear protesters know that their own lives are sufficiently protected from their own moralistic claim of deterritorialisation to save the lives of other people, such as the future generation. Akagi even argues that the slogan 'for the sake of children' is the preserve of wealthy people who can afford to establish a family with children (Akagi, Twitter, 10 Jul 2012).

What Akagi does not notice is that the protesters' statements to 'protect children' and 'protect lives' seem to go beyond the concept of the individual lives of themselves, their own children or the people around them. For one *Kanteimae* protester, the disaster revealed that we "need to value life as *inochi* (life-force) rather than as *kurashi* (the way of individual living)." She distinguishes these two as follows:

> *Inochi* is something that relates to our cells, and it is connected with the future, while *kurashi* is the way of life in a limited time. It looks like a difference between ethics and common sense. Common sense varies in time, while ethics are woven by the accumulation of data we acquire through the interaction with others (Interviewee 22).

Her metaphor of a cell as a life is very insightful. From her explanation, we can see that what she actually meant by cells is probably the genome, which is the "accumulation of data" of all who once lived on earth, and which is to be passed on to future generations. Perhaps this is another example of 'the otherness' living within the self. In this case, 'the other' does not even exist, as

it is either the past or future generation. Although the voice of such a non-existent other cannot be politically represented, it is already living within the subject. We feel it rather than recognise it, and that 'feeling' affects our political decisions and our perceptions of how we want to live.

For this female protester, the slogan 'protect lives' (*inochi*) means more than the protection of individual lives. By *inochi* she means a flow that accumulates from the past, involving her own life and continuing to the future. The Fukushima disaster shocked her because radioactive contamination, which persists for decades, has distorted this life as flow in a way she never wanted. Another protester comments:

> We could recover from the war, but (the highly contaminated area in) Fukushima will remain uninhabitable for a long time. It has happened during my lifetime. I want an excuse for our children and grandchildren, saying that I have done something (to fix it). I used to believe that I would complete my own peaceful life, but I shouldn't, in such a huge mess (Interviewee 23).

Examining the perceptions of Japanese citizens, the philosopher Morioka (2012) points out that, for them, the term *inochi* possesses contradictory characteristics of finiteness and infiniteness. On the one hand, life belongs to the individual and encompasses birth and death. In this context, life is regarded as an independent 'particle' with a clear border and limitation. However, life can also be seen as a network or a stream of these individual lives, which expands through the universe and continues through history

(Morioka, 2012). The protesters' concept of life described above falls under the latter description. In such a concept of life, the existence of the self is dissolved in a flow of life, as I have examined in the previous section.

It seems that traumatic disaster highlights life as an assemblage. The Fukushima disaster revealed the impossibility of the self being disconnected from the network of complex society. The slogan 'protect lives' could be understood as protecting this life as an assemblage, a networked life, rather than protecting each independent life. By chanting this slogan, the protesters may be declaring that they are part of the flow of life and accepting their responsibility to direct it in a better way.

6.3.2 The meaning of life for the post-Fukushima protesters

If there are two aspects of life, i.e. a solid/closed life-as-particle and a fluid/open life-as-assemblage, then there will be two ways of fulfilling one's life or making one's life meaningful. Manuel De Landa (2011) acknowledges that the term 'meaning' also has "two meanings"; one is linguistic "signification," and the other is pragmatic "significance." For instance, a sentence such as 'what do you mean?' asks for signification, clarification and disambiguation. However, when someone says his/her life has no 'meaning', he/she indicates that his/her life is not significant/important to anybody. De Landa (2011) mentions that the term 'significance' relates to the "capacity to make a difference."

The linguistic form of meaning (signification) and non-linguistic form of meaning (significance) appear to have contrasting natures, since the former is

about identity, fixation and territorialisation while the latter implies difference, change and deterritorialisation. De Landa (2011) notes that these two are often confused. In my opinion, those who pursue 'the meaning of life' will be the greatest victims of the confusion.

Although signification does sometimes make one's life significant, it may lead to self-enclosure. As we have already examined in chapter two, young Japanese people have been struggling to perfect the individual life into a certain form. They are desperately hoping to have meaningful lives and are falling into over-conformity to the dominant value system which provides the identification (signification) of themselves.

On the other hand, the meaning of life for most post-Fukushima protesters has less to do with signification, or completing the self into some pre-fixed form. The MCAN core member Misao Redwolf indicates a value of life without signification. After the Fukushima disaster, Misao left her job as an illustrator to concentrate on organising the anti-nuclear actions. She explains that her "soul desires to be a stone for the foundation of a better society" rather than leaving her name as an artist.

Moreover, among all my interviewees Misao Redwolf is the one who talks the most about Japanese history and tradition. She appreciates her connection with her ancestors, as she believes that it makes us "stop thinking ourselves like a dot," and therefore,

> We recognise a vertical line from the past to the future. When we

recognise it, what comes to us is a different pride from what we think now. Well, probably now I sound like a nationalist, though (Interview, 16 April 2014).

There is some kind of passivity in Misao's discourse, as if her life is embedded in the background history. However, she also emphasises that she is protesting "for herself." She prioritises individual freedom, saying that "freedom means liberation of mind. It means to make a decision on your own" (Interview, 16 April 2014). Her entire discourses signify that although her sense of 'self' is permeated by others in the past and future, she makes her own choices, together with those historical others.

Misao's example shows that a "dissolved" self still has a sense of pride and fulfilment that her life is meaningful, enabling her to proudly state that she is acting for 'herself'. The protesters lost "signification" in an assemblage: they become a nameless 'tree' or a mere 'number'. Feeling proud of and satisfied with this means that they know this nameless existence still has "significance" in the assemblage, as it makes a difference to themselves, to others and to society. Deleuze explains:

> The life of such individuality fades away in favour of the singular life immanent to a man who no longer has a name, though he can be mistaken for no other. A singular essence, a life... (Deleuze, 2001, p. 29).

Here, a sense of pride, freedom and a meaningful life are obtained when we

accept that our own lives are confined and restricted to some extent by the force of others permeating the self, while we respond to this with our own ability and desire, and make a difference to ourselves and society. As Protevi (2009, p.37) claims, an individual is both "embodied and embedded" and "connected and individuated." Then, the desire for life as such an individual inevitably become political, and potentially ethical.

6.3.3 Politics as the experimentation of bodies

Morioka (2003) distinguishes two forms of desire in our lives. The "desire of the body" relates to life as particle, which seeks self-protection and self-reproduction within a closed environment. In contrast, the "desire of life" indicates the passion for opening up one's individual life to new encounters and renewal; therefore, it relates to the act of deterritorialisation. Morioka (2003) states that, although both are aspects of life, pursuing one form of desire limits the pursuit of another form of desire. Desire for a new encounter and creation will threaten the stability of the self, and the adherence to self-protection denies the opportunity for new creation.

Morioka argues that our civilisation has prioritised the desire for stability and self-protection, which he calls "the painless civilisation" (2003). This resonates with Osawa's explanation that, in contemporary Japanese society, people are hoping for "the other without otherness" (2008, p.193), and also with Baudrillard's notion that postmodernity is "the hell of the same" (1993, p.122), as we have excluded the otherness that threatens our stability.

The Fukushima disaster was a radical crack in such an enclosed society. The

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post-Fukushima protesters regret their past way of living in the closed territory and have now started celebrating new encounters and creation. However, at the same time, these protesters, particularly those in NFS, have made it clear that they are not completely rejecting the desire for stability and closure. As was seen in their celebration of humour, they seemed to concede such a desire, because it is also a part of life. Humour is the acceptance of the inadequacy of the self to act for other people. An individual life as a particle becomes forgetful and lazy and tends to be indifferent to the outside. Instead of blaming this desire for self-enclosure, the protesters seek a way for such a body to live ethically. The NFS protester Nao Izumori approves of worldly desires:

> It's not bad to have economic growth and the culture of affluence. We should not stop advancing, because it means to realise a more equal society. We should not deny our desire for that. We (as the anti-nuclear protesters) should declare "YES, I LOVE urban life, I LOVE consumption; but still I dare say this (that we must stop nuclear plants)" (Izumori, Interview, 5 April 2012).

He does not deny a self-contented life. Yet he suggests that we at least need to try opening it, as it is our responsibility. Through their actions, the post-Fukushima protesters may find their own balance between the openness and self-closure of life. Its structure is like a "discursive membrane" that has a double function to "both isolate cells and connect them to others" (Peltonen, 2006, cited in Escobar, 2008, p.260).

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Recently, there has been a tendency to refer to a biological system in the search for a new social and political imaginary for the postmodern condition, when people can no longer form a cognitive unification based on the common cause (De Landa, 2006; Escobar, 2008; Protevi, 2009). In fact, what motivates the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters to engage in politics is not the humanistic idea of rights or obligations. As one protester comments, the anti-nuclear politics is "a matter of life" and "primitive politics" (Interviewee 15). Izumori summarises this primitive politics of life as follows:

> Society is too complicated. Our interests are entangled, and I might find myself being a stakeholder of the institutions I hate. If you think that it is our sin, then we have to say that we should not be born. A life does not have such a thing as theory. It just desires to live. Who can judge who is to blame or who is wrong? Nobody can. We need an indulgence to accept that and enjoy life... If you can do that, it's natural for you to have no goal (of life). (Izumori, Interview, 5 April 2012)

His comment suggests that we may need to stop searching for a coherent theory for a better life. We have been asking questions framed as 'what' and 'should' — what our political responsibility is, to what extent we should care for other people, or to what extent we should sacrifice our enjoyment for others. These questions seek a solid model of the life that we should live. On the other hand, the knowledge sought by the protesters deals with how we might enjoy deconstructed lives and make our life-as-particle fulfilling.

This may even deconstruct the notion of responsibility. In the NFS demonstration, one of its members, Mizuki Nakamura, positively commented:

> It is such a terrible time, and it might sound imprudent to say, but I feel excitement too, because I can make connection with various people locally and create new actions (M. Nakamura, Interview, 6 May 2012).

After the 2012 election, which seemed to reveal the 'unwillingness' to change by Japanese society in general, I met her again and asked how people might accept the responsibility to stay open and to change, instead of pursuing self-enclosed stability. She answered as follows:

> I just think that stopping nuclear plants and choosing the alternative way will be VERY exciting. Anyway the money generated by the nuclear industry never comes to our pocket. So what was that for? The nuclear plants just separated urban areas (as the consumers of nuclear energy) and rural areas (as the producers), creating a huge gulf between them. Now we can utilise sustainable energy such as solar power and windmills. If we do it locally, we can promote the local economy. Nobody loses (M. Nakamura, 13 Jan 2013).

There was no preaching about what we should do in her words, but her passion and her smile were so persuasive that I thought that it would indeed be very exciting, and I wanted to try it. Another NFS member Yumi Nakamura explains her experience of the NFS meetings. There, her opinion changed frequently after hearing the passionate voices of the other participants. She

recalls that it "felt good" to have her opinion completely changed:

> I think that people naturally feel good to change. People have desire to change. In NFS, someone's passionate presentation makes me want to do it too, and I feel happy about that. […] It is the feeling of opening something that you squeeze so hard. It is like taking a deep breath at the top of a mountain, absorbing fresh air into my cell. I breathe out some of me, and absorb something new from the other people (Y. Nakamura, Interview, 5 June 2015).

It seems that there is something in a body, or a solid self, which desires more than mere self-protection. In this sense, 'Lifeness' might be created in this threshold between the limited body and the flow of life, when the limited body carefully tries to dissolve it in order to make a difference in the flow, and in so doing it makes its individual life meaningful. The politics of life suggested by the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement is not so much about the battle against the enclosed body, but more like an experimentation of the body for "setting and then breaking limits":

> [W]e don't know the outcome, and we can't measure our success. Instead we find ourselves working with a different idea of time and space, experiencing moments of intense creativity which resonate and amplify with others, throwing up new worlds, and new possibilities (Free Association, 2006, p.23).

6.4 Implications of the post-Fukushima activism

What kind of implications can be derived from the post-Fukushima activism, for the political impasse in contemporary Japanese society? It is probably inaccurate to insist that the characteristics of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters described here are completely new to Japanese activism. On the contrary, I found that one memoir of the *Zenkyoto* movements in the 1960s and 70s, written by an activist, Shuhei Kosaka, contains strikingly similar descriptions to the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements:

> For me, the *Zenkyoto* movement was the attitude when I face the other, and when I face myself. [...] The ethical questions have always existed in any political movements. However these movements have been asking what our obligation is [...] or accusing the gap between the moralities and our actual behaviour. *Zenkyoto* asked completely new questions, which was our attitude rather than the rightness. [...] The meaning of *Zenkyoto* cannot be clearly described and conveyed in language. It firstly goes under the water, and comes up again with a form of affect and the way of life.[...] What is important in life often comes beyond one's intention, and in this sense, I use the term 'destiny' (Kosaka, 2006, pp.204-206).

From Kosaka's analysis (2006), we can see that what he was pursuing in the *Zenkyoto* movement was not the abstract principle of how he should live; rather, he was exercising how he might live. The *Zenkyoto* students were sensing the coming of a new society, in which the conventional political ideology becomes incompatible with reality.

However, because this 'sense' had no language, they had to express it through the old frameworks. Their embodied "sense" was moulded into dogmatic political terms (Kosaka, 2006; Oguma, 2012). The politics of "attitude" became the politics of "rightness", which is a more familiar evaluation of the entire *Zenkyoto* movement with the image of bloody infighting and purges. The *Zenkyoto* movement could not create a new political language based on their sense. In this memoir published a year before his death, Kosaka (2006) notes that Japanese society has not yet produced any concept to articulate a hope for a new society, even in 2006.

The post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements entail similar politics of attitude based on sense. The difference is that the post-Fukushima protesters are living in a more 'postmodern' world without any transcendental meta-narrative for reference. They are more aware that their politics needs to stay in touch with their bodies and emotions rather than being conceptualised into abstract theory. Still, as argued in the previous chapter, we can observe a tendency to solidification and conceptualisation in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement, in which their emotional discourse becomes disembodied. Yet the conceptualisation itself is inevitable, and it is important not to regard this tendency as signifying that the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement may end up with the same impasse as that faced by the *Zenkyoto* movement.

The post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement includes several currents which reject the convergent process and cognitive language. Hajime Matsumoto seemed to be uninterested in my question about his 'goal' or his 'ideal

society'.

> Many people ask me that question, but I don't know. Ideal society…
> my goal...how can I speak about that? Well, one thing I can say is that
> I want my place to be diverse with many different people. I hate
> capitalism, because it standardises things. It filters whether it makes a
> profit, or whether it is useful. I don't like that. I like a place filled with
> many people with different sense of value, with people beyond my
> understanding. I hope that those places will exist all over our society.
> Every time I go somewhere, I will be able to get a surprise. It will be
> very interesting to have ourselves and society always open to
> surprise (Matsumoto, Interview, 6 April 2012).

He does not have a goal to reach. Nevertheless, he is not rootless. He seems to have an anchor, which he calls a 'place' for encountering something which gives him surprise. His anchor is not an abstract ideology but the intersection between him and other people. It does not guarantee him a permanent resting place; rather it brings desire as the impetus for action. In such a movement, people anchor themselves with the very network they create, and which they are changing (Escobar, 2008, p.268).

Of course, not everyone can live with this level of radical openness like Matsumoto does. The precariat activist Amamiya, who has joined many actions by *Shiroto no Ran*, admits that people in *Shiroto no Ran* are communicative and relatively well-educated (Interview, 19 March 2012). Moreover, the Koenji area, where they have their base, has traditionally had a

counterculture atmosphere. The same thing cannot be achieved everywhere.

However, the NFS member Nawa believes that their lifestyle still gives us inspirations to rethink how we might live. *Shiroto no Ran* was the pioneer of going 'outside' of the dominant norm. According to Nawa, they are "already living in a society without nuclear energy" and "if we keep them in our sight, our life will change" (Interview, 17 December 2012). Nawa explains that her perspectives have actually been changed by keeping them in her sight:

> Before, I wanted to be a normal person. Living a decent life had been a guideline of my life. [...] I have tried to be a fully-fledged person. I believed that would make my life more fulfilling. But now I realise that there was also another way, which is to reverse it (the concept of 'fully-fledged'). From now on I will be reversing these unnecessary titles (Nawa, Interview, 17 Dec 2012).

A meaningful life, for her, used to be the construction of herself according to the dominant norm of society, or of being regarded as a 'fully-fledged' member of society. However, she found another kind of value in the practice of *Shiroto no Ran*. This corresponds with Matsumoto's comments about his anti-nuclear action. Although he does not think about what he can personally do for other people, he believes that, by seeing his action of rejecting authority, "more and more people start acting on their own will" (Matsumoto, *Shiroto no Ran*, talk event, 23 Dec, 2012). This is actually happening.

Matsumoto's view is shared by another anarchistic activist, Kengo Matsunaga.

He organised a demonstration in support of the Occupy movement in 2011, creating a space for dialogue for the *Kanteimae* protesters when I first interviewed him in 2012; he was studying the mutual help system 'time bank' when I interviewed him again in 2014. In this second interview, he recalled all his experiments and commented:

> I don't think that I personally can make the world better. Yet if someone feels empathy with me and joins me one by one, then the movement expands, and society will change gradually. [...] I will do what I want to do. I am very grateful if my word evokes a response from someone (Matsunaga, Interview, 17 May 2014).

Their political efforts never generate one righteous answer or coherent principles; however, they do have affects. They convey the desire for opening and change to those who encounter them. Their politics is creating "affective resonance, where imagination shifts through the interacting bodies" (Shukaitis, 2007).

The politics in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements tell us that the struggle of one person makes a swelling force, and such individual force resonates with one another, and forms new actions; then such actions resonate and create a new movement, which supplies energy for individuals to keep experimenting. Protevi (2009, p.191) calls it the "body politic"; we live our lives as "imbrications of the social and the somatic," from which affect, empathy and love are generated. I believe that this is a new political imaginary which the activists of the 1960s and 1970s were probably unable to

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fully develop, but we are now in the process of developing it again.

Conclusion and further directions

Many sociologists in Japan have been questioning whether the Fukushima disaster or the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements have changed Japanese society (Furuichi, 2011; Kainuma, 2012; Miyadai, 2014). In addressing such questions, my research at least shows that the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters are signifying a change. However, the more important implication of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements is that such questions are not particularly useful and need to be changed.

What the protesters learned from the Fukushima disaster was that we are all part of on-going social reproduction, and nobody can be a neutral observer. Hence, the question to be posed to this movement is not whether it is effective or meaningful, but how 'we' can make it effective and meaningful for a better society. In chapter five and in this chapter, I examined the many struggles of the protesters who have experienced "deterritorialisation" and who are trying to respond to it in their own way. Rather than posing objective questions and making a judgement about "their" actions, we need to ask ourselves how we might learn from their practices, and construct our own struggles for a better life and society.

This chapter explored the ethics of the protesters, which have replaced the political ideology to guide them. Before the disaster, most of the protesters believed that their lives would be stable as long as they made an effort to live normative lives. However, the disaster revealed the contingent and entangled

nature of our lives in contemporary society, where we have difficulty in predicting how our own actions will have an impact. The protesters accept that they are too forgetful and incomplete to become a rational and moralistic subject to work 'for' other people. Hence, they mobilise their bodies onto the streets and force themselves to feel and think. This chapter identified this as a new form of ethics, i.e. of being open to the other.

Several protesters mentioned this openness as their own desire. I argued that it is a desire as a 'dissolved' self who lives in an indiscernible status with the self and the other, and the space of activism is providing the opportunity for identity deconstruction and expansion. Those protesters feel proud of, or satisfied with, the 'dissolving' self in an assemblage, as the encounter with unknown people allows them to create new potential together. Hence, I argued that the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements indicate that personal desires might be ethical too. The post-Fukushima activism provides a space for affective politics, where a struggle of limited bodies affects other bodies, creates new desires and triggers changes in themselves and the surrounding environment.

As I wrote in the last section, Kosaka's description of the *Zenkyoto* movement as the politics of "attitude" (Kosaka, 2006) explains many aspects of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement. It is very difficult to logically describe the post-Fukushima activism because it is in fact the attitude of each individual in facing the lives of the others and the self. However, I believe that the effort is absolutely necessary to theorise this as a new political imaginary. Without this effort, this movement would be judged by the conventional

framework of politics, which sees the novelty of this movement as a mere lack of what there should be, such as rational plans or moral obligations. What is worse is that the people inside the movement are forced to explain it using existing theories that are incompatible with the nature of this movement, rather like what seemed to happen to the *Zenkyoto* movement.

For this reason, the rest of this thesis attempts to delineate a new political imaginary implied by this post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement. I consider this project to be the continuation of a previously discarded attempt in the 1970s, and it also succeeds many painful struggles by young Japanese people in contemporary society. In short, I hope to construct a new political imaginary at the intersection of all these struggles in post-war Japanese society, the political efforts of the post-Fukushima protesters and my own position in academia.

Chapter 7 Synthesis discussion I:
A political imaginary in postmodernity

Introduction

Chapters five and six analysed my fieldwork research and argued that the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements emerged from the experience of "deterritorialisation" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988) — the protesters found that what they had been blindly accepting, such as the discourses of the government, scientists and the mass media, were no longer trustworthy. The belief that their lives would be stable collapsed. Those people were motivated by their own emotion to join social movements, and this new political language of emotions encouraged many other forms of activism in Japan.

Nevertheless, the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements are often evaluated by what they lack – an alternative plan, a shared ideology, coherent and rational discourses, a sense of obligation, and so on. The conventional political theories fail to recognise that their politics operate on a different logic with a dissolved subject, affective connections and an ethics of desire, as we have already seen in the previous chapter.

Hence, this chapter tries to conceptualise the implications of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement as a new political imaginary in the postmodern condition. First, I provide an overview of the position of this anti-nuclear movement in the history of post-war Japanese activism (7.1). The novelty of the post-Fukushima activism lies in the motivational factors of the protesters because it is neither led by a totalising ideology nor based on the

interests of an existing identity. The protesters are building a flexible collective identity in the movement based on their personal emotions.

How can this 'molecular' language of emotions become political? I argue that the post-Fukushima activism signifies two types of political tactics. The *Kanteimae* protest and the subsequent movements are reinvigorating abstract universal concepts such as justice and democracy through their embodied experience (7.2). I argue that these movements adopt a concept similar to the "agonistic" politics proposed by Mouffe (2005). It consists of a form of engaged dialogue with the established institutions of power. While it can appear antagonistic towards the present political system, it remains necessarily, both in its repertoire of action and its acceptance of the location of power, a largely 'majoritarian' movement. It is therefore constituting a hegemonic configuration of power despite and because of its engagement in emotional work.

While followers of such liberal trends see emotions as a political resource within institutional politics, there are also anarchist currents in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements, whose emotional politics involve creating connections and affects. In the following section (7.3), I explore their political imaginary through post-anarchist philosophy (Call, 2002; Day, 2005; Newman, 2001, 2007). Although there are some discrepancies between these theorists, they all reject the constriction of the absolute foundation and reference for politics. Exponents of these 'minoritarian' politics celebrate new encounters in order to create a new way of living.

The final section (7.4) pays attention to the ontological position of the post-Fukushima protesters. Political theories normally attempt to provide a fair and legitimate political model which all the participant agree with. In this framework, what one sees in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements is the confrontation of different theories. However, I argue that post-Fukushima activism should be seen as a force field where the energies created from many different political efforts interact and resonate. The concept of "rhizome" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988) explains this political ontology of the protesters who are moving around different attractors. I conclude that the novelty of this movement lies in this flexible subjectivity which engages in different experiment. The political imaginary needs this flexible ontology in order to respond to the precariousness of lives in the postmodern condition.

7.1 Post-Fukushima activism as postmodern politics

In the history of contemporary Japanese activism, the largest mobilisation occurred in the student movement in the 1960s. As was examined in chapter two, the protest against the revision of the *Ampo* Treaty (a Japan-US security treaty) created turmoil nationwide in 1960. The *Zenkyoto* movement in the late 1960s had a more complex nature as it questioned the hegemonic power within the students themselves – within their identity as majority Japanese (Iida, 2002). This was the politics of "attitude," which needed a new political language (Kosaka, 2006); however, it was framed by the politics of legitimacy, which drove them towards the violent annihilation of what was identified as a hegemonic nature within themselves and their fellows (Oguma, 2012). The search for a new political language was abandoned in the Japanese economic boom, as this provided Japanese people with stable lives and a

plausible narrative to follow (Iida, 2002). For most Japanese people, it had been considered legitimate to maintain the prevailing system and norms.

On the other hand, new social movements occasionally flared up during this period. The Chernobyl nuclear accident in 1986 triggered the anti-nuclear movement in Japan. It was mainly supported by middle-class housewives who demanded safe food for their children. According to Suga (2012), this movement combined ecologism and feminism to counter the 'masculine' discourse of politics. Environmental activism successfully stopped the dam construction on the Yoshino River in 2000 via a referendum (Takagi, 2004). In 2003, around 50,000 people joined the march in Tokyo to protest against the Iraq war. This mass mobilisation changed the image of street protest with its carnivalesque style incorporating music and art, which was adopted in the later movements including the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements (Gonoi, 2012).

These single-issue movements are often understood as what Melucci (1996, pp.34-35) calls a "claimant" movement. It claims policy changes based on a clear collective identity, and tries to realise this within the dominant systems. The post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement is seen as a single-issue claimant movement, because it essentially aims to stop the operation of nuclear reactors. As a claimant movement, the impact of this anti-nuclear movement is limited. It was unable to prevent the Ohi nuclear power plant from resuming operations in 2012, followed by the Sendai plant in August 2015.

However, the evaluation of this movement as a mere claimant movement fails to appreciate its crucial impact on contemporary Japanese society. As was examined in chapter two, the recession since the 1990s has been undermining the once 'super-stable' Japanese society, and now a significant number of people have been forced to lead precarious lives. However, the majority of Japanese people still accept the dominant system and norms. It is still rare to hear the foundation itself being questioned. As Akagi (2007, See chapter two) indicates, it is his 'own fault' that he is poor. His struggle is isolated from any social movements based on a pre-existing minoritarian identity. While the existing political theories fail to respond to the complex nature of society and the fragility of life, the hope for change by some alienated young Japanese people turns into violence against the self and others.

The most common reaction of political apathy is illustrated by Furuichi (2011). As his book entitled *The Happy Young People in the Nation of Despair* (2011) signifies, those young people are 'enjoying' their self-protective lives in a closed community. In Furuichi's view, withdrawal into an enclosed life is a survival strategy in a complex society. However, this survival strategy drives many of them to the painful over-conformity to the prevailing norms of the closed community, resulting in the problems of *karoshi* and suicide. In addition, this self-contained lifestyle ignores those who have already lost the stability of life and leaves them completely hopeless, as seen in Akagi's claim.

Hence the premise of postmodern political condition in Japanese society is as follows. Unlike the revolutionary movements in the 1960s and 1970s, any

totalising political ideology has lost plausibility and people no longer share any common cause for revolt. However, unlike the era of high economic growth, the fragmented identities of Japanese people are no longer protected by social stability. Now they fear poverty, unemployment and overwork, and the feeling of alienation is becoming serious. It is obvious that we now need a new political theory to reshape our society under these postmodern conditions.

The Fukushima disaster was a critical event because it revealed the fact that most people are now facing the precariousness of life. For many Japanese people, the Fukushima disaster meant the collapse of the belief that their lives would be stable and satisfied as long as they followed the dominant norms. The disaster revealed that it was almost a "fake peace" (Interviewee 7, See 5.2.4) which was hiding the fragile nature of the system. I called this the experience of "deterritorialisation" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988) in which the Japanese people are exposed to the radical 'outside'. Although this experience of deterritorialisation is not always caused by such a catastrophe, it seems that the Fukushima disaster brought this experience on an extremely large scale, and the anti-nuclear movements became a massive experimental field for those people trying to re-create their society in a less painful form.

This awareness of a fragile life pushes the protesters' imagination beyond the existing identities. I argued that the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters are responding to this precariousness of life by building a new collective identity, which Castells (1997, p.8) calls "project identity." Their form of politics is not based on the existing identity which is already fragmented, nor is it led by a totalising ideology capable of uniting such fragmented identities. It is

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each individual's anger, fear and regret that has fuelled their political action to reject reality. Hence, it is beyond the scope of the claimant movements. The protesters are reconsidering how to engage in politics and how to relate with other people.

Hence I argue that the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement marks an important milestone in Japanese activism. It came out of the dominant atmosphere of hopelessness in contemporary Japanese society, and it is probably the first activism to directly tackle the postmodern predicament by inventing a new way of doing politics. In the light of the many experiments conducted in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement, the rest of this chapter attempts to elaborate the new political imaginary in postmodern Japan, which is neither ideological politics based on meta-narratives nor identity politics based on predetermined attributions.

7.2 The molecular politics of emotions

7.2.1 Liberalism and the limit of rationality

The prevailing argument in political philosophy for dealing with a complex society remains in the domain of liberal theory, which tries to re-establish some kind of meta-narrative and define a solid political subject. John Rawls' theory of justice (1999) is one of the most prominent ones. Rawls proposed the famous thought experiment for a fair decision-making procedure. This thought experiment places all the participants in what he calls the "original position"; they wear "the veil of ignorance" to extinguish all identities and interests of individuals (Rawls, 1999). Rawls considers that, in such a hypothetical environment, people will agree on the fair principles of justice.

Rawls (1999) then elaborates the justice principle that might achieve a consensus in such a thought experiment. For example, he considers that people in the original position would agree with the "difference principle" which allows inequality as long as it provides the greatest benefit for the least advantaged person (Rawls, 1999). These principles are all sophisticated and plausible. Yet the most attractive point of Rawls' theory is his explanation of the genesis of the justice principle. What, he asks, is the legitimate procedure for people living in a complex society to agree with the principle of justice? His answer is the hypothetical non-identity situation. This imaginary may be close to that of disaster or war, in which everyone becomes equal by losing all they have.

On the other hand, Rawls' theory of justice and his concept of original position were criticised on the grounds that political subjects cannot emerge from such a non-identity situation. Communitarians offer the most obvious critique, claiming that there are no "unencumbered selves" (Sandel, 1982). People are embedded in their community and no one can be totally detached from the surrounding environmental and cultural constraints. The motivation for any political choice must have its roots in one's identity. This criticism sounds plausible. If we problematise identity as skewing fair political decision, what else will motivate us to any political commitment?

Habermas (1990) provides an alternative procedure of fair decision-making, which concerns the actual identity of people. In his theory, the legitimacy of decision-making is guaranteed through the actual deliberation between

people with different identities. What is necessary in politics is the public sphere that allows all participants to freely discuss and reach agreement.

However, these theories face the problem of membership to claim their legitimacy. Neither Rawls's original position nor Habermas's public sphere can include the voices of the future generation in their legitimate decision making procedure. This issue of the future generation is crucial for making decisions on nuclear energy, as it leaves highly toxic nuclear waste for thousands of years. In addition, any accident may cause huge contamination lasting for decades.

In a complex society, we have difficulty constructing a 'fair' political decision. This is the case not only because of the impossibility of representing the voice of the future generation, but also because the interests of the present generation have already become unclear. In a diverse society, finding a common interest is difficult. Moreover, the Fukushima disaster revealed that even personal interests are sometimes unclear, since we are often not fully aware of the risks of advanced technology such as nuclear energy until an accident occurs.

In my fieldwork, several post-Fukushima protesters commented that their stance had "always been anti-nuclear," but they did not act politically before the disaster. These participants regretted the fact that they had expressed anti-nuclear opinions only when asked in petitions (Interviewee 24) or questionnaires (Interviewee 25) but "had not taken further action." People's feelings are often too weak to take political action. We were not so sure about

our interest, and it was only after the disaster that "I realised this system at last. I realised that while I was ignorant, many things had already been decided" (Interviewee 26).

Before trying to establish a fair platform for decision-making, the complex nature of society requires political theories to consider how we identify our political interest to make a commitment in politics. As was mentioned in chapter two, the social dissatisfaction among young Japanese people has not been channelled into politics. Sometimes they do not even feel it as dissatisfaction, as shown in Tomohiro Kato's comment that he had a "doubt" about his unfair treatment but "was not dissatisfied" (See 2.4.2). Similarly, in Furuichi's argument (2011), most young people describe their lives as being satisfied despite seeming to feel unbearable pressure to grasp a majoritarian life to make their lives satisfied (See 2.3.3). It seems that some liberal theories have too much faith in human rationality for them to form the basis of political action, while the political impasse in postmodernity actually stems from the fact that ordinary people living in a complex society are not always conscious of their political claims.

7.2.2 Radical democracy by the inconsistent subject

Several liberal political theorists try to reflect the nature of complex society by reducing the overdependence on human rationality. The theory of liberal "ironism" by Richard Rorty (1989) is one such attempt. His ironism derives from his attitude of accepting the contingency of the self, who has no "final vocabulary" (Rorty, 1989). Based on this notion of inconsistent subjectivity, Rorty claims that "we should abandon the hopeless task of finding politically

neutral premises which can be justified to anybody" as the legitimate condition of democratic politics (Rorty, in Mouffe, 1996, p.4).

In Rorty's view, we will be able to create solidarity not by rationally sharing the universal discourse but "by increasing our sensitivity" (1989, p.xvi), in particular, by cultivating the "ability to suffer humiliation" (1989, p.91). Hence, Mouffe notes:

> Against the type of liberalism that searches for universal rational justification and believes that democratic institutions would be more stable if it could be proven that they would be chosen by rational individuals under the veil of ignorance or in a situation of undistorted communication, Rorty's pragmatism reminds us of the limits of the claims of reason (Mouffe, 1996, p.6).

Mouffe categorises Rawls and Habermas as rational universalists, and she credits Rorty's pragmatism. However, Mouffe (1996) casts doubt on Rorty's optimism, since Rorty still believes that there will be an ultimate agreement on one liberal value to realise a fair society. Mouffe cannot agree with this. For Mouffe, Rorty is not very far from Habermas because both "envisage moral and political progress in terms of the universalization of the liberal democratic model" (Mouffe, 1996, p.7). Both believe that the creation of consensus is possible, and the difference lies in the way of achieving it. While Habermas calls for rational communication, Rorty believes that 'sentimental education' and economic growth would bring a unity to a liberal society.

Like Rorty, Mouffe (2005) accepts the contingency of a subject and emphasises the role of passions in the formation of political identities. However, for her, non-rational discourses are not for building a consensus. Rather, Mouffe suggests discarding the pursuit of consensus and argues that we should not avoid confrontations because they are the condition of democracy (Mouffe, 2005, p.29). Hence, we need a democratic outlet for our passions to engage in "agonistic" politics. In her view, democracy is a dynamism of hegemonic confrontation between different values, claims and political passions, rather than the deliberation towards consensus. When democracy is in crisis under the dominance of a single hegemonic power, Mouffe seeks a way to "pluralize hegemony" (2005, p.118) by agonistic politics with emotions.

Yet it seems that Mouffe's radical democracy remains in the framework of institutional politics. Although Mouffe pays attention to the formation of political identity which the conventional theories usually ignore, she seems to presume that emotional claims naturally forms a solid political demand to be actualised through the existing political institutions. But how can emotional expression construct solid political claims that are coherent enough to compete with each other? Is this always achievable through the existing political system?

The post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements show the process of how the initial emotional burst becomes political. Although the anti-nuclear movements include several different political thought, the *Kanteimae* protest deploys the similar tactics to Mouffe's proposal to "pluralize hegemony" (2005, p.118).

Mouffe claims that in order to counter the oppression of the present institute of sovereignty, we need several other hegemonies to compete with it. When the organiser of the *Kanteimae* protest MCAN states that the purpose of its action is to pressurise the government (Noma, 2012; Misao Redwolf, 2013), it appears that they are establishing this counter-hegemony. As I mentioned in chapter five, the "vessel" of the *Kanteimae* protest collects people's anger in one place, legitimates its expression and amplifies it. In this process, the emotions of ordinary people become the political voice to compete with the hegemony of the government.

Yasumichi Noma, who is active in both MCAN and Counter-Racist Action Collective (C.R.A.C), claims that their activism works as the re-embodiment of liberal values. He points out that the political language of the liberal left used to be disembodied and failed to impact on many ordinary people:

> The counter-racist actions were previously attempted by the well-mannered liberal left. However, sadly, their rational discourse preaching that "we can never allow such exclusionism in our society" has never reached people's minds, even though what they said was right. […] When you come across those who are shouting on the street "Kill the Koreans" or "kick them out of here," how come you keep calm? Isn't it a more normal reaction to shout back at them, "what the hell are you talking about?" (Noma, 2013).

In Noma's view, the traditional rational liberal discourse became detached from the embodied experience of people. Critically, this discourse could not

describe anger. In contrast, C.R.A.C's counter-racist action uses strong language in order to denounce the racists. For this reason, their action is sometimes criticised for being as violent as that of racists. However, Noma's position is clear: to tackle evil, we have to tactically descend to the same level as its perpetrators to form counter-hegemony. Noma still believes that "justice is with us" (Noma, 2013).

In the same interview, Noma refers to Rawls's concept of justice as fairness, and his words suggest his liberal tendencies. He is hostile to so-called postmodernism, because it deconstructs even the concept of justice. To him, justice exists as the transcendental, universal value, but it has been a disembodied concept due to the laziness of the traditional liberal left who preferred rational intellectual discussion to physical confrontation. Noma argues that we need "training and practice" to react immediately to injustice when we come across it, and the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement worked on such training (Noma, Twitter@kdxn, 6 September 2014).

The anti-government movement is another form of post-disaster activism that is similar in nature to the anti-racist actions. Since the LDP's huge victory in the 2012 general election, the LDP-led government proceeded with controversial policies by introducing the Secret Information Protection Act and lifting a constitutional ban on collective self-defence. In such conditions, those 'trained' protesters quickly organised anti-government actions. Wakagi Takahashi (2014), a political scientist and anti-government activist in the Tokyo Democracy Crew (TDC), follows Noma's view and comments that their movements are "visualising their anger" (Takahashi, 2014), which has been

suppressed in the conventional liberal left.

The notable aspect of these actions is the reintroduction of the language of the liberal left into their activism. The terms 'justice', 'freedom', 'democracy' and 'peace' are frequently mentioned in the movement. Their emotions and embodied experiences in activism reinvigorate the once discarded old values. Takahashi claims that their actions are "defending post-war democracy" from Prime Minister Abe's revolutionary attempt to destroy it. This re-embodiment of liberal values is described well in the message of the rapper and activist ECD for the anti-racist campaign: "Let the glossed-over language have power (*Kireigoto ni chikara wo*)."[32]

7.2.3 Major politics of emotions

These practices of the post-Fukushima activism indicate that the role of non-rational language is crucial for political mobilisation. It forms a political counter-discourse and creates dynamism in politics, as Mouffe suggests. However there is another concern about emotional language in regard to its legitimacy. Mouffe discards the idea of universal consensus whereas most liberal theorists usually pursue a consensus because it is the source of legitimacy. Without a consensus, how can we justify our decisions?

Actually, Mouffe does not say that we do not need any kind of universal consensus. She (2005) acknowledges that we need to agree with the grounding principles which enables antagonistic political debate to be

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[32] From the website of 'People's Front of Anti-Racism' [in Japanese]. Available at: http://antiracism.jp/march_for_freedom/supporter-289.html

possible without descending into unethical antagonism. In short, the platform of agonistic debate needs to be institutionalised in advance based on a consensus; once the participants accept this rule as legitimate, any decisions made by this rule are legitimate. However, this invites another question: how can we agree with this rule in the first place? To form a consensus, we probably require a rational and coherent subject. It seems that as long as we pursue some kind of general principles to guarantee the legitimacy of our decision-making, we arrive back at the same problem of how to reach a consensus.

Although the *Kanteimae* protest is adopting an attempt similar to Mouffe's agonistic democracy, the protesters are doing so outside the political institutions. While Mouffe legitimates the emotional discourse to become a counter-hegemony by institutionalising the system of agonistic democracy, the *Kanteimae* protest skipped this process.

The advantage of emotional language is its promptness, as Noma comments. When people feel anger, it directly fuels political mobilisation without the legitimation process such as deliberation. Using the terms of Deleuze and Guattari (1988), it might be said that the politics of emotions creates "molecular" flows, rather than a "molar" planning and ideology. However, how such molecular language of emotions on the street can claim its legitimacy to form a counter-hegemonic power without the mediation of political institutions?

As I examined in Chapter five, the *Kanteimae* protest frames people's

emotions in everyday life into the mainstream voice in order to compete with the present hegemony in the formal political arena. In order to do so, the number of the participants is extremely important, as the organiser Misao Redwolf (2013) states, because it shows their power and legitimacy of their claim. This orientation is also clearer in later movements such as anti-racism actions and the anti-government movements. The TDC member Takahashi explains:

> We identify ourselves as the citizen 'inside' the society, and as the strong people with sovereign power. In the era when the politicians are short-sighted and disgraceful to us, we need to prove that it is we who have sovereign power. […] We already have anger and dissatisfaction; so we need to visualise it for society. For that, politicians who trample on the democratic process should be pointed out as the enemy and told to resign (Takahashi, 2014).

This is exactly what Mouffe (2005) considers "the political"; it is this antagonism that Mouffe tries to express in agonistic politics in order to fluidise the static political order based on laws and morals. The 'molecular' language of emotions is flexible, and their political actions are changing according to the situation. However, the direction, timing and speed of change are regulated in order to form a unified power. Although their 'molecular' political force of emotions does not pursue the objective of establishing another hegemonic institution, they may be creating a single flow of emotions to counter the existing form of sovereignty, which is somewhat closer to the term 'atmosphere' (See chapters two and three). This is a form of hegemonic

power in Mouffe's sense: for her, hegemony means the creation of the order which excludes other possibilities (2005, p.18).

It is the novelty of the *Kanteimae* protest that it creates new political practices based on emotions, to challenge the present system. However, they accept the existing political system based on sovereignty, and its tactics are elaborated to work within it. They are challenging the existing hegemonic institution by insisting that their political claim is more legitimate and should become dominant.

The *Kanteimae* protest is largely 'majoritarian' in a sense of Deleuze and Guattari (1988, p.105), who define majority as "a constant" and "homogeneous systems" while minorities are "subsystems". A majority is not necessarily defined by its size but it is rather "a model you have to conform" (Deleuze, 1995, p.173); therefore when "a minority creates models for itself, it's because it wants to become a majority". The *Kanteimae* protest is establishing this majoritarian model, and therefore this action should be distinguished the non-hegemonic and "minoritarian" anarchist current of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement, which I later explain in this chapter as the politics of affect.

As I already mentioned, this hegemonic nature of the *Kanteimae* protest is criticised by several intellectuals as populistic. For example, the sociologist Hiroshi Kainuma (2012) comments that the protesters are imposing their own justice. The critic Hiroki Azuma illustrates the *Kanteimae* protest as "leftist populism" and claims that "nothing comes out from it" (Twitter, @hazuma, 14

July 2013). While Mouffe's agonistic democracy is institutionalised and she presumes that "pluralised" hegemonic powers compete under the agreed rule, the *Kanteimae* protest constitutes a hegemonic flow outside of political institutions in order to influence representative democracy. It may therefore be reasonable for the political scientist Kazuto Suzuki (2012) to call this action "undemocratic." As politics on the street may establish another unchallenging hegemony outside formal politics.

The political scientist and anti-nuclear activist Chigaya Kinoshita has a different view. He admits that the post-Fukushima activism signifies the nature of populism (Kinoshita, 2012, 2013). However, he emphasises that the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement is a grass-roots form of populism as opposed to the populism incited by the authoritarian nationalists.

Kinoshita's distinction is important to refute the simplistic equation of populism with problematic politics. However, the majoritarian nature of these actions certainly has a disadvantage as well as advantages. Although the protesters started from fluid emotional language, their orientation to majority-ness eventually solidifies their action and language and excludes other potentials. The activist Seiji Uematsu criticises MCAN for framing themselves as forceful people, as their voice may drown out the voices of the further politically weak people. Instead of 'power-versus-power' politics, Uematsu is searching for a way to "express ourselves as the weak" and wants the movement "to wander, waver and becoming entangled" (Interview, See 5.3.2).

7.2.4. Minor politics of emotions

I agree that this majoritarian tendency in the *Kanteimae* protest has a problem. However my view is also different from that of Uematsu as my fieldwork suggests that the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters largely shared an aspect of wandering. Although the unified political claim of the *Kanteimae* protest looks majoritarian, the narratives of the *Kanteimae* protesters as individuals were mostly based on personal emotions of anger, confusion and regret.

It is notable that the discourses of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters were mostly occupied with their personal emotions, especially the period before the series of general elections, while the subsequent activism such as anti-racism and anti-government movements put more emphasis on universal values such as justice, equality and democracy. Despite the fact that significant amount of protesters in these actions overlap, usage of such abstract political concepts were less in the anti-nuclear movements.

This may be because the anti-nuclear movement was the first large-scale activism by 'non-political' citizens for decades. For them, expressing their emotions may have been the only way of doing politics. Their language may have naturally become more polished in the subsequent movements as they became more experienced.

However, another reason may lie in the nature of the anti-nuclear movement itself. The issue of nuclear energy inevitably highlights the complex power relations between the government, municipalities, scientists, the nuclear

industry, electronic companies, employees and consumers. The anti-nuclear protesters face many criticisms; abandoning nuclear energy may damage our economy. It will reduce employment opportunities in the depopulated area. Rather than framing their claim as universally and morally right, the protesters tended to make their political claim based on their personal desire.

These personal discourses themselves are in fact already political, even without conceptualisation or legitimatisation. The practices of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters notify us that politics is more than the coordination of political demands and the actualisation of it through the existing institutions, or the construction of the legitimate order. Their emotional expressions are the rejection of their past selves who passively accepts the ready-made discourses, and it contains what we call micropolitics, or a cultural exploration for "creating new modes of being and relating" (Osterweil and Chesters, 2007, p.254).

Connolly (2013, p.188) calls this politics the accumulation of "role experimentation" by people, who are reconsidering a place to shop or things to buy, who start travelling to broaden their perspectives or seeking new friends, and so on. This is exactly what the anti-nuclear protesters are doing, especially those in *Shiroto no Ran* and NSF. The protesters in *Shiroto no Ran* and NFS were not trying to prove the legitimacy of their claim to other people. Instead they expressed their desires about how they want to live, which affects and being affected by the people around them. I believe this is another kind of politics based on the molecular language of emotions.

Hence, I argue that this 'molecular' political language actually has two dimensions. It is possible to say that of *Shiroto no Ran*, NFS and MCAN and the subsequent movements are all motivated by the participants' own emotions and their particular experiences, which signifies the novelty of the post-Fukushima activism. Yet we need to distinguish two tendencies of the molecular language of emotions. The difference lies in the way they use this emotional language. The politics of the *Kanteimae* protesters and their subsequent actions mostly claim the legitimacy of their molecular flow of emotions by showing unity, while the emotional politics implied by *Shiroto no Ran* and NFS's action is non-hegemonic experiments outside this legitimacy claim.

The difference is seen in their slogans too. In MCAN's *Kanteimae* protest, the participants express the power of the people by chanting "it's our turn to make them (the government) obey us." This is also often heard in the anti-government actions. In contrast, *Shiroto no Ran* adopted the policy "we are not obeying them."[33] NFS also seems to have this tendency. While the former is a molecular-"majoritarian" movement which pursues the hegemonic power, the latter is molecular-"minoritarian," which signifies the flight from the hegemonic power, in the sense of Deleuze and Guattari (1988). In this case, emotional language does not claim legitimacy by forming a majority; it simply

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[33] It is said that both slogans belong to the same person, a rapper called ECD. On his Twitter account, he explains that he changed his original slogan of "We are not the people who obey you" into "it's our turn to make them obey us" after the 3/11 disaster (ECD, Twitter@ecdecdecd, 16 August 2012), which signifies his shift from non-hegemonic to hegemonic politics. On the other hand, Matsumoto in *Shiroto no Ran* still repeats this 'non-hegemonic' discourse of "not obeying you" as we have already seen in chapters five and six.

creates an affect and disseminates new actions. This trend cannot be explained within the framework of political liberalism, and we need to focus on anarchism.

7.3 Understanding the politics of affect

7.3.1 Anarchism of subjectivity

According to Newman (2001, p.40), radical political theories are "haunted" by questions such as "what replaces the state?" or "what replaces power?" He insists that both Marxism and liberal political theories are based on the concept of social contract and paradigm of the state. On the other hand, anarchism goes beyond these ideas of governance based on social contract - "Anarchism is the story of man" (Newman, 2001, p.37). Hence, an anarchist might reframe a political question to enquire how individuals might live satisfactorily.

Anarchism itself has many trends. It seems that traditional anarchists have an essentialist notion of human subjectivity. For example, Newman (2001, p.39) notes that Bakunin uses an "enlightenment humanist framework" and considers that human beings are essentially moralistic and rational. Meanwhile, Kropotkin presumes that the human being has an instinctive drive for mutual help (Newman, 2001). The assumption is that human nature is fundamentally good, moralistic or cooperative; therefore, if we liberate it from suppressive hegemonic institutions, those individuals will naturally create a harmonious society. In short, the political project of traditional anarchism is summarised as the liberation of this human nature from state power (Newman, 2001; Call, 2002).

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This essentialist view held by traditional anarchists appears similar to that of the liberal theorists: they presume that people are naturally social and political. However, the subjects in complex contemporary society have little idea about how their actions impact on society, other people and themselves. The social relationship is not as simple as that between the oppressive institution and the subject. We may deliberately choose an action that ends up narrowing our own life potential, or we may be unwittingly sacrificing others for our own life.

The complexity of post-industrial society was analysed by the Situationist International in France in the 1950s and 1960s (See 3.3.1). They argued that it is not the hegemonic institutions outside of us that oppress us. We internalise the consumerist norm within ourselves and mould our desire in accordance with the market trend. Hence, instead of claiming the liberation of essentially rational or moralistic subjects from the hegemonic institutions, the situationists claim that we should follow our authentic desire within ourselves for a lived experience (Debord, 1983; Vaneigem, 1983).

This political project of liberating desire seems to be a subversive approach against the invisible hegemony in a complex society. This philosophy is shared by anarchism in the postmodern era, such as Hakim Bey's "Temporary Autonomous Zone" (1991, See 3.1.1). *Shiroto no Ran* may be seen as part of this trend, as the political scientist Gonoi (2012) compared the liberated space they created in their anti-nuclear mobilisation with the concept of TAZ.

However, as chapter two has already pointed out, this 'liberated desire' could

flow in the direction towards the major power that oppresses us. Moreover, an unrestricted desire might be equated with the selfish pursuit of own interest by sacrificing other people. Liberation of the personal desire is also the claim of neoliberalism, which rejects state regulation and celebrates individual competition. Taylor (2013) notes that the post-anarchists' anti-ideological pluralism is similar to the neoliberalist view of "End of History". In addition, both celebrate creativity; the former's Do it Yourself (DIY) ethos is compatible with Entrepreneurialism (Taylor, 2013).

The anarchist tendency in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements received criticism in this context. The critic Hidemi Suga (2012) notes that the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement entails an individualistic culture which shares the same worldview as that of neoliberalism. For example, *Shiroto no Ran* remained indifferent to the protesters arrested during its mobilisation, whereas in the traditional left movement, activists are more unified and organise support. For Suga (2012), their anarchist ethos is based on 'self-responsibility', which endorses the neoliberal discourse. Suga (2012) also points out that *Shiroto no Ran* and the other post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters lack a global perspective. Although these protesters are passionate about shutting down nuclear plants in Japan, they are relatively indifferent to Japan's policy of exporting nuclear reactors. In short, the politics of 'desire' are denounced as lacking ethics.

However, chapter six has argued that the politics of desire pursued by the post-Fukushima protesters is actually ethical, due to the notion of the "dissolved" self (Deleuze, 1994). Comparing the libertarian theorist Robert

Nozick with Deleuze, Bell (2003) argues that although both will agree that no social entity should transcend individual desires, Deleuze does not claim that individuals are transcendent entities. His philosophy not only discredits the idea of absolute social entities but also disproves a solid individual entity. As the subject of the desire is not a solid entity, the desire cannot be self-contained.

The ambiguity of the selfhood was highlighted by the Fukushima disaster, as it was a force from the 'outside' that destabilised the self. Connolly (2013) analyses that although neoliberals celebrate the spontaneous order in the market, they tend to see the market system itself as a closed system which works under the "impersonal rationality." However, the market system is a part of the open system where the different forces interpenetrate; therefore, this system is affected by a variety of unpredictable outside factors and renders the lives of the individuals in this network more precarious than they imagine.

The awareness of this open system was mentioned by my interviewee Nawa, who said that the Fukushima disaster "showed that even the value of immovable property loses its value" (See 6.2.1). The disaster made her realise that they are the "99%" of people who face the precariousness of life, and who cannot disconnect their lives from a fluid and complex society.

A life is not complete within itself, and it always goes beyond the comprehension of one individual. Therefore, the protesters seek encounters in the street and make connections. Although the awareness of the incomplete self does not become a motivation for resistance, it brings a desire

for encounters and connections. Their desire for a better life is not self-contained. It involves other people. Here we can see the different worldviews of the politics of desire between neoliberalism and post-anarchism.

> A capitalist entrepreneur is looking for potential moments of excess in order to enclose it, to privatise it, and ultimately feed off it. Our angle is to keep it open, in order to let others in, and to find out how it might resonate with others and hurl us into other worlds and ways of being (Free Association, 2006, p.18).

This notion of the inconsistent and ambigious self is not an entirely novel concept of postmodernity. Newman (2001) traces it back to Max Stirner. Newman insists that Stirner's concept of the self is "empty, undefined, and contingent," and it is constantly in the process of recreating (2001, p.66). There is no authentic self to be liberated from the oppressive power. For him, insurrection means to reject one's enforced identity and liberate one's potential to "reinvent oneself" (Newman, 2001, p.68). Hence, Newman notes that Stirner proposes an "anarchism of subjectivity" rather than "anarchism based on subjectivity" (Newman, 2001, p.66).

Nietzsche is another thinker who insists on an "anarchy of subject" (Call, 2002). Call (2002) claims that Nietzsche deconstructed the conventional human subjectivity which penetrates the Enlightenment-based modern political theory. The modern political theory presumes a subject who is always consistent and rational. On the other hand, Nietzsche believes that human

subjectivity is in a state of flux and "change is the very heart of who and what we are" (Call, 2002, p.50). Call (2002) argues that Deleuze and Guattari find a revolutionary possibility in this subjectivity, which engages in a constant value creation and self-overcoming.

Call even notes that reprogramming or redesigning ourselves is "our primary duty" (2002, p.52). Although this term 'duty' sounds moralistic, the previous chapter noted that several post-Fukushima protesters had expressed this self-overcoming as their own desire rather than their duty. The NFS organiser Mizuki Nakamura felt "excited" by her political commitment as it would bring new connections. Another organiser, Yumi Nakamura, also commented that encountering different opinions and having oneself changed might be part of our desire (See 6.3.3). These examples from among the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters show how the 'post-anarchistic' desire takes a different path from neoliberalism.

The post-anarchist theory challenges the self-enclosure of neoliberalism by claiming that complete closure is impossible in a fluid and open system. In contemporary Japanese society, people like Akagi are told that their precarious lives are their own fault as they cannot accommodate themselves to the 'impersonal rationality' of the market. Liberals will be able to counter this by calling for human rationality to form solidarity and establish a fair, inclusive political order. Yet, there are always people whom such political communities fails to include, due to the limitation of our imagination and also due to rapid changes in society. Akagi claims that he is in such an air pocket. The future generation tends to be outside of our rational concern. Hence, another

political approach is needed to 'fill the gap'. We need this anarchist politics of desire which encourages encounters and making connections, where there are no existing theories, collective identities and political concepts.

7.3.2 Reconciling unity and diversity?

Call (2002, p.118) briefly outlines the academic theories that might contribute to post-anarchism. Based on this outline and his arguments, I summarise that it celebrates the following:

1) An anarchy of the subject, or the notion of the self as the process of becoming, as suggested by Nietzsche

2) Foucault's micropolitics as the resistance to the power to mould our way of life

3) Critique of representations, seen in the work of the situationists and Baudrillard

4) Incredulity towards meta-narratives, proclaimed by Lyotard

5) Rhizomatic nomad thinking of Deleuze, as opposed to the convergence towards universality

It seems that the earlier criteria may also be met by some liberal political theories, while the latter criteria are more specific to anarchists. For example, Rorty's (1989) view of the subject is anarchic rather than coherent, as I mentioned earlier. This notion is mostly shared by the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters I observed, such as MCAN, NFS, and *Shiroto no Ran*. It can be noted that these are not the entire characteristics of the movement, as there are also the old revolutionary left and right-wingers in this movement. However, my fieldwork did not focus on those who are internalising a totalising

ideology. This is because the anarchy of the subject is the starting point of my research, which asks how this ambiguous self can avoid being apathetic.

The second criterion of micropolitics still explains most of my research targets. MCAN's *Kanteimae* protest is less clear about this, because its aim is to impact on the government. However, they reject the traditional anti-hegemonic view which equates the political struggle with the battle against the state. MCAN members and the Kanteimae protesters are more cautious of the complex and entangled nature of power in contemporary society (See 5.3.1).

Nevertheless, MCAN, C.R.A.C and TDC are clearly distinguished from the post-anarchistic currents because they do not meet the remaining criteria, which are the rejection of representation, meta-narratives and celebration of rhizomatic dissemination. Actually, these are usually considered political defects. Although the rhizomatic nature of NFS and *Shiroto no Ran* brought creativity to political practice, their policy to "connect with everything" (Williams, 2013; See 5.4.4) is incompatible with electoral politics, which requires a consensus on 'what to connect' in order to win. Their other policy, to "forget" once-established organisations, makes their actions quite short-lived. As I mentioned in chapter five, *Shiroto no Ran* withdrew from its role as the influential demonstration organiser after six months. As the interviewee Mizuki Nakamura states (See 5.4.4), NFS was also a temporary emotional eruption, and the participants moved to different actions without sticking to their "brand".

Hence, while Call (2002) celebrates the loss of meta-narratives and rhizomatic dispersion in political movements, another post-anarchist theorist, Saul Newman (2007), emphasises that politics need some kind of consensus. On the one hand, Newman's anarchist perspective claims that politics are possible for a dissolved subject, because he/she is motivated by his/her own emotions aroused by a particular event. On the other hand, as I analysed in chapter three, Newman (2007) argues that these particular actions are vibrating each other and eventually converge into "unstable universalities," which become the basis of democratic politics.

Although his concept of these "unstable universalities" is not articulable in advance, it is a kind of a meta-narrative, or a transcendental reference, which is created retrospectively in the movement. Newman notes that we need "a new International" which runs a global project of constructing "a common political imaginary, a common vision of what the world should be" (Newman, 2007, p.189). In his idea, "the basis for this new International might be found in the existing anti-globalisation movement, although it obviously requires much greater political elaboration and organisation" (Newman, 2007, p.189). What could be this new political project? Newman notes that although it emphasises organisation and unity, it should not sacrifice the difference seen in the anti-globalisation movement.

To become a consistent and coherent political project, it requires some kind of moulding. We probably need a logic of legitimacy and rational discourse for the moulding process, and this will invalidate the affective aspect of emotional language. In the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement, this moulding

process divided the protesters rather than unified them, as was seen in the debate over the elections (See 5.4).

It seems that these arguments still presume that politics is only about fair collective decision-making; therefore, in order to make a fair decision, legitimacy is required. Even these theorists reject a rational and coherent subject in politics; they still share the premise that politics needs a model. In this sense, Newman's suggestion may be not so far away from those of Mouffe (2005). I agree with Newman when he criticises Mouffe's proposal of resisting the single sovereignty by pluralising hegemony, claiming that: "I fail to see why this is necessarily a better scenario: rather than having one single site of oppression and domination, we have several" (Newman, 2010, p.94). However, when Newman proposes a global project with "a common vision of what the world should be," which is "much greater political elaboration and organisation" than anti-globalization movements (Newman, 2007, p.189), it sounds like he is excluding some other potentials of politics in his favour of "a new International."

Mouffe's radical democracy defines a legitimate system while allowing divergence as a result. On the other hand, Newman rejects any fixed political arena and assumes some sort of universality as a result. Despite the methodological difference, both believe that a political project needs a universal model, and both try to reconcile particularity and universality, emotions and reasons, diversity and unity. However, the problem is that agreeing on a single model often sacrifices particularity, emotions and diversity.

It is not my intention to invalidate these theories of radical politics, since they all share the awareness of an inconsistent self in a complex society, where social relationships are entangled. In such a condition, our political concern is bound to the here and now and is limited to what is achievable in the existing systems. This is why they try to reflect emotions into politics in order to bring fluidity in politics. This approach is necessary. However, my point is that the attempt to make a universal political model appears problematic, as it reduces its flexibility in politics.

Newman (2011) acknowledges that there are two trends in post-anarchism: "transcendence" and "immanence" (See 3.4.3). As noted in chapter three, Newman seems to favour transcendence rather than immanence. On the other hand, referring to the "immanent" philosophy of Deleuze and Foucault, Smith (2012, p.346) argues that the "error of transcendence would be to posit normative criteria as abstract universals, even if these are defined in intersubjective or communicative terms." From the viewpoint of "immanence," these transcendental norms must be thrown into the process of changing, and its process "must account for *both* the production of the norm and its possible destruction or alteration" (Smith, 2012, p.346-7).

Patton (2000, p.9) notes that, if we understand the world as "a complex of interconnected assemblages," then the only possible 'norm' is "that of deterritorialisation." Deterritorialisation brings turmoil and creates many accumulation points, or what Deleuze and Guattari (1988) call "plateaus," where new identities and new practices are created. Deleuze also notes that if

we dare to use the term 'essence', it is "precisely the accident, the event, the sense" (Deleuze, 1994, p.191). The Fukushima disaster was one such event that marked a point of deterritorialisation and brought many political actions as new creation.

The 'norm of deterritorialisation' does not signify the completely atomised individuals wandering hopelessly in a world of pure chance. It is neither presuming the re-establishment of transcendental reference. What it assumes is some immanent forces within individuals that enable them to make assemblage, keep asking and creating. Only in this way we can pursue some coherence in diversity without sacrificing diversity; and among Call's criteria of post-anarchism, the concept of "rhizome" thinking by Deleuze and Guattari (1988) signifies the potential of such collectivity.

7.3.3 Post-anarchism and the concept of rhizome

As I have examined in chapter five, the rhizomatic thinking is seen in the post-Fukushima protesters around NFS and *Shiroto no Ran*. *Shiroto no Ran*'s Hajime Matsumoto seems to be disinterested in any attempts of making consensus. When he visited Zuccotti Park in New York City in October 2011, he even found the attempt to form a human microphone "unpleasant." [34] What inspired him in the Occupy Wall Street movement was the alternative

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[34] From the author's indirect observation. This comment was made by Matsumoto at the talk event entitled "*Demo kara furikaeru 2011 nen* (Looking back the demonstrations in the year 2011) held on 17 December 2011 in Tokyo. Matsumoto was talking with a cultural anthropologist, Masanori Oda (a.k.a. Illcommonz). Available online at YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZEnun7Pq2gU or Magazine 9: http://www.magazine9.jp/article/gakko_report/5010/

way of living that occupants attempted in the park, rather than their process of collective consensus-building, which attracted many academic researchers.

Matsumoto disclosed that, when he was asked by local activists there about how to make a consensus in Japan, he answered, "we get drunk and it goes smooth."[35] The space which *Shiroto no Ran* created in 2011 was a temporal space that existed for just a few hours. It was more like a chaotic space of encounters than a space for consensus-building or deliberation. Perhaps what he expects from a public sphere is not so much linguistic deliberation to establish a commonness but, rather, infectious dissemination through emotional attachment.

NFS has similar characteristics. NFS has meetings, but what the participants celebrate is not the moment when the argument reaches a consensus but creates a "swell" which completely turns over what the participants expect and brings somewhat eccentric ideas. In short, they are enjoying the act of creation in chaos rather than finding an answer acceptable to all the participants. Although these actions are short-lived, the energy created in such actions remains and encourages each participant to create different actions.

Still, the rhizomatic philosophy of post-anarchists seems unpopular in politics. *Shiroto no Ran* has received criticism from its closest neighbours, who accept the anarchy of the subject. A core member of MCAN and C.R.A.C (Counter Racist Action Collective), Yasumichi Noma, shows his disagreement with

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[35] From the same talk event as listed above.

anarchistic politics. He reveals that MCAN's protest style, with its simple and repetitive slogans, was adopted from one of its member groups, 'TwitNoNukes', of which Noma was a staff member. He notes that the demonstrations by TwitNoNukes were the "antithesis" of *Shiroto no Ran*-type anarchism (Noma, 2012, p.259) because their carnivalesque movements are not acceptable to everyone. In fact, carnivals bring a rupture in everyday life and make people feel uneasy. The *Kanteimae* protest enabled huge mobilisation because it is a normative action that exists on the extension of our everyday activities.

Noma claims that *Shiroto no Ran*'s anarchist policy – "fight playfully in a restrained life" -- does not match the atmosphere of the time. It inherits the counterculture spirit of the 1990s, which was, for Noma, "a mere pretence of social dropouts only enabled by the prosperous economy" (Twitter@kdxn, 21 November 2014). As *Shiroto no Ran* appeared in the post-bubble recession in the mid-2000s, they reframed their action as "the revolts by the poor"; however, Noma insists that their politics of 'creating chaos in nasty society' is already a "luxury" for many young people now, as they are facing more serious threats in their lives. Holding a street party is "wasting the space" for politics; Noma comments:

> While the older generation enjoyed creating disorder in society [to change it], the young generation knows that if society is broken down, it is them who suffer the most. That is why their [younger people's] expression becomes more straight and stylish, showing their anger and saying that we are serious (Noma, Twitter@kdxn, 21 November

2014).

Noma makes the point that simple expression of anger in front of the *Kanteimae* protest may be more accessible for ordinary people compared with the norm-breaching carnivals, and it is also compatible with the mood of this era. Thus, the *Kanteimae* protest successfully mobilised huge number of people, which pressurised the government to listen to them. Noma's criticism against *Shiroto no Ran* looks similar to the description that the carnivalesque alter-globalisation movement (AGM) received as somewhat 'immature' politics.

Gerbaudo (2014) argues that the so-called 'squares movement' such as the Occupy Wall Street (OWS) indicates the "maturity" of activism compared with AGM. According to him, the squares movement emphasises unity and totality, while AGM has more post-anarchist tendency to emphasise autonomy and diversity. He argues that the AGM's lack of coherence could not exclude militant tactics and violent repression against it. On the other hand, he describes OWS as more coherent political project, in which a different political colour of individuals created a "fusion" which became a coherent whole, and they could represent themselves with a common identity as "the 99%".

Gerbaudo (2014) describes OWS as "majoritarian" movement, which represents itself as the unity of ordinary people without a particular political colour, whilst the AGM is a "minoritarian" movement which stresses sectional identities. Here Gerbaudo (2014) uses the term "minoritarian" politics in the same sense as identity politics, and argues that the emphasis on this identity

in the AGM hindered a coherent political project. However, the argument of AGM as "minoritarian" movement does not mean that the movement has its basis on a particular attribution; instead, it refers to the act of "becoming minor" in Deleuze and Guattari's (1988) sense, in which established and fixed identities are reconfigured through encounters and connections (Chesters and Welsh, 2006).

Examining the protest events in Prague in 2000 against the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, Chesters and Welsh (2004, 2006) argue that the implementation of different colours in the march helped to form a temporal unity between the groups with different political orientations, whilst it simultaneously sustained the difference and tension between them. The protest space is not described as making a fusion of different identities, but a resonance of different identities. This type of politics does not establish a fixed collective identity as a form of more legitimate representation; instead, it creates new political repertories and reconfigures the identities of individuals and groups (Chesters and Welsh, 2006).

In this sense, OWS should also be said as 'minoritarian' movement. However, this minoritarian aspect cannot be evaluated within the conventional political framework of representation. Gerbaudo seems to put more importance on the squares movement rather than AGM, because its collective identification as the 99% and its consensus making process is also understandable in the conventional politics of representation.

There is similar presumption in Noma's view that the *Kanteimae* protest is

more developed politics compared with the carnivalesque *Shiroto no Ran*. This may look plausible, as my fieldwork shows that the carnivalesque movement initially encouraged the people's emotional outburst, and later the *Kanteimae* protest proposed more normative action to work within the representative system. However, can we describe it as a process of "maturation"? Are the carnivalesque movements to be eventually replaced by more consistent form of politics to work within institutional settings?

The post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement shows that it is not a linear process. Minoritarian actions co-exist with the *Kanteimae* protest. Moreover, when the confidence in activism and the engagement in electoral politics makes the protesters' discourse solid and closed from outside, it seems to be these carnivalesque actions that escape this 'reterritorialisation' and fill the gap between the protesters and the people outside.

Hence, rather than being 'immature' politics, *Shiroto no Ran* indicates a different type of politics. This does not mean that *Shiroto no Ran* is the model of postmodern politics. "*Shiroto no Ran* is not the answer," as the NFS protester Kaori Nawa comments (Interview, 17 December 2012). Their politics is something like: "if we keep them in our sight, our life will change" (See 6.4). It has a role of catalyst. People receive energy from it and pour it into their own struggle.

If we need to choose only one model, carnivalesque politics is certainly problematic. However, the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements contain diverse political attempts that come out of the event of deterritorialisation. It

will never converge into one political model. There are some flows escaping the convergence and recreating actions, practices and identities. Hence, my proposal to the political theorists is to stop assuming that there is only one coherent political order. "Unity in diversity" may not be achieved as a political model which reconciles unity and diversity. Can we pluralise and fluidise politics itself, rather than making a more flexible political order?

Chesters and Welsh describes AGM as a "plateau" from Deleuze and Guattari's (1988) concepts, and it constitutes of "a parallelogram of forces" (2006, p.128) by different identities, such as peasant, socialist, anarchist, feminist, liberal and environmentalist. This plateau works as "a strange attractor," where encounters between these different identities generate an unexpected outcome (Chesters and Welsh, 2006).

After the Fukushima disaster, "deterritorialised" individuals gathered and constructed assembles, each of which generated different type of actions. Some assemblages generated strong force fields which attracted many people; for example, the attractor created by the *Kanteimae* protest enabled people to make a stable revolving orbit around it. On the other hand, *Shiroto no Ran* created a more irregular force which took an unpredictable trajectory; it destabilised the stable closed system and brought reconfiguration.

Social and political theory needs a new imaginary to describe this dynamism of different actions resonating with one another. As Holloway (2010b) notes, we cannot have the right answer for our political struggle. There are only many examples to keep 'in our sight' in order to create our own image of a

better life. Its politics consists of many experiments and infectious relationships between them.

Deleuze and Guattari's concepts such as "rhizome" and "plateau" (1988) explain this dynamism of attractors, instead of proposing one model for politics. Patton claims that their work in *A Thousand Plateaus* should be seen as "a political ontology that provides tools to describe transformative, creative or deterritorialising forces and movements" (Patton, 2000, p.9). What this ontology presumes for politics is not a single model but minoritarian subjectivities, who are open to encounters, moving around many different force fields, receiving energy from them and creating something new.

7.4 A new political imaginary of disaster

7.4.1 Post-Fukushima activism and the rhizomatic ontology

Ontological difference among the protesters are the most crucial, but least tangible factor in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements. The movements include many different actions, politically left and right, ideological and non-ideological, majoritarian and minoritarian. However, the most critical controversy arises between their ontological differences; some believe that politics have a proper model while others think it consists of endless experiments. Some desire to build "a coherent project of counterpower," [36] while others "allow for incoherence within the ranks of those who oppose the neoliberal order, each for their own reasons" (Day, 2005, p.152).

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[36] Day cites this phase from Hardt and Negri (2001). Day analyses that Hardt and Negri still remain in the hegemonic paradigm, as I have already argued (See 3.3.3).

The ideology-based actions clearly belong to the former. On the other hand, *Shiroto no Ran*, NSF and MCAN are not ideology-led movements. These are the actions of inconsistent, ambiguous people who are advancing by asking. Nevertheless, this does not mean that they all share the latter type of ontology. Some post-Fukushima protesters seem to look for universal reference for an effective political model in a certain condition, be it radical liberalism or anarchism. This thought still seems to belong to the former type of ontology.

In contrast, if we see politics as the experimental field of many actions, neither *Shiroto no Ran*, nor NSF nor MCAN are proposing the ultimate answer. They are all experiments that resonate with one another. Deleuze and Guattari explain this worldview with the concept of "rhizome," which develops through the encounters and conjunctions, without having a blueprint of the whole. It is a network that "has neither beginning nor end, but always a middle (milieu) from which it grows and which it overspills" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988, p.21). Unlike an arboreal order which has a linear structure to converge into a single point, the rhizome "connects any point to any other point" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988, p.21). They assert: "Where are you going? Where are you coming from? What are you heading for? These are totally useless questions" (1988, p.25).

Hence, we may need to change our questions about political theory. We should stop asking who the legitimate political subject is, or what kind of universal foundation we need. In the absence of all these transcendental references, what does the concept of rhizome ask? The practices of the post-Fukushima protesters indicate that it asks what to connect with, when

and how, and what kind of impact that particular connection may bring.

Therefore, the significance of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements is perhaps not so much about the politics of molecular language reinvigorating liberalism or renewing anarchism. The more crucial novelty lies in the fact that the movements include both the politics of legitimacy and the politics of affect, the majoritarian actions and the minoritarian actions. The MCAN and NFS member Yumi Nakamura claims that both have different roles and both are important. While MCAN provides a "hard vessel" with which to confront the existing hegemony, NFS is a "soft vessel" which provides an opportunity to "reconsider own lives, and changes from the local level by making connections with people" (Interview, 19 November 2012).

Paul Patton (2010) insists that majoritarian and minoritarian politics do not always contradict one another. He admits that democratic politics entails majoritarian tendencies. It requires a doxological plane in order to regulate the free play of opinion. From Rawls to Mouffe, political theorists consider creating coherent and legitimate principles to derive the correct decisions. It is a reconstruction project of equilibrium in the postmodern era (Patton, 2010).

On the other hand, Deleuze and Guattari prefer 'minor' politics without the hierarchal order, and they suggest a politics of creation rather than reconstruction (Patton, 2010). This invites suspicion like that of Mengue (in Patton, 2010), who claims that Deleuze and Guattari are hostile to democracy itself. Patton opposes this view and suggests that what they are challenging is not democracy *per se* but a fixed form of democracy mediated by political

institutions and the concept of universal rights. For Deleuze, the concept of human rights is a new form of transcendence which is "unable to evolve in accordance with the requirements of a particular case" (Patton, 2010, p.173). For Deleuze, such fixed and ahistorical concepts are incompatible with the nature of our lives. Hence, he notes: "There are no 'rights of man,' only rights of life, and so, life unfolds case by case" (Deleuze in Patton, 2010, p.175).

Surely such a general principle easily becomes an empty signifier, as Akagi (2007) finds that the conventional liberal left does not provide any hope for his particular struggle. Deleuze and Guattari's minor politics is not reconstructing a universal reference with desires and emotions. Their minor politics envisages democracy without the political order based on transcendental universality.

Patton emphasises that the minor politics is not providing "an alternative to the politics of majority will formation" but it "operates alongside or below the realm of democratic deliberation" (Patton, 2010, p.176). Liberal democracy does not need to be replaced with minoritarian politics, but it needs to be supplemented by it. In the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements, the anarchist-type minoritarian actions aided the emergence of political agency that works alongside the majoritarian institutional politics (such as the *Kanteimae* protest) and within the institutional politics (such as electoral campaigns).

In a complex society where our political interests are unclear, political commitment will not naturally occur. Political theories need to consider a

process of subject formation, asking how people come out of their closed territory in the first place. The minor politics may work in this stage, and eventually a collective political identity and interest may be formed. Yet, this does not mean that the minor politics of affect is eventually replaced by the major politics of legitimacy. We have already seen that when the anti-nuclear movement started losing the language of affect in the process of solidification, there were several protesters who escaped this process. They leave the action when it becomes routine, and follow their desire for change and creation.

Hence the post-Fukushima activism shows the potential of democratic politics where the 'vessels' for the major and the minor politics exist in parallel and resonate with one another. This becomes possible only because many protesters join these different types of actions. These protesters have a "rhizomatic" ontology, which considers politics as an experimental field of different actions affecting one another, rather than a search for the most effective model or legitimate order.

7.4.2 A new political agency of "crossing the border"

It is not new to find one person joining several social movements with different political issues; however, it is interesting when one person joins both major politics such as the *Kanteimae* protest and minor politics such as NFS, because they require individuals to play different roles. The *Kanteimae* protest makes an individual a colourless 'number' who represents a single claim of 'No Nukes', while NFS celebrates each participant's different colours.

Such a flexible subjectivity seems to be a crucial aspect of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters. This flexibility was also seen in their engagement in electoral politics. In the Tokyo governor's election in 2014, a certain number of anti-nuclear protesters supported the ex-Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa, who was tagged with another neoliberal ex-PM, Junichiro Koizumi. One of the supporters was Misao Redwolf of MCAN. In her Twitter account, she often expresses her opposition to neoliberalism and sometimes shows her sympathy with the Zapatistas movement. Regardless of this orientation, she still chose the Hosokawa-Koizumi duo instead of another grass-roots anti-nuclear candidate because Hosokawa was "more likely to have an impact in state politics" (Interview, 16 April 2014). She explains:

> We need to win. It's not the matter of principles. My choice is made in accordance with situations in which I am engaging. We need to be flexible. This is what the left movements in the past did not notice and they made a mistake. They fell into "the hell of rightness" (Interview, 16 April 2014).

In my view, she takes actions that conflict with her own beliefs. In my interview (16 April 2014), she mentioned that "breaking into the National Diet" is her "dream"; however she was one of the MCAN members who stopped the *Kanteimae* protesters from breaking into the National Diet when the mobilisation peaked in 2012. She explains that she saw no chance of success at the time, because there were only a few people who actually wanted to go inside. I asked her whether there was any conflict between her belief and her action as the organiser. She replied:

Although my policy is to pursue the truth, it does not apply to every case I come across. It is not to compromise. I am just separating myself according to the case and choosing the way which looks better (Interview, 16 April 2014).

"Separating oneself" explains MCAN very well. MCAN refuses to become a theorist or agitator, and remains a mere provider of the protest space. However, this does not mean that each individual has discarded their own political ideology. They have different beliefs and ideologies, but as MCAN members they share the flexibility to "separate" them.

This flexible political agency allows the parallel existence of these different 'vessels'. The protesters choose a vessel with the appropriate timing and provide whatever ability is necessary to the vessel – sometimes it is a mere body to add to the number in the mobilisation, and at other times it is their talent. This flexible agency allows them to join in both minor and major politics, both institutional politics and everyday politics. He/she sometimes behaves like a conventional liberalist in formal politics and then suddenly acts in an anarchistic way when the time comes. Hence, what the rhizomatic ontology proposes is not a new political principle that reconciles the fluid and the solid, or the major and the minor, but a political agency wandering between major and minor.

In fact, Deleuze and Guattari prefer a verb to describe their philosophy, such as the term "becoming" instead of a noun as a final status. When they actually

articulate a noun, they say "people to come" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p.218). They are interested in inventing a new subjectivity, which is "a people in the process of becoming other" (Bogue, 2007, p.24). In other words, their political imaginary is the creation of "a revolutionary collectivity capable of opening up new possibilities for life" (Bogue, 2007, p.108).

The critic Hiroki Azuma's works imply how changing the focus in political theory from a system to an agency brings a different evaluation of activism. In a book entitled *Ippan-ishi 2.0* (General Will 2.0), Azuma (2011) envisages a Mouffe-like conjugated political system of rigid and fluid. He proposes to connect the closed parliamentary politics with the online subculture community where the molecular emotions of people are constantly visualised in real time. He insists that visualising people's unconscious desires would pressurise parliamentary democracy (Azuma, 2011). This concept was similar to the *Kanteimae* protest a year later, since the *Kanteimae* protest is an emotionally motivated intervention in parliamentary politics. Nevertheless, when MCAN's Noma pointed out its similarity in the talk event in early 2013, Azuma expressed his disappointment at the anti-nuclear movement, mainly because of its defeat in the general election. Azuma almost seemed to doubt his own theory, saying that unconscious, emotional language floating online may never be political; people are self-enclosed and self-satisfied within their own territory. [37]

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[37] From the author's observation of the online talk event "*Talking about Demo 6: Demo wa seiji wo kaeru noka: Kinyo Kanteimae kogi kara kangaer*u" (Will demonstrations change politics? The case of the *Kanteimae* protest). The panellists were Azuma, Noma and the sociologist Daisuke Tsuda. It was broadcast on 23 January 2013 by Dommune: http://www.dommune.com/

However, the disappointment with the online emotional language shifted his interest to physical experience. In 2014, Azuma published a book entitled *Yowai Tsunagari* (The weak ties), which is an essay on life rather than politics. Here, Azuma reformulates his philosophy. What he celebrates is not a particular political system but a particular way of life moving between the network of strong ties (the world of intention, meaning and language) and the network of weak ties (the world of contingency, non-meaning and body). He defines this subjectivity as that of a "sightseer", who is neither a villager nor a nomad. "Sightseers" offer a somewhat irresponsible opinion because they are not the residents there; however, their opinion is not completely irresponsible, as it stems from their own physical experience of sightseeing (Azuma, 2014).

Interestingly, with this philosophy of a "sightseer", he re-evaluated the post-Fukushima activism positively. After his second dialogue with Noma in 2014, by which time Noma was known as an anti-racist activist rather than an MCAN member, Azuma almost followed Noma's claim by commenting that the anti-racism action is "untangling the sense of justice [of the ordinary people] that has become stiffened" by encouraging people to take action based on their emotions; hence, at least "it has been changing the people's attitude toward politics" (Azuma, Twitter@hazuma, 7 Sep 2014).[38]

Post-Fukushima activism is creating political people who take actions with

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[38] This tweet of Azuma's was made as a summary of the talk event "*Demo no genzai to mirai: soredemo shakai wa kawarunoka* (Demonstrations in the present and the future: Is it still possible to change society?" on 5 September 2014 at Genron Café, Tokyo. It was panelled by Azuma and the political scientist Ikuo Gonoi, but was later joined by Noma.

their own emotions and embodied experience. Hence, it signifies the emergence of new political agency as a "sightseer" (Azuma, 2014) rather than the realisation of the ideal political form of "unconscious democracy" (Azuma, 2011). [39] A "sightseer" is neither a completely rootless nomad nor a stable "villager" in the closed community with a fixed value. These "sightseers" wander between the territory where they have a fixed identity and the unknown place where they lose a fixed identity. They construct their own desire and value through these experiences of sightseeing.

Richard Day (2005) finds a similar agency in Deleuze and Guattari's concept "the smith". They note that there are "no nomadic or sedentary smiths. Smiths are ambulant, itinerant"; and the place where they live "is neither the striated space of the sedentary nor the smooth space of the nomad" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988, p.413). For Day, a new political subjectivity has a twin formation; it has both fluid and yet has stable relationships with social entities, and it engages in both deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation. It is a "subject who does not love the state form, but can co-exist with it if they must" (Day, 2005, p.176). Also citing Gloria Anzaldúa, he explains it as a subject to cross borders rather than eliminating borders, and a subject who knows the "necessity of choosing when to cross borders with whom and how to open" (Day, 2005, pp.185-186).

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[39] It should be noted that Azuma does not positively evaluate the anti-nuclear movements such as the Kanteimae protest. He worries that the mass excitement in activism will pull the protesters apart from the grounded physical experience. He finds this nature in the anti-nuclear movement, and that is why he calls the movement 'populism' (Twitter, @hazuma, 14 July 2013). He is also not actively joining or supporting the post-Fukushima activism, as I later argue in chapter eight.

7.4.3 Politics of life in the postmodern condition

My argument suggested that the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements are creating a new political subjectivity whose members mobilise their own bodies to the space of encounters, form a rhizomatic connection with others and create temporary assemblages which may be molar or molecular, major or minor. This is a quite different political imaginary from the conventional one, which identifies one political model for everyone. I have argued that it is the politics of legitimacy which needs a foundation for judgement, be it the principle of justice elaborated by the consideration in the original position (Rawls,1999) or the process of fair consensus-making (Habermas, 1990), or the outcome of agonistic debate (Mouffe, 2005). Those political theories presume some kind of transcendent reference for a political subject.

Although I believe that such attempts are necessary, my point is that these are not enough to think about politics in the postmodern condition. In a complex society, it seems to be difficult to find a consistent, coherent 'model' to solve any problem that we come across. As we examined in chapter two, the young Japanese people, who face what Amamiya (2010) calls '*ikizurasa*' (pain of living), cannot identify the cause of their suffering, and they are sometimes alienated from their feeling of pain. How can they reject the intangible hegemony which alienates them? The political theories need to consider this before the legitimate order, and even before the fixed concept of subject, interest, impetus and objective for political action. Political theories need to think beyond the fixed models for reference. We need to think about a new subjectivity that can respond to their particular struggles in such a complex

society.

The political subjectivity signified by the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters and their 'rhizomatic' ontology are pragmatic in one sense. They put their own ideological consistency aside, separate their bodies and connect them with the entities that seem to create the most effective impact at a certain time and in a certain condition. Patton (2010) addresses the similarity between Deleuze's ontology and Rorty's pragmatism. For both theorists, the role of philosophy is not the pursuit of truth to describe the world but "providing intellectual tools for particular human ends" (Patton, 2010, p.63).

Here, knowledge does not provide a universal guidance for taking action. This is why so many criticise the post-Fukushima protesters unethical, because they take action based on their own desire, and seem to utilise knowledge at their convenience. However, as Patton argues, "desire always requires a machine or assemblage" (2000, p.70). The desires of the protesters are already involving other people, such as the people in Fukushima or the future generation. They remain open to the unknown others and respond to it by changing themselves. What I found in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement is the creation of a new kind of subjectivity, "which [relies] upon an amoral, postmodern ethics of shared commitments based on affinities rather than duties based on hegemonic imperatives" (Day, 2005, p.177).

This inconsistent but ethical subjectivity seems to be a natural response to the disaster. Connolly cites the economist Karl Polanyi, commenting after the Great Depression, that political and economic thinking must become more

"situational" and open to contingency, as we readily become "too confident about our ability to give complete explanations" (2013, p.191). Disaster is an event that breaks such confidence. In the politics of disaster, each individual is thrown into a state of disorder. The politics emerges when they try to respond to the outside forces. They have no idea about what should be done and therefore need experimentation. The post-Fukushima protesters are exploring how an imperfect, forgetful and inconsistent individual, who does not share any ideology, can still be politically active and ethical. They are exposing their bodies to the eyes of others, forcing themselves to keep feeling and thinking, and weaving ethics from the experience.

This political imaginary does not guarantee any stability, equilibrium and order, unlike liberal politics. Rather, this politics emerges from contingency, dislocation and disequilibrium. In fact, we cannot assume any ultimate resting place. Williams acknowledges that a problem is always changing, because it is "a series of changing tensions" (Williams, 2013, p.142). A problem emerges out of the tension between the social requirements of a particular time and the existing laws, technological culture or theories. In such a condition, what we need is "a series of creative reactions" rather than "a lasting solution" (Williams, 2013, p.130). We need "something like a way of living with the problem, rather than solving it" (Williams, 2013, p.62).

Hence, Osterweil and Chesters (2007) consider that people in the new political imaginary would operate in artisanal practices. While the architect tries to implement "a grand design" and become a "master" of the material, the artisan never tries to direct and form things into pre-determined plans

(Osterweil and Chesters, 2007, p.259). The artisanal creation is generated through the interaction between the creativity of the artisan and the material, and neither he/she nor the material has the pre-existing image of its final product.

The conventional political theory underestimates this type of situational knowledge, to react creatively to what we encounter. Yet I believe that it is this knowledge that motivates people to take action in the complex postmodern condition. It is not knowledge telling us how we should live, but it demonstrates many potentials of how one might live (May, 2005). The post-Fukushima activism is inventing many ways of "living with the problem" (Williams, 2013, p.62) more creatively, playfully, or at least less painfully. The accumulation of such experiments does not establish a model, but it creates resonance in assemblage, new desires and energies for creation. Then, only one question remains regarding this political imaginary: What kind of force does each of us elicit from this assemblage of the post-Fukushima activism, and how do we create our own struggle to respond to our political disillusionment?

Summary and further directions

Throughout this chapter, I have argued that we need to reconsider the political theory for the postmodern condition. Now, we share neither the political goal to reach nor the fixed collective identity to engage in politics. We can no longer presume the existence of a rational subject who is motivated by a clear interest or objective. In such a condition, the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters use their emotions arising from the catastrophic event for an

impetus for political commitment. The post-disaster activism in Japanese society has provided many types of 'vessels' which channel such emotions into politics.

There are several political thoughts on how to turn such fluid "molecular" language of emotion into effective political resources. Some liberal theories try to provide models of political institutions for such emotional language to freely discuss or to compete. On the other hand, the post-anarchist theories consider that such emotional language should remain outside the fixed intuitions. There seems to be further differences among the post-anarchist theorists on whether the resonances of such actions eventually converge into one united political project, or whether they repeat endless encounters, connections and disconnections, which contribute to the dispersion of movements. Yet they all suggest that each struggle of individual bodies, which are deterritorialised by a particular event, create swelling forces to interact one another, form a temporary assemblage and create new potentials out of its resonance.

These different tendencies towards the politics of emotions are also examined in the post-Fukushima activism. On the one hand, the emotional language in the post-Fukushima activism is understood as reinvigorating the abstract concept of liberalism. On the other hand, it is also used to create empathy and affect, and it encourages experimentation in a new way of living. These two were distinguished as the molecular-majoritarian movement of MCAN and the molecular-minoritarian movements of NFS/*Shiroto no Ran*.

It is often considered that, as political theories, these two tendencies are contradictory and irreconcilable. The minoritarian politics is misunderstood as rejecting liberal democracy in general. However, as Patton (2010) notes, these two can co-existent, and democracy needs both major and minor politics simultaneously. The concept of rhizome (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988) explains this ontological thought, which allows different forms of political movement. Here, emotional language fuels both major and minor politics, but it is never fixed into one political form.

The post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters show this rhizomatic ontology, which allows them to join many different 'vessels.' I have argued that such people with rhizomatic ontology activate politics in postmodernity. We need to overcome our obsession with the legitimate models and instead elaborate a new subjectivity and new form of living. A new political imaginary needs to reflect the nature of life, which is complex, spontaneous and ambiguous. It needs to provide tools to encourage us to keep responding creatively to ever-changing problems.

As I have already examined in chapters five and six, the practices of the post-Fukushima protesters show many examples of how we might accomplish this. They mobilise their bodies on the streets, force themselves to feel and think, and practise ethics to be open; at the same time, however, they accept the incompleteness of the self with humour. Now I would like to conceptualise my own experiments of 'how I might live' in the postmodern condition, which I envisage from the resonance of this post-Fukushima activism. This is my final project in chapter eight. Although I will not propose

any general model, I believe that my experiment will also resonate with those who read it and that it will encourage new experiments.

Chapter 8 Synthesis discussion II:
Knowledge and life after the disaster

Introduction

The aim of the previous chapter and this chapter is to elaborate a new political imaginary from the implications of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements. Chapter seven suggested that the 'rhizomatic' thought suggested by the protesters may bring new angles in political thought. Instead of identifying general models or legitimate procedures for the decision-making process, this view considers politics as the on-going experiments of each individual seeking a better way to live with other people.

This chapter continues this argument. As I noted in the previous chapter, in order to become 'political', we need to think about how we want to live. Disasters often pose such questions to us, because they destroy the certainty of life and reveal the limitations of existing knowledge.

First of all, I argue that the Fukushima disaster led us to reconsider ethics (8.1). In complex society, we cannot rationally predict how our actions will affect society. Hence, our responsibilities to others become vague and we tend to withdraw into our own territory to protect our own interests. Although there have been several attempts to articulate new ethical principles from the imaginary of disaster (Jonas, 1985; Dupuy, [2002] 2012), my focus is on ethical relationships rather than principles, indicated by thinkers such as Levinas and Deleuze. I explore the potential of ethico-politics, in which

individuals with limited imaginations open themselves to other people, force themselves to think and feel, and collectively seek a way of social change.

The next section (8.2) re-examines the concept of the self and the other as an agency for this ethico-politics. The Fukushima disaster was the unexpected force from the outside that destabilised Japanese people's sense of identity. The anti-nuclear protesters show that this "dissolved" self (Deleuze, 1994) takes action without any mediation of stable identity. Moreover, they feel their satisfaction and pride in life not through the recognition of their identities but by engaging with "the art of life" (Foucault, 1996) in which they create changes in themselves and in society by interacting with other people.

Another thing to be reconsidered in the post-disaster society is the role of knowledge itself (8.3). Conventional knowledge is based on the ontology of 'being' which seeks invariant and general models. In contrast, the knowledge generated in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements signifies a different type of knowledge based on the ontology of 'becoming'. This view, taken by philosophers such as Bergson and Deleuze, considers that the world is constantly changing. Using the concept of 'self-organisation' (Connolly, 2013; De Landa, 2013), I argue that the knowledge based on this ontology provides tools for responding to this changing reality better, rather than discovering the essence of reality.

In the final section (8.4), I demonstrate how the knowledge generated in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements respond to the political predicament in the postmodern condition. While political theories often avoid the

philosophical questions of life in favour of the practical arguments in the actualised world, I argue that the desire for political commitment is generated when an individual encounters a force from the 'outside' which is beyond his/her intentions. The post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters are collectively inventing a better way to respond to this, and their struggles are already political and ethical. I argue that what motivates this ethico-political action is the desire for dignity (Holloway, 2011) rather than the desire for identity, recognition and completion; and by dignity I mean that the 'dissolved' self intermingles his/her own ability with that of others to create changes.

8.1 Reconsidering ethics

8.1.1 Disaster and the limit of rational knowledge

A catastrophe often challenges human knowledge and renews it. A case in point is the Lisbon earthquake of 1755; it led Voltaire to become disillusioned with conventional optimism which insists that world was created by God in a way that "all is well." The Lisbon disaster destroyed the coherent worldview based on God's purposiveness. In his work *Poem on the Lisbon Disaster* ([1755] 1912), Voltaire simply mourns the meaninglessness of the world and expresses a sense of powerlessness before it. In his novel *Candide* (Voltaire, [1759] 1918), he concludes that all we can do in the world of senselessness is to "cultivate our own garden."

In contrast, at the collapse of the old order, Rousseau ([1756] 1967) provided another explanation. Refuting Voltaire's poem, he insists that the Lisbon disaster was caused not by senseless force but by human beings themselves;

I have shown that most of our physical pains […] are also our own work. […] it was hardly nature who assembled there twenty-thousand houses of six or seven stories. If the residents of this large city had been more evenly dispersed and less densely housed, the losses would have been fewer or perhaps none at all.

What Rousseau provided was a scientific explanation based on a coherent causal relationship. The Lisbon earthquake was a 'man-made' disaster; hence, we know how it might have been avoided. Rousseau's remark is considered the beginning of 'modernity' because it implies that this man-made disaster was preventable by human rationality.

The Fukushima nuclear disaster in 2011 was also described as being due to human error. The official report of the Fukushima Nuclear Accident Independent Investigation Commission declares that the accident "cannot be regarded as a natural disaster" and concludes that it was "a profoundly manmade disaster – that could and should have been foreseen and prevented" (National Diet of Japan, 2012, p.9).

Referring to Rousseau's insight, the political scientist Yoshie Kawade also notes the lesson of the Fukushima disaster as follows: "our decision should be based on scientific calculations, which enable us to collate the benefit of nuclear energy with its risk" (2014, p.150). Although Kawade shows her sympathy with Voltaire in the sense that scientific knowledge cannot explain everything, Kawade basically encourages us to embrace Rousseau's reason rather than Voltaire's 'pre-modern' awe.

On the other hand, the French philosopher Jean-Pierre Dupuy ([2005] 2011) argues that Voltaire has provided a 'postmodern' insight rather than 'pre-modern' awe. In a society with diversity and complexity, the rational decisions of each individual do not always result in the expected outcomes as a whole. The identification of the individual cause of a disaster does not necessarily allow us to prevent it.

Dupuy's view here is important. The post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters would agree that the nuclear disaster was down to 'human error'. They believe that what allowed the disaster to occur was their ignorance and indifference, as well as the profit-oriented thinking in Japanese society. Nevertheless, this does not mean that they might have prevented it. One of my interviewees, the demonstration organiser Nao Izumori, made this point clear. He commented that, because "society is too complicated" and "our interests are entangled," we may unwittingly become a "stakeholder" of the institutions we hate (Izumori, Interview, 5 April 2012, See 6.3.3).

We are not always certain whether our decisions based on our rational knowledge bring blessings. As Connolly (2013) puts it, our society is an open system and lives are implicated in countless forces, both human and non-human. The problem, for him, is as follows:

> In a world more scientifically and technically advanced, we are not that much better equipped culturally, philosophically, politically and spiritually to address these entanglements (Connolly, 2013, p.7).

Hans Jonas also acknowledges that our "predictive knowledge falls behind the technical knowledge that nourishes our power to act," and he argues that this gap should be overcome by establishing a new form of ethics, which is "a new conception of duties and rights" (Jonas, 1984, p.8). Jonas insists that, because we are now surrounded by uncertainty, we at least need certainty in our ethical principles.

What might be the new ethical principles in a complex society? Jonas claims that the conventional ethical principle based on mutual reciprocity is unworkable, since this concept does not include the future generation, which does not yet exist. It is often the case in contemporary society that a decision by the present generation has a significant impact upon the future generation, and ethical imagination must overcome this generational gap. Hence, the guideline that Jonas proposes is somewhat divine and transcendental rather than a reasonable moral law. He claims that, when we can no longer accurately predict our future with scientific knowledge, we need to assign "greater weight to the prognosis of doom than to that of bliss" (Jonas, 1985, p.34).

Dupuy ([2002] 2012) takes Jonas's suggestion and elaborates his 'apocalyptic perspective'. The fact that we can no longer foresee the future makes us reluctant to think about it. In such a condition, what motivates us to take action for future generations is, according to Dupuy, our fear that the worst catastrophe is now unavoidable in the future. He argues that, by forcing

ourselves to believe that the apocalypse will occur in the future, we create a sense of fear that evokes our sense of responsibility to stop it.

These suggestions perhaps indicate the 'emotional turn' in ethical judgement, which goes beyond the relationship based on practical reason. However, it still lacks the explanation of initial motivation to strongly believe that the catastrophe is unavoidable. In Japan, another disaster is actually unavoidable; it is predicted that Japan will be hit by another huge earthquake in the near future.[40] However, even this 'fact' does not evoke a strong sense of fear impelling many Japanese people to take action. Then who can actually believe the catastrophe to come? The ruling Liberal Democratic Party has proposed to utilise nuclear energy as a 'baseload energy source' in Japan by 2030, stating that their disaster prevention measures are sufficient (Watanabe and Urabe, 2015).

Therefore, although Jonas's and Dupuy's attempts to establish a coherent ethical principle in the imaginary of disaster are attractive, they appear to lack a significant variable that motivates people to impose these principles on themselves in the first place. As I argued in the last chapter, we are not usually driven to make a commitment to society simply on the basis of coherent and legitimate moral principles.

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[40] For example, the probability of the Magnitude 8 or 9 class *Nankai* Trough earthquake occurring within the next 30 years is estimated at 70% (Headquarters for Earthquake Research Promotion, 2014). Experts predict that, in the worst-case scenario, this earthquake would trigger a 34-meter tsunami, resulting in at least 323,000 deaths (Asahi Shimbun, 2012).

8.1.2 Moving away from ethical principles

On the contrary, chapter six pointed out that the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters do not describe their motivation for political commitment as their moralistic obligation. With the implications of their practice, I explore a new form of ethics which does not articulate any general principles internalised by the subject.

Just as the Lisbon disaster of 1755 signified to Voltaire the collapse of the meaningful world, the triple disasters in Japan in 2011 destroyed the certainty of life for many Japanese people. Fear and anger motivated tens of thousands of people to take to the streets to protest against nuclear energy. In my interviews, many of these protesters expressed their sense of responsibility, which indicated an ethical notion behind the movements.

Simon Critchley (2007) acknowledges that an ethical subject is composed through a traumatic experience, which exposes people to the outside of their familiar territory. Critchley refers to the philosophy of Levinas (1969), who describe ethics as the infinite responsibility to respond to the "face of the other." The ethics of Levinas does not identify any pre-existing general rules or procedures. For Levinas, the ethical motivation stems from the actual relationship with the particular, existing other (Critchley, 2002).

Citing the argument of Stanley Cavell, Critchley (2002) acknowledges that there are two types of "moral philosophers." The first is the "legislators" such as Rawls and Habermas, who "provide detailed precepts, rules and principles that add up to a theory of justice" (Critchley, 2002, p.27-28). On the other

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hand, Levinas is categorised in another type called "moral perfectionists," since Levinas "is seeking to give an account of a basic existential demand, a lived fundamental obligation" (Critchley, 2002, p. 28). The difference lies in whether the ethical obligation is ascribed to a coherent institutional law or generated from an abstract concept based on somewhat anarchic lived experiences. In a slightly different way, Levinas himself separates his ethics/religion from politics. He notes that while politics "tends toward reciprocal recognition" and "ensures happiness," religion (and ethics) "is Desire and not struggle for recognition" and "the surplus" of responsibility and sacrifice (Levinas, 1969, p.64).

Critchley argues that we need both legislators and moral perfectionists. Levinasian ethics, which is motivated by desire, will encourage people to pursue legitimate order in politics. Thus, "ethics is ethical for the sake of politics, that is, for the sake of a more just society" (Critchley, 2002, p.25). This may partly explain the mobilisation process of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement. The Fukushima disaster was the rupture which intruded on the protesters' self-contented lives. They are facing the fragility of life in contemporary society and are responding to it with their embodied actions. This is an ethical attitude, according to Critchley, and this ethical awakening has encouraged them to make a commitment to politics.

However, it is not sufficient to explain the entire dynamism of ethical awareness and political mobilisation in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement. Neither is it enough to map out the potential of ethics without general principles. Firstly, it is necessary to clarify Levinasian ethics, since

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calling him a 'moralist' is slightly confusing. Referring to Foucault's view, Deleuze states that morality and ethics have opposite natures. Morality consists of "a set of constraining rules of a specific sort" which judges actions and intentions "in relation to transcendent rules". Ethics, in contrast, is "a set of optional rules that assess what we do, what we say, in relation to the ways of existing involved" (Deleuze, 1995, p.100). In this distinction, Levinas is offering ethics rather than morality, because Levinasian ethics "does not rest in a series of rules to be followed, but rather in inexorable and constant exposure to alterity" (Nealon, 1998, p.xi-xii).

Nevertheless, Critchley's description of Levinas as a "perfectionist" is convincing, because the alterity or "the face of the Other" for Levinas is posed as the absolute reference. This brings Levinas's ethics quite close to the 'moralist' perspective. For Levinas, ethics arose from the desire of the subject who faces the radical otherness, and he describes this desire as living for the sake of the Other, or "offering him one's being" (1969, p.183). It is a complete submission of the self to the otherness.

For Levinas, ethics is the practice of perfection, motivated by the desire to be taken over by the Other. This is a passive attitude, and Levinas himself states that it is the attitude of "the holy" rather than ethics (Critchley, 2002, p.27). This passiveness of Levinasian ethics makes it difficult to apply on the practical level, since the infinite responsibility requires a heavy burden and a sense of guilt. Although I agree with Critchley that political practice needs such an ethical subject whose thought goes beyond the notion of self-interest,

Levinasian ethics requires too much self-sacrifice in the name of the Other, which is rooted in his religious faith.

Hence, Richard Rorty (1996) is strictly against bringing Levinasian transcendental ethics into politics. Politics for him is "a matter of reaching accommodation between competing interests" and it is to be "deliberated about in banal, familiar terms" without philosophical presuppositions (Rorty, 1996, p.17). I agree with him that politics should not be based on sublimity; political practice needs to be acceptable to ordinary people.

The "perfectionist" tendency of Levinasian ethics is at odds with some of the ethical practices of the post-Fukushima protesters, such as NFS and *Shiroto no Ran*, because they seem to accept the incompleteness of the self. Their ethical orientation is neither that of 'legislators' nor of 'moral perfectionists'. It is obvious that they are not 'legislators' because their actions do not reference any pre-set rules. Their ethics is generated through their experience of radical openness and the particular encounter with other people. In this sense, it would be appropriate to refer to Levinasian ethics.

However, they are not 'perfectionist' either. I believe that the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements show the possibility that 'banal' politics can be simultaneously ethical. This is 'imperfectionist' ethics. While the tendency for radical opening was clearly seen in the protesters in NFS and *Shiroto no Ran*, they were accepting the imperfectness of their action in responding to others, and they were often celebrating it. In chapter six, I described this attitude as humour, which Critchley (2007) acknowledges as laughing at their own

inauthenticity. Unlike the perfectionist notion of Levinas, humour allows incompleteness. In fact, Critchley (2007) himself mentions humour as a mitigation for Levinasian sublimity.

8.1.3 Ethico-politics of desire

Humour played a significant role in the ethics of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters, especially in those people in NFS (See 6.2.2). They know that they cannot completely understand other people; however, their attempts show that people still act ethically without the notion of being perfect.

What exactly is the ethical subject like without a notion of perfection? NFS and *Shiroto no Ran* celebrate the radical encounters because they provide an opportunity to make new connections with people and bring creativity to their lives. For example, Mizuki Nakamura of NFS commented that she felt "excited" to be part of anti-nuclear movements because she could make new connections with local people, organise events and create new practices. Hajime Matsumoto also expressed his desire to obtain "surprise," which motivated him to create a space for encounters (See 6.4). Although those are personal desires, they are not self-enclosed. Matsumoto expects his actions to encourage people with the same desire, and the accumulation of these actions will change society.

These protesters describe their openness to others and political engagement as something they *want* to do, rather than what they *have* to do. Moreover, for them, this desire is not for perfection but for connection and change. "Desire

is productive in the sense that it produces real connections," as Patton notes in Deleuzian philosophy (Patton, 2000, p.70).

It can be said that both Levinas and Deleuze reject the concept of moral obligation which exists as invariant principles. For them, ethical awareness arose when the alterity permeates the selfhood (Islam, 2001). The "forces of the 'outside'" would "impinge and impact upon us, upon what we think we are and what we think we are capable of becoming" (Ansell-Pearson, 1999, p.84). However, they seem to have a different concept of desire that comes out of this encounter with the outside force. Levinas (1969) addresses the desire for holiness, to live for the sake of the Other. Hence, Levinasian ethics leads to "alterity politics" (Nealon, 1998, p.2) as opposed to identity politics, which pursue recognition.

On the other hand, the politics of desire implied by the philosophy of Deleuze pursues connection, mutation and production. The deconstructed subject seeks his/her way through the connections with others. Here, what stands against identity politics is not alterity politics. Rather, it is the politics to make a difference through encounters with others. The desire for connection, change and new creation motivates individuals to engage with others and take action for social change. It is an ethical act because it means opening themselves to the radical otherness. Rather than bridging the ethics of the sublime and the politics of banality, it shows that actions based on the desire for connection and mutation are already ethical and political.

The post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements show how this ethico-politics of

desire may work. In order that the desire for connections might result in ethical actions rather than domination or taming of the others, it requires a unique concept of self, which I examined in chapter six as "a dissolved self" (Deleuze, 1994, p.259). Many protesters indicated that their feelings of satisfaction and pride were generated when they contribute for the movement by becoming "a plus-one" of the protesters, which signifies a nameless, non-personal entity to compose social assemblage. The MCAN organiser Misao Redwolf did not distinguish herself from people in Fukushima (See 6.2.3). For her, speaking 'for' the Fukushima people means the separation between her and them, while her struggle is actually indiscernible from that of the people in Fukushima. Another female protester linked her life with her 'cell'. The genome in a cell includes the historical other which will be passed to the future generation (See 6.3.1). These signify the otherness inside their self, or the expansion of selfhood into other bodies.

Furthermore, the NFS protesters in particular appreciated the inconsistency and ambiguity of the self. The awareness of themselves being incomplete motivated them to open up to other people. The NFS meetings created a chaotic swell. They were enjoying the experience of finding their own opinions frequently changing as a result of listening to the passionate voices of others, and they were celebrating the fact that the outcomes of their meetings would be totally unexpected (See 5.3.3).

Although these are different types of actions, I found that the novelty of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements is this notion of the indiscernible, inconsistent and fluid self, which is shared by many protesters. As the

previous chapter noted, this flexible sense of agency allows them to participate in different political actions inside and outside institutional politics. More importantly, this notion of 'indiscernible self' allows them to engage in ethico-politics, in which the personal desire for fulfilled life becomes ethical.

When Levinas explains the ethical desire as the substitution of the self for the other, he still seems to distinguish the self from the other. There is a subject of desire. On the other hand, for Deleuze, "[t]here is no subject of desire, any more than there is an object. There is no subject of enunciation. Fluxes are the only objectivity of desire itself" (Deleuze and Parnet, 2006, p.58). Here, the distinction between the self and the other is blurred. The agency of ethico-politics may be such a dissolved self, who is invaded by otherness, who is ambiguous about him/herself, and who therefore desires to make more connections with others.

8.2 Reconsidering identity and meaning

8.2.1 The Self and the Other

As the previous section examined, the alternative form of ethics, or the ethico-politics, offers a new perspective of non-subjective agency which goes beyond the familiar framework of political/social thought based on identity. One might wonder how these 'dissolved' selves make commitments and decisions, or how they acquire desires in the first place to become political and ethical.

For Deleuze, desire does not reside in an entity who is fully conscious of his/her intention. It is a certain 'event' that forces people to feel and think, and

it is the sensation caused by this event that brings desires. Colebrook (2002, p.88) gives an interesting example of plants and their 'action'. The plants perceive the sunlight, respond to it by moving their bodies towards it, and generate energy through photosynthesis. Likewise, human beings perceive an event, respond to it with their bodies and, in that process, desire and thought are generated (Colebrook, 2002, pp.87-88). Hence, what exists is not a solid subject but a process of 'individuation' or a mode of our response and expression when we come across a certain event (Williams, 2013). We "cannot own our subjectivity in terms of some fixed and secure property" (Ansell-Pearson, 1999, p. 33).

In a process of individuation, the unconscious entity encounters an event, feels and responds to it. The Fukushima disaster was an 'event' which caused confusion and anger throughout Japanese society, and some responded by taking to the streets. Their desire to create a nuclear-free society or to establish new political practices was generated by this event of disaster and the subsequent mobilisation through which they experienced a sense of responsibility, pride and empathy. The protesters were often criticised for being reactive and inconsistent; however, being reactive and inconsistent is the very nature of life, as Colebrook's example shows.

This 'individuation' has different types, according to Deleuze (1995). The 'subject-type' individuation constructs a self with a fixed identification and a clear personality, while there is also an 'event-type' individuation where there is no subject. In such a condition,

We're not at all sure we're persons: a draft, a wind, a day, a time of day, a stream, a place, a battle, an illness all have a nonpersonal individuality. They have proper names. We call them "hecceities." They combine like two streams, two rivers (Deleuze, 1995, p.141).

The post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters are considered to be practising a variety of individuation processes. Sometimes, they became a collective political subject with a clear identity and interests, such as seen in the *Kanteimae* protest. In the *Kanteimae* protest, the protesters followed a certain fixed style and presented themselves as normative in order to be recognised as legitimate political actors. As I have pointed out in chapter five, this type of assemblage is hegemonic and relatively closed. However, this assemblage consists of subject-less people, who also join in the various actions. NFS hardly has an aspect of collective subjectivity. Its members describe it as a swelling force or a collective wandering, which resembles Deleuze's expression of 'a wind' or 'a stream' (1995).

Deleuze explains this unique concept of individuality using many terms, such as an 'event', 'intensities' and 'hecceity'. 'Hecceity' is probably the term that is most clearly opposed to the concept of a fixed, self-conscious subject. For Deleuze, hecceities "are simply degrees of power which combine, to which correspond a power to affect and be affected, active or passive affects, intensities" (Deleuze and Parnet, 2006, p.68). The question to be posed then is how this force as hecceity enters into a relationship with other forces, and what kind of communications they might employ.

The capacity to affect and to be affected by this subject-less entity is highlighted by Deleuze and Guattari's (1984, 1988) concept of 'machine' or machinism, which counters the humanistic model of relationships. For example, an 'organism' highlights the 'whole', which already has a narrative, intention or goal. On the other hand, a 'mechanism' focuses on the isolated parts, each of which has a particular function and role. Both presuppose a fixed identity, and therefore both are closed to new connections.

In contrast, a "machinic" agency is open to connections, since it does not have pre-existing identities, functions and objectives. A machine itself has no meaning, unless it is connected to other machines. Each encounter and connection with other machines brings a new identity, function and objective (Colebrook, 2002, p.56). In this concept, "a thing is known better through its conditions […] or through what it expresses than through an isolated examination of what it is" (Williams, 2013, pp.18-19). A machinic assemblage does not require any transcendental entity to reveal what it is. Each machine consisting of an assemblage has the capacity to connect, affect and co-produce new meanings together with other machines.

In political thought, the anarchist current celebrates the encounter with others as such a creative source. In my interview, Hajime Matsumoto in *Shiroto no Ran* and Akira Harada in NFS expressed their desire to meet with those beyond their understanding and give them a surprise. Their desire might be said to be 'machinic'.

The transgression of a boundary between the self and the other is seen as a creative action, as Donna Haraway's "cyborg" metaphor shows (1991). In recent days, this transgressional imaginary of 'cyborg bodies' has been actualised in the attempts of body hackers. For example, as a body hacker with a small magnet implanted in his finger, Greiner (2014) explains that a 'cyborg body' not only brings a new sense to the body hacker but also has a broader impact on society. Since they blur the boundary between the self and the other, cyborg bodies open a pathway to what he calls a 'cyborg society', which is a "collective form of living and intelligence sharing" (Greiner, 2014, p301).

Nevertheless, a body hacker represents a controversial form of 'border transgression'. While post-anarchists such as Lewis Call (2002) celebrate the creative potential of this plugged-in machinic entity, Newman (2007) describes it as a mere reflection of "the ultimate fantasy of capitalism and the ultimate nightmare of technology" (2007, p.81). In contemporary society, our bodies are exposed to and penetrated by the uncontrollable power realised by global capitalism and advanced technology. The force from the outside is not always enjoyable. We are more likely to be threatened by it.

The relation with the otherness in contemporary society seems more complex than simply affirming or avoiding. For Baudrillard, the Other means something that betrays the self; therefore, it is "what allows me not to repeat myself for ever" (1993, p.174). However, he argues that modern science and technology have enabled us to eliminate and or control the otherness, as seen in the development of sanitation, immunisation and genetic engineering (Baudrillard,

1993). In addition physical encounters in society have been replaced by those in artificial reality, and unpredictable events have been replaced by something programmed (Baudrillard, 1993).

In Baudrillard's view, the project of eradicating otherness will invite a catastrophic outcome because it creates more dangerous others outside of our territory, such as religious extremists (Baudrillard, 1993). The problem in contemporary society is the parallel existence of the deadly stagnant inside without otherness and the outside as a completely different world with incomprehensible and irreconcilable 'others'. Under this condition, all the possible encounters with others become extremely destructive.

Hence, the otherness in contemporary society is close to the imaginary of disaster, which falls into the stagnant 'hell of the same', and indicates that complete stability is impossible. We cannot totally control the environment, and we always need to prepare for the unexpected rupture that is beyond our intention. This world-view is quite pessimistic. It makes us passive entities facing some kind of transcendental force, like Voltaire and the Lisbon disaster.

While Levinas's opening to the otherness is voluntary passivity, this kind of passivity is involuntary. In this sense, the latter is probably no more suitable as a political manifesto than the former. This involuntariness seems to have affinity with the biological examples. While Baudrillard explains the intrusion of radical alterity into the self through the analogy of disease (1993), Deleuze and Guattari's '*A thousand plateaus*' (1988) refers to the openness of genetic code to mutation by a viral infection. The mutation occurs through genetic

information "jumping from one already differentiated line to another" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988, p.10).

This catastrophic imaginary seems to describe the nature of the otherness more accurately than the imaginary of cyborg. In our life, the otherness is something we can neither avoid nor willingly invite when we want. We are simply open to the encounter with the other, and we do not know how we will change as a result of its encounter. Like an encounter with virus, it may result in the disaster, or it may bring creative evolution.

8.2.2 Beyond identity and recognition

An good example of this 'involuntary' relationship between the self and the other in our society is found in Foucault's (1996) term "passion," which he contrasts with the concept of love. For Foucault, love is relationships between people, who have subjectivity. Passion, on the other hand, is always an event without subjectivity. Passion is "something that falls on you out of the blue" and which "grips you for no reason"; one "doesn't know where it comes from" (Foucault, 1996, p.313). Hence, we probably cannot describe this communication as the relationship between the self and the other. It is more like an intertwining of different non-subjective forces.

This communication as an intermingled force field is important, as it seems to provide an alternative perspective on the conventional relationship based on identity and recognition. As we have already examined in chapters two and three, meaning in life is usually tagged with the concept of identity and recognition in contemporary Japanese society. Yet the pursuit of an identity

may lead to self-subjugation to the dominant authority that provides us with recognition, meanings and stability in life. This is both a sociological and a political problem because it discourages people from desiring social change even when their lives are oppressed under the current social system.

The need for identity and recognition among young people is often pointed out in sociological analyses of contemporary Japan. The 14-year-old Boy A (Sakakibara Seito) who carried out the Kobe school murders in 1997 wrote a confessional statement explaining that he had committed the murders in order to attract public attention because he felt he was living "a transparent existence" and hoped to be "recognised as a real, living human being" (Asahi Shimbun Osaka Shakaibu, 2000; See 2.3.2). The online diary of the female high school student Aya Nanjo, who reported her history of self-harming and drug overdosing up to her death in 1999, was also analysed by Doi (2008) as a cry for attention and recognition (See 2.3.2).

When the alienated young temporary worker Tomohiro Kato murdered seven people on the streets of Tokyo in 2008, the polemics of his generation also analysed that what Kato wanted was recognition (Amamiya and Kayano, 2008; Akagi *et al*., 2008). Kato himself noted later that he was desperate for a "connection with society," by which he meant a connection with somebody. The online community was the only space in which he could make connections, and he kept posting fictional stories to attract attention from the community (See 2.4.2).

Fictionalising characters and narratives in order to be recognised from society

is not an unusual phenomena, as we have examined the case of *Shukatsu* activity in which the young Japanese people simulate the self into what a company wants (See 2.3.3). According to Baudrillard, the contemporary society is full of simulacra, which are the images without any reference to reality; those image never represents the real, but they are accepted as real.

If we believe the notion of coherent and authentic self, the simulated bodies seems to be a problematic disaffirmation of life because it falsifies the self. The pain of living is hidden under the simulacra. The contradiction we saw in "the era of the impossible" (Osawa, 2008) was that to make our life valuable, we need to gain recognition, and to gain recognition, people need connection, and make their life into simulacrum in order to connect.

However, being desperate for connections does not necessarily mean that Kato wanted recognition. The need for recognition presupposes a static notion of the self to be recognised. This actually contradicts Kato's comments in his autobiography. For example, Kato recalls the time when he planned suicide out of loneliness. He notes that the suicide was supposed to be a message to convey his pain to his friends, who did not care for him:

> By killing myself, I can make a connection to society [because the death conveys the message]. […] People may say that it is nonsense because anyway I die. However, for me, it was not at all important whether I would die or not. All that mattered was whether I was lonely or not (Kato, 2012, p.27).

He did not even care about dying, as long as it gained him a connection. If what he had really wanted from a connection with other people was recognition, what would have been 'recognised' after he had died? Was it his name, or the fact that he had once existed? Kato thought that he could sacrifice his somatic body, because it was meaningless unless it was connected with someone else. As an individual, he thought that he had no essence; therefore he needed meaning through connection. What he hoped seems to be a meaningful life, but it should not be carelessly combined with the desire for "recognition", since his sense of self is very weak.

As was argued earlier, the desire for 'meaningful life' should primarily be understood as 'making difference' (significance) rather than 'getting recognition' (signification) (De Landa, 2011, See 6.3.2). Then, such a desire is "machinic" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988). A 'machinic' entity does not have its own essential identity. It acquires meanings through connection and by forming an assemblage.

However it does not mean that the assemblage as a whole supplies meaning to each component of the assemblage. De Landa (2006) describes that machinic assemblage is against the notion of totality, which considers that the harmonious unity of the whole defines the meaning of parts. The authentic meaning exists nowhere, neither as an essence of the part nor as the totality of the whole. Meanings are generated by the action of each component, interacting and resonating one another in an assemblage.

Deleuze's philosophy acknowledges that there is no original meaning in life,

because they are all in the process of change (Colebrook, 2002). There is no distinction between the original and copy. Under this notion, simulation is no longer a force of falsification, but it is productive force of creation (Colebrook, 2002). Hence, for Deleuze, life has always been a simulation, which never has a fixed status, and is always engaged in the process of creating a new image (Colebrook, 2002).

Then, perhaps the problem with Kato was not that he made his 'authentic' self into a simulacrum, as there is no authentic self but a process of change. The problem is that Kato used his desire for meaningful life and his capacity of simulation (creation) to gain recognition as a fixed subject, rather than to create difference. The problem in contemporary society is not that it is full of simulacra which never reflect reality, but that society operates with a system of recognition, and the power of simulation is always used to create something recognisable.

The act of recognition operates "by comparing the new to that which is already known" (Williams, 2013, p.127). De Landa (2013) argues that, in the essentialist world-view, each life form is measured by a resemblance or "degrees of perfection" in comparison with the fixed archetype. Under this system, something new is only understood through the framework of the already-known. We cannot evaluate things without any mediation of representation, which means that we cannot value the unknown.

Opposing this, De Landa (2013) proposes the Darwinist "norm of reaction," which considers life as the dynamism of several variables affecting one

another, such as genotypes and outside environment (De Landa, 2013, pp.52-53). Here, the distinction between the subject and the object disappears, and all entities become dependent variables affecting one another. Things are in the process of permanent change, or that of 'becoming'.

> To become is never to imitate, nor to 'do like', nor to conform to a model, whether it's of justice or of truth. There is no terminus from which you set out, none which you arrive at or which you ought to arrive at (Deleuze and Parnet, 2006, p.2).

In Deleuzian philosophy, being means alteration; it means to engage in the process of invention, innovation and differentiation (Hallward, 2006, pp.12-13). Here, what one desires is not to be recognised but to engage in the process of invention. "To affirm is to create, not to bear, put up with or accept" (Deleuze, 1986, pp.185-186). In other words, to affirm someone's life is not to accept and celebrate his/her existence but to permeate it, intermingle with it and create something new together with it. It is the act of "making an event" no matter how small it may be (Deleuze and Parnet, 2006, p.49).

Amamiya and Kayano (2008) acknowledge that a possible prescription for postmodern alienation is to provide a 'home base' and 'unconditional recognition' to young people, just like a mother's love for her child (See 3.1.3). However, when we deconstruct this relationship between solid subjects who recognise and are recognised, love is explained in very different manner:

For my pathetic wish to be loved I will substitute a power to love: not an absurd will to love anyone or anything, not identifying myself with the universe, but extracting the pure event which unites me with those whom I love […]. Loving those who are like this: when they enter a room they are not persons, characters or subjects, but an atmospheric variation, a change of hue, an imperceptible molecule, a discrete population, a fog or a cloud of droplets (Deleuze and Parnet, 2006, p.49).

I believe that this is more like 'passion' in Foucault's sense. Loving those who are not "subjects" is not done to give or receive recognition. To love someone without subjectivity is to create something new together. This is one of the most powerful example of machinic assemblage, which dismantles the distinction between the subject to give meaning and the object to be interpreted. The desire for being part of this assemblage should not be confused by the desire for recognition, as it has much more creativity.

8.2.3 Life as an art

Post-war Japanese society used to have a 'model' for social change that Osawa (2008) calls the imaginary of the "anti-real" (See chapter two). After WWII, the United States became the ideal model, and it was challenged by Marxism espoused by the student revolutionaries of the 1960s and 1970s. These ideologies encouraged people to make a commitment to politics in order to actualise its model. The questions of life were the matter of how to perfect one's life into the suggested model (Osawa, 2008). However, in Osawa's analysis, this model has become less clear in the later era, and it has

disappeared in what he calls "the era of the impossible." We lost our shared imaginary for the model of our life in this era, which in my view is the condition of postmodernity.

As we have examined, there have been a number of attempts to establish another invariant model in the postmodern condition, such as those by Rawls (1999), Habermas (1990) in chapter seven, and Jonas (1985) in the earlier part of this chapter. However, my position is more pessimistic as I feel that we can probably no longer find or establish a viable model for a complex society. The practice of the post-Fukushima protesters implies another type of social/political thought that is not based on a fixed model, but on their own desires.

Of course, the celebration of emotions and desires itself is not new, because it is capitalism that unleashed the flow of desire and liberated people from the old norm of 'who I should be'. However, as Deleuze and Guattari (1984, p.33) note, capitalism creates an "axiomatic" which regulates the flow of desire by articulating the object of the desire. The market economy deliberately creates lack, and directs our desire to fill the lack in the form of needs and wants (Deleuze and Guattari, 1984). Hence, desire only becomes a creative and an ethical force when it is liberated from this notion of lack, and any form of model to complete, which identifies "whom I want to be."

This meaning in life without identity is called by Foucault (1996) "art" of the self. While conventional thought presupposes the necessity of knowing the self in order to act, he argues that it is possible to imagine a society without

questions of identity. In such a society, what is worth the effort is "to make one's being an object of art" (Foucault, 1996, p.318).

What does this art of the self actually mean? It seems to turn one's own life into something different from what is already known, rather than to complete one's life into the pre-imagined form. Here, rather than finding another "anti-real" model to realise, our effort for change needs what Deleuze calls "counter-actualisation" (1990, p.150, 161): a technique of decomposing the once fixed arrangement and recreating it anew. Under this concept of counter-actualisation, our lives are placed in the middle of a complex force field rather than in the linear movement towards the one ideal model.

Deleuze and Guattari (1988) explain the dynamism of this force field through different types of lines. According to them, a "molar" line draws a clear border between things and engages in the process of identification. Then, there is a more fluid "molecular" line which enables the entities to intermingle with one another and reformulate themselves. Finally, the most creative line is a "line of flight", which "'carries us away' towards a destination that is neither foreseeable nor pre-existent" (Hallward, 2006, p.28). According to Hallward, a subject with fixed identity comes into existence when the creative movement of the line of flights is temporarily slowed down or solidified. This subject starts perceiving the world according to his/her self-interest. The world-view of the solid subject is limited - just as a cow only sees grass as food and has no interest in its creative function of producing oxygen (Hallward, 2006). Subjectivity moulds a creative potential of things into a recognisable form.

Hence, to create, "one has to lose one's identity and become imperceptible" (Hallward, 2006, p.3).

Yet Deleuze and Guattari do not highlight a dualism between the molar lines and the lines of flight; instead, they are interested in "co-evolution of them within any given assemblage" (Ansell-Pearson, 1999, p.168). This is because every living thing has tendencies both towards "ordering and stratification" and towards "creative dispersion or productive chaos" (Colebrook, 2010, p.33).

The post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters seem to be developing the attitude of balancing this openness and closeness. The protesters know that a solid subject tends to become indifferent to the outside. The street protest offers them a space in which to remember their emotions. They mobilise their limited bodies onto the street in order to engage with other people who force their bodies to feel, to think and to change. As Colebrook explains;

> [A life] is a fleeting and fragile perception that at once gets caught up in territories and recognition, only to break down again when life is blessed with enough violent power to overcome self-maintenance (2010, p.166).

The MCAN organiser Misao Redwolf used the term 'pride' as the motivation for her action (See 6.3.2). She obtains her pride when she passively accepts the force of the outside permeating her, while she responds to it with her own creativity and desire. The accumulation of these passive but creative

responses makes up one's life, and the resonance between these individual reactions composes political and ethical struggles. I believe this is what Foucault calls making "one's being an object of art" (1996, p.318).

8.3 Reconsidering knowledge

8.3.1 Self-organisation and the ontology of becoming

The last element to be reconsidered through the context of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement is knowledge itself. As I have already noted, Japanese political theories mostly focus on re-establishing a self-conscious subject, a legitimate procedure for decision-making and a new meta-narrative to guide people in the postmodern condition. Social theories seek a reconstruction of the sense of identity by finding a legitimate authority that might provide recognition and acceptance. While these theories seek invariant references, general principles and models, this thesis has been arguing that these concepts are not enough to deal with the precariousness of life.

Henri Bergson (2001) insists that our intellect fails to think about life. For Bergson, a living thing is in a state of flux; hence, "[t]here are no things, there are only actions" (Bergson, 2001, p.240). On the other hand, our intellect tries to find an invariant pattern in changing reality, because the role of the intellect is to predict and prepare the next actions. Here, the changing reality is explained with inert concepts and is understood as a series of snapshots from a certain stage to another, rather than as a continuous movement (Bergson, 2001).

Bergson (2001) believes that this intellect generates two types of knowledge which he distinguishes as mechanism and finalism. Mechanism tries to understand the world from its constituent parts. The world is explained by the accumulation of each part functioning through causal relations. In that sense, the mechanistic view entails the reductionist notion. On the other hand, finalism presumes a fixed objective or meaning of the world that pulls the components into harmony, which is also referred to as holism. The problem for Bergson (2001) is that mechanism and finalism share the same ontology; they presuppose some sort of invariant elements, either for the components or for the whole, which is at odds with the nature of life.

I share this view as I believe that, in complex society, we cannot identify any fixed value of life either in the social components (such as the ideal subject) or in the whole (such as the ideal goal). Looking at a catastrophic event such as the Fukushima disaster, we notice that there is no fixed meaning to each aspect that composes our complex social assemblage. Nuclear energy used to be welcomed by most of the Japanese people as an ideal energy source that is clean and cheap. It would still have been accepted, had the accident not have taken place. However, the Fukushima accident changed the context. Now around 60 to 70 per cent of Japanese people are against the operation of nuclear reactors. [41]

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[41] For example, in an opinion poll by Asahi Shimbun (2014a), 59% of the respondents are opposed to restarting the nuclear reactors in Japan. Reuters introduces public research in which 70% of respondents are against restarting them (Hamada, 2015).

This shows that there are no fixed evaluations for modern technology. There are just our inconsistent desires to possess it or not possess it in certain times and situations. Our lives are entangled with many forces, both human and non-human, and we do not know how we should live. Thus, as the demonstration organiser Nao Izumori says, "a life does not have such a thing as theory. It just desires to live" (See 6.3.3).

His view entails the open ontology proposed by theorists such as Bergson and Deleuze, for whom life is understood as "becoming" rather than "being" (Colebrook, 2002; Connolly, 2013). This ontology of becoming views the hidden flow and movement beneath what is usually explained as a fixed and solid entity. While the ontology of "being" pursues knowledge as a form of general laws and models, the knowledge based on the ontology of "becoming" seeks how to respond to this change. These responses are temporal and particular; nevertheless, they are not completely random. They operate in another type of order, which is often explained as the order of "self-organisation" (Escobar, 2008; Protevi, 2009; Colebrook, 2010; De Landa, 2013; Connolly, 2013).

Self-organisation operates without any central control. According to Connolly (2013, p.87), in the self-organising system the movement is neither "pulled by a final purpose" (holistic) nor "reducible mostly to chance" (anarchic) nor "simply explicable as a mechanic process" (mechanistic). The self-organising system introduces a new element of instability into its own system and reformulates it in order to adapt to a new condition (Connolly, 2013). The clearest example of this may be the evolutionary process. By introducing

alterity from the outside, the system experiences a state of disequilibrium; and through the efforts to respond to it, the system is renewed, which we understand as mutation (Connolly, 2013; Deleuze and Guattari, 1988).

The self-organising system is not just the characteristics of living organisms. It applies to any assemblages whose formation is organised spontaneously out of the interactions of its components. The process of self-organisation operates in the balance between a certain energetic requirement of matters and the constraints of the surrounding environment. For example, De Landa (2013, p.7) exemplifies the structure of a soap bubble, whose spherical form is acquired by minimising surface tension, and of a salt crystal which shapes itself into a cubic form by minimising bonding energy.

This system of self-organisation is important in social and political theories too. In fact, the explanation of this system corresponds to my description of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters: accepting an unexpected force from the outside and trying to respond to it. The self-organisation system shows an existing example of a 'third way', where our actions become neither self-enclosed behaviour completely detached from the outside nor complete surrender to the outside force, be it that of God, nature, the state or the face of the Other.

Furthermore, the self-organisation highlights the different types of knowledge. The system of self-organisation appears complicated when we explain it with inert concepts, while it is actually a very simple movement from a certain perspective. For example, Bergson (2001) exemplifies a moving hand from

the point A to the point B. Looking at this movement objectively, one might describe it as a certain curve, AB, which is calculated using a complex formula. This is a mechanistic view. Otherwise, it is also possible to find a certain meaning of its entire movement. A finalist view may be interested in it. However, when I move my hand from A to B, it is just a simple movement felt within me (Bergson, 2001, p.88). Neither mechanism nor finalism notices this simple mobility 'felt within'.

Bergson's explanation of mechanism and finalism resonates with what Deleuze and Guattari (1988) call mechanism and organism. Hence, what Bergson explains as the knowledge 'felt within' will be akin to the knowledge of machinism. When explaining the concept of the machine, Deleuze refers to the novelist Heinrich von Kleist's short story *On the Marionette Theatre* ([1810] 1972). Here, Kleist describes the knowledge of a marionette operator in a similar way to Bergson. Kleist acknowledges that we must not suppose that every single limb of the marionette is controlled by the operator; instead, the operator only controls "a center of gravity" (Kleist, [1810] 1972, p.22). The movement of this gravity centre is quite simple, although it creates a complex dance of the marionette because each limb swings freely in accordance with the movement of the gravity centre.

Here, the machine operator should not be understood as the transcendental existence who controls the marionette by his own will. Instead, the operator is "present in the machine, 'in the centre of gravity', or rather of speed, which goes through him" (Deleuze and Parnet, 2006, p.77). The machine operator situates himself within the marionette and tries to create actions in balancing

between the gravitational force and the ability of the marionette's body. That knowledge can only be acquired through practice and sympathy, by feeling these forces from inside.

This knowledge is totally different from the objective knowledge gained by calculating each movement of the parts, or by interpreting the intention of the whole movement. It is what Bergson calls intuition, which is "lived rather than represented" (Bergson, 2001, p.169). Hence, it is knowledge not for perception but for "palpation" (May, 2005, p.20). It entails the attitude of learning (William, 2013, p.171). As the ontology of becoming considers that reality is in an ever changing state of flux, it requires experimental knowledge of "how to live best with that change" (Williams, 2013, p.5). Without assuming any final status to be reached, "we must experiment with our thoughts and our bodies" (Williams, 2013, p.11) each time we encounter the problem.

Conventional political and social studies seem to fail to examine the internal forces within ourselves; hence, they are unable to provide this type of knowledge for experimentation and learning. Without this type of knowledge, we cannot explore how our desire for a fulfilled life might better respond to the postmodern condition instead of responding by suicide, mass murder or political disenchantment. The role of emotions and desires is crucial in politics because they are such internal forces. These internal forces are probably unsuited to being the object of knowledge for finding invariable models, as I noted in chapter four. The study of emotions in politics is meaningful under the ontology of becoming, because these emotions motivate the

self-organisation system, in which each entity tries to respond to a given condition.

8.3.2 Philosophy and the epistemology of creation

The ontology of becoming and the system of self-organisation is often linked with complexity theory, because the formation of its system cannot be explained by a linear causal relationship. As De Landa (2006) explains, in the system of self-organisation, examining the characteristics of each component cannot allow us to predict the outcome as the assemblage. Our lives are open to a variety of forces and their interaction may cause unexpected disasters. In the case of social assemblage, although each individual can make its own move based on their own intention, the consequences as the assemblage would be unintentional (De Landa, 2006, p. 24).

The complex system which goes beyond the linear causal relationship, and the entangled relation between the observer and the observed, are widely mentioned in the systems of physics, biology and informatics, as well as in social systems. In most cases, these self-organising systems are approached scientifically. However, my research attempts to take a more philosophical approach.

Deleuze and Guattari (1994) distinguish science, philosophy and art from the attitude to chaos. Scientists isolate independent variables from the chaos and establish a comprehensive reference to the world; therefore, science engages in "acts of capture" of unknown forces, constructs models and brings order to the chaotic movement of reality (May, 2008). On the other hand, art and

philosophy are concerned with the creative potential of a chaotic field. While artists retrieve "affect" from the chaos and express it in the actual world through their artworks, philosophers extract a pure energy from chaos and create new concepts (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994).

In the ontology of becoming, any knowledge will require experimentation, be it science, philosophy or art, since what we see is a series of particular phenomena of matters responding to the changing environment. Nevertheless, according to the definition of Deleuze and Guattari (1994), science still engages in identifying independent variables, measuring them, and bringing order to chaos, even though it is temporary. It will articulate patterns, establish a model and possibly make a prediction. What science values is certainty (Ansell-Pearson, 1999); even the ontology of becoming states that it can only be a partial stability. This is also adaptable to social science, as Stones (1996) attempts to construct knowledge based on 'sophisticated realism' (See 4.2.2).

However, the ontology of becoming implies that scientific knowledge cannot provide a complete picture of our world. It cannot guarantee the perfect certainty of the future, because our lives are more than we are conscious of, and our cognitive identification inevitably becomes partial and temporal. Although scientific knowledge will provide us with safer nuclear energy in the future, the speed of its progress may not be fast enough. There are still many unknown variables in operating nuclear power plants in Japan, such as the risk of another earthquake and tsunami, volcanic eruptions and terrorist attacks, and we are unable to know how serious the damage would be. In

addition, there is no fundamental solution to the huge amount of nuclear waste. Our scientific knowledge is not enough to harness the entangled forces of complex society for our benefit, and it may also bring disaster. This is why I argue that another type of knowledge is needed, one that does not intend to control chaos and create stability.

According to Deleuze and Guattari (1994), philosophical knowledge is distinct from scientific knowledge. Philosophy does not seek any stable reference of truth. Instead, "it will always have to work with an obscure edge that it can only experiment with, rather than grasp" and what it asks is "how exactly that experimentation should take place" (Williams, 2013, p.32). Hence, philosophy is supposed to replace "the values of completion and certainty with the values of openness and indeterminacy" (Williams, 2013, p.248). Philosophical knowledge creates a new potential of living rather than securing the certainty of life.

The scientific knowledge, particularly that of natural science, aims at constructing 'empirical theory' about 'what it is', and eliminates value judgement. Social and political science has been following this tradition; however recently, the knowledge for value judgement is re-evaluated, and some political theorist actively engaging in the debate of social justice, seen as the attempt of Rawls and Habermas (Bauböck, 2008). The role of such 'normative theory' to provide 'what we should do' is important move of political theory. I agree with Bauböck (2008) that there is ethical requirement of political theory to go beyond an objective description of reality to make some

proposal, and normative theory can be founded and improved by empirical theory.

Nevertheless, what I have been arguing in this thesis is that the complex society requires even more than normative theory of 'what we should live/act'. That is why I emphasis on the knowledge of 'what one might live' (May, 2005). In my fieldwork, especially the anarchist trend embodies this type of knowledge. They express what they want to do rather than what they think they should do. Their actions affect those who encounter with them and encourage those people to take new action. It is neither the knowledge to represent the world, nor to suggest one right answer. It is 'affective knowledge' which stems from creative desire and brings becoming (Semetsky, 2009). It seems that when Deleuze and Guattari contrast scientific knowledge with that of philosophy and art, the latter signifies this affective knowledge.

The tendencies of science and philosophy seem to be moving in opposite directions; however, they work in a complementary manner, as Deleuze and Guattari demonstrate with the movement of lines. Philosophical knowledge allows us to palpate an unknown variable in chaos; science will then identify it, analyse it, establish an order and harness it. This is an interaction between molar lines, molecular lines and lines of fight, and the movement is only described as the repeating process of territorialisation and deterritorialisation.

As Bergson (2001) addresses, we might be too accustomed to seek models and principles. Even our values of life are strongly tied with certainty, identification and completeness. On one hand, it is necessary to describe

complex reality with fixed concepts and models. It allows us to predict the future and make decision. It may help normative theorists to establish a principle of what we should do. However, as May (2005, p.172) puts it, "[there is] always more" about our lives, which cannot be known. Making a static model means to eliminate this 'unknown'. Therefore, we need another knowledge to palpate the problem which escape from its formula.

The concept of self-organisation inspires such exploration to live with uncertainty. As I mentioned earlier, the self-organising system could be approached both scientifically and philosophically. Predominantly in natural science but also to some extent in social studies, the self-organising system becomes the object of knowledge, which is to be elucidated and modelled.[42] Although these attempts are important, my argument is that the self-organising system also creates philosophical knowledge to pursue 'how one might live' (May, 2005). Social movements are among the self-organising systems that produces knowledge for experimentation. I argue that politics need all of these: the scientific knowledge to describe what it is, normative knowledge to suggest what we should, and affective knowledge to palpate how we might. Those should never be confused, and we need to think which knowledge is required when.

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[42] A clear example of the scientific analysis of a 'political self-organising system' is seen in the work of Aguilera *et al*. (2013). Here, they mathematically model the complex process of mobilisation in Spanish social movements through Twitter.

8.3.3 The position of my research

Based on the argument in this section, I would now like to clarify the position of my research. My ontological position is that of 'becoming'. Therefore, providing the invariant reference of reality is not my primary objective. Also I am aware that my limited fieldwork is insufficient to construct a complete representative image of post-Fukushima Japanese society or the post-Fukushima activism in general.

What I attempted in chapters five and six still falls under the category of social science because it attempted an explanation, categorisation and critical evaluation of what I observed in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement. However, as I stated in chapter four, it is a partial and temporary identification to be used for another exploration. The post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements are knowledge producers as well as being the objects of knowledge. In the movements, the protesters respond to problems of the postmodern condition, such as the loss of shared meanings, the 'dissolved' subjects who are entangled in a complex network in society, and the limitation of rational knowledge in open systems, all of which are highlighted by the Fukushima nuclear disaster.

Hence, analysing this movement motivated me to take the next step to elaborate a new political imaginary from their knowledge and think about how we might 'respond well' to the postmodern predicament instead of responding with suicide, mass murder, over-conformity or passive nihilism. Chapters seven and eight are devoted to this exploration; therefore, this work might be described as a philosophical attempt at creation rather than a scientific

attempt at providing certainty. Yet this imaginary of 'postmodern' politics will never be the absolute reference as well. It does not provide a new political project to regain our control over life from the invisible power of global capitalism or uncontrollable technology. Holloway (2010b, p.256) notes that, in our struggle, there is "no Right Answer" but "just millions of experiments"; hence, we need knowledge not to find the right answer but to keep on experimenting.

Deleuze (1995) exemplifies two ways of reading a book, an approach through which I think he is describing different functions of knowledge. Some readers treat a book like a 'box' with contents inside it. Just as people investigate what is inside the box, these readers seek the meaning in the book and examine what it signifies. Other readers treat a book as "a little non-signifying machine" (Deleuze, 1995, p. 8). Such readers only ask how a book=machine works. "There's nothing to explain, nothing to understand, nothing to interpret. It's like plugging into an electric circuit" (Deleuze, 1995, p.8). What matters is whether a book passes something on to a reader or not, whether it has an affect or not. Such readers expect unknown encounters that make them feel and think. Here, knowledge is not representing the world: it is "making connections or becoming 'desiring machines'" (Colebrook, 2002, p.62).

The knowledge I aimed to construct in this thesis is precisely this 'machine' for making connections and opening up to new perspectives. The encounter with the Fukushima disaster forced the protesters to search for a way to respond to it, and through the practice of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements, knowledge is generated for the dissolved, incomplete self to live politically and

ethically. By connecting myself with their knowledge practice, I produced another knowledge which I describe as a new political imaginary to respond to the political impasse in the postmodern condition. I believe that this knowledge will be further connected with the alienated young people in contemporary Japanese society and provide a tool for their struggles, and new knowledge will be generated at the intersection of my knowledge and these struggles.

8.4 The politics of disaster and its knowledge contribution

At the very end of this thesis, I demonstrate how my 'tool' would respond to the political predicament in contemporary society.

There have been many attempts to establish a viable model of politics in the postmodern condition; they have proposed a new form of democracy, new ethical principles to encourage inactive people, or a new political project to resist the neoliberal order. There are already many concepts, such as the public sphere (Habermas, 1990), agonistic democracy (Mouffe, 2005), struggles of the multitude against Empire (Hardt and Negri, 2004), the attempt to establish Temporary Autonomous Zones (Bey, 1991), and so on.

However, all these political theories face the same problem of political disenchantment and self-subjugation in contemporary society, as was examined in chapter two. Most of the '99%' of the people, or what Hardt and Negri (2004) call the multitude, are busy protecting what they have now, and they maintain the system, knowing that it does not affirm their lives. Akagi's (2007) frustration at liberal politics, Amamiya's (2010) 'pain in life' (*ikizurasa*),

and Furuichi's (2011) cynicism for politics all indicate that the existing political models are not providing hope.

My concern is that there now seems to be an unnecessary separation between political theories and philosophical questions of life. For example, Hallward (2006, 2015) seems to criticise the use of the philosophy of Deleuze for a down-to-earth political project, because Deleuzian philosophy encourages us to go beyond this actualised world. I agree with Hallward's description of Deleuzian philosophy as being 'extra-worldy', and I am even able to accept Hallward's claim that "Deleuze's work is essentially indifferent to the politics of this world" (2006, p.162). Hallward has a normative definition of politics as organised collective action based on a fixed identity and interest. [43] In this sense, Deleuzian philosophy may have nothing to do with it.

However, my point is that such a molar political project cannot deal with our lives so entangled in complexity and thus facing uncertainty. I believe that politics needs to be liberated from the actualised 'this world', because many Japanese people seem to be completely disillusioned with the politics of 'this world,' despite they feel that their life is threatened. I cited Deleuze and Bergson in a political context because I believe that politics needs the imaginary of an outside.

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[43] For example, in his lecture in Japan, Hallward (2015) notes that "by 'politics' I propose to refer to that collective dimension of human experience (i) which cannot be reduced to more 'elementary' or 'natural' forms of organisation […], and (ii) which presumes, as a matter of principle, that the participants who constitute a distinctively 'political' or 'civic' collectivity relate to each other on the basis of equality and inclusion, and not on the basis of hierarchies adapted from other spheres of life."

I am not objecting to the view that politics takes place in the actualised world, and it often needs institutions and subjects with solid interests. However, the political and ethical commitment to social change may never occur without the emotional attachment to something beyond this actualised world, and beyond the self. We have examined this in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements. The rupture of the self, caused by the Fukushima disaster, brought people onto the streets in order to meet with other people.

The post-Fukushima protesters accepted a life with this openness, as they learnt that it is impossible to disconnect themselves from the complex social network. The protesters' desire for social change emerged when they absorbed unexpected forces from the outside. They feel pride when they are affected by other people, such as people in Fukushima, create their action out of their emotional experience in its encounters, and pass their creation on to other people, such as the future generation. Bergson's concept "elan vital" (2001) or Deleuze and Guattari's "desire" (1984, 1988) describe the force to go beyond the somatic life. My research shows that such forces played a significant role in the politics that have emerged in post-disaster Japanese society.

Against the common separation between the political practice and the philosophical imaginary of an outside, the post-Fukushima protesters imply that politics is inseparable with the philosophy of life. We can tell this from one of my interviewees' reaction to the cultural critic Hiroki Azuma, who draws a similar separation between politics and philosophy of life, as does Hallward.

As the previous chapter examined, Azuma is a fairly 'postmodern' theorist with an open ontology; however he seems to believe that the political imaginary must have a fixed reference. This position requires Azuma to defend his open ontology from dogmatic politics. On Twitter, he insists that cultural critics, of whom he is one, "should forget about changing society and just quest what it means to live or to love" (Azuma, Twitter, @hazuma, 25 November 2014).

Here, Azuma separates people who cherish non-subjective forces to go outside (such as love) from those who involve politics, which is about the hegemonic confrontation between the subjects. He identifies himself as among the former and deplores that people such as he are criticised by 'political' people as being 'irresponsible' to society. Azuma counters these criticisms by insisting that their dismissal of the philosophy of life makes politics unattractive. As a cultural critic, he defends his thoughts thus:

> We do not care about elections. Instead, we just want to think about God and love. Many people would say so. […] Our life is limited, and what matters is how to utilise its time. […] Is it irrational to say that I am not willing to spare any more time (for politics)? How long do I have to put up with this nonsense game called a state? (Hiroki Azuma, Twitter@hazuma, 25 November 2014).

I share Azuma's concern that politics now dismisses thoughts on love and life. In addition, I personally share his cynical view on elections and the state.

However, I disagree with his attitude of completely giving up talking about politics and social change in his defence of the philosophy of life. One of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters criticises him:

> Azuma asked: "how long do we have to put up with a nonsense game called a state?" and here is my answer: "until we die". We cannot escape it; then the only remaining way is to enjoy this boring game through participating in it (Yumi Nakamura, Twitter @run-bun, 17 December 2014).

In one sense, this Nakamura's remark seems to be the passive acceptance of reality, suggesting that we enjoy life under the established rule. I see similar passivity in other MCAN members: for example, in Hattori's comment that he "gave up" on giving up, and in Takenaka's word that he protests because he has "no hope" (See 6.1.2). Even though the 'actual' institutional politics is hopeless, they cannot disconnect it from their lives, because they are living in an actual world with a state.

Azuma considers it as the entrapment in the actuality and the abandonment of other potentials. However, I argue that the engagement in the actuality does not necessarily mean the abandonment of the imaginary of an 'outside'. My research demonstrated that what motivates the protesters is this thought of an 'outside' that permeates their selfhood.

Moreover, the practice of NFS and *Shiroto no Ran* showed that politics is more than the action taken to realise a goal or establish a legitimate system. It

is about encountering the other, connecting with them and collectively responding to the changing situation. Hence, politics is a movement that encompasses one's entire life. This allows Nakamura to refute Azuma's argument that politics is not the question of 'how long'. We are never discharged from politics. For her, politics and life is the same, which repeats de-territorialisation and re-territorialisation and keeps creating difference.

Far from ignoring the questions about life, their politics actually produces a new perspective for thoughts on life. The post-Fukushima activism created many examples of how 'imperfect' individuals live well with their responsibilities, using their bodies, emotions, humours and desires. It is a life as a non-subject, who cannot be clearly identified and recognised, but each of them "brings something new into the world" (Bergson, 2001, p.231). The post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement seems to be one of those successful assemblages where these non-subjective forces are affecting and being affected by one another. The protesters desire to bring the best of their capacity into the assemblage and create an effect that goes beyond their somatic lives. I believe that this desire of the 'machinic' entity (Deleuze and Guattari, 1984, 1988) motivates us to take political and ethical actions.

Nevertheless, the same desire may lead people to destructive violence when it receives no positive reactions from other machines, as Kato's mass murder shows. In contemporary society, our lives are entangled with so many uncontrollable forces. Because these complex connections make our lives precarious, people try to disconnect themselves from the risky 'otherness' (Baudrillard, 1993). They subjugate themselves to the hegemonic power

which provides them with security and identity. The lives in the postmodern Japan are bounded by the invisible authoritarian power and fragmented from one another. Kato's desperation for the "connections to society" emerged out of this painful inconsistency and led him to destructive actions such as suicide and mass murder. Therefore, how might we respond to his desperation for connections?

We might agree that creating a space (*basho*) for making connections is important. However, in Japanese sociology, the term *basho* (space) is frequently linked with the concept of *ibasho*. As Amamiya and Kayano (2008) argue, *ibasho* means 'a home base' to which people belong and where they are given unconditional recognition (See 3.1.3). This concept may be problematic as it does not challenge the hegemonic power to provide recognition and meaning. It cannot liberate us from the painful effort to complete ourselves to the pre-existing value. As I pointed out in chapter three, it brings a political void to our struggle in life.

On the other hand, the space of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement does not work as *ibasho* where individuals belong, or where they are recognised by others as important. Rather, it is a space in which to become a subject-less entity, to encounter other people, to collectively invent actions to struggle more successfully. This space allows a person to make connections without a fixed identity. Instead of a subject who is to be recognised, this space generates a political actor who keeps learning and experimenting. These are ethical actors too, because they open themselves to others and allow those forces of the outside to permeate the self. In doing so, they affirm

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the lives of others, not by recognising their identity but by co-creating a change in the self and in society.

I believe that this desire should be called the desire for 'dignity' rather than for 'recognition'; and by 'dignity' I mean that the 'dissolved self' brings his/her ability to affect into an assemblage, intermingle it with that of others, and co-create a difference in the self and society. For this reason, I agree with John Holloway (2011) that dignity is a meta-narrative in postmodernity. It is not a transcendental concept which guides our lives, but it resides in our lives and encourages us in the political struggle in postmodernity, which is to engage in "millions of experiments" (Holloway, 2010b, p.256).

Summary

The Fukushima nuclear disaster disclosed the insufficiency of rational knowledge to predict the outcome of our (in)action in complex society. This prompted a reconsideration of our knowledge and, in particular, highlighted the importance of ethics. In the conventional notion, ethics is thought of as an obligational law between solid individuals. However, I argued that establishing a coherent obligational law is not sufficient to motivate us to take action for social change, since our minds are easily occupied with the here and now.

The post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters show that such a body, which is living in busy everyday life and tends to be self-enclosed, can still be motivated to political and ethical action. The Fukushima disaster revealed that their lives cannot be completely disconnected from the forces of the outside, which intrudes into their stable lives and destabilises their identities. This

'dissolved' self is ambiguous about what should be done, which is why the protesters took to the streets to encounter other people.

The protesters feel pride and satisfaction when they become nameless entities in the assemblage and create new political practices and a new way of living together. Although their political actions are motivated by their own desire for fulfilled lives, their openness to the outside also makes their action ethical. Hence, I argue that the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement demonstrates a potential form of ethico-politics which is based not on a sense of obligation to the other people but on a desire for creation and change.

The concept of 'dissolved self', implied by the politics of disaster, would discharge us from the question of identity and our effort to complete ourselves into certain models. Instead, it encourages countless encounters with other entities in order to create new potentials. This challenges conventional knowledge which provides certainty in how to control the chaotic world. The knowledge created in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement signifies the ontology of becoming, which is seen in the philosophy of Bergson and Deleuze, who consider reality to be in ever-changing flux. The knowledge-practice of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement does not provide a general answer to the problem, but it shows many ways of responding to the changing situations, which I explained through the concept of self-organisation.

The social movements that have emerged in post-disaster Japanese society imply a new political imaginary, which is without any fixed identity to be

recognised or meta-narratives to be led. It is politics by a 'dissolved self' whose life is affirmed when his/her own ability resonates with that of other people in an assemblage, and when its resonance generates some difference. I argue that our struggles in the postmodern condition are motivated by the desire for such dignified lives.

Chapter 9 Conclusion

9.1 How I started my research

In this thesis, I examined the potential of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement as a new political imaginary in the postmodern political impasse. There have already been several studies on this movement (Gonoi, 2012; Oguma, 2013). In addition, several sociologists have reached the hasty conclusion that the movement has not signified a change in Japanese society (Furuichi, 2011; Kainuma, 2012). However, my research takes a different view from these existing evaluations concerning *what* this post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement is about, or *whether* this movement has changed Japanese society or not. My primary research question was, as I stated in chapter one, *how* we might change society, in an era when people seemed to have given up hope in politics. My premise was that since this post-Fukushima activism emerged in the prevailing atmosphere of political disillusionment in contemporary Japanese society, it has certain implications.

In post-bubble Japanese society, an increasing number of people are facing the precariousness of life. Against the once-held image of Japanese society as wealthy and stable, even cases of people "starving to death" are becoming familiar news stories (Allison, 2013). Japanese society is a "sliding-down society" (Yuasa, 2008); one step away from mainstream stability immediately draws people down to the bottom. The fear of falling down pushes people to cling fiercely to the stability of the dominant norm, causing social problems such as suicide and death from overwork.

The sense of hopelessness and the feeling of having 'no way out' is expressed by the temporary worker Tomohiro Akagi (2007), who claims that his "hope is war" — war being the only imagination of change. His claim unmasked the political impasse in contemporary society, where the hope of change lies not in collective action or revolution but only in the destruction wrought by war. This hopelessness was the starting point of my research, and my objective was to envisage a new 'political' imaginary to illustrate some kind of hope in contemporary Japanese society.

In order to accomplish this ultimate objective, this thesis took three steps. The first step was *to examine how the condition of political hopelessness emerged*. Hope for change among young Japanese people was expressed politically in the 1960s and 1970s, while in contemporary society the hope to go 'outside' of reality is hardly expressed, apart from some violent attempts at creating change by a few individuals hurting themselves or others. Chapters two and three examined the historical process of 'losing political voices' in Japan and analysed how political theories might respond to it.

After the huge catastrophe of the earthquake, tsunami and the nuclear accident in the Fukushima Daiichi plant in March 2011, anti-nuclear movements emerged from such a political impasse. Therefore, I examined this movement as a case-study of how we might become political in postmodernity, which was developed in chapters four, five and six. Based on my interview research in Tokyo between 2012 and 2014, I conducted an *analysis on what motivates the protesters to political commitment, and what kind of identity and ethics they have*.

As the final step, chapters seven and eight were devoted to *the invention of a new political imaginary in contemporary Japan,* from the implication of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements. This was a synthetic attempt at the first analysis of postmodern political impasse and a second analysis of the practices of the post-Fukushima protesters, and I illustrated possible political agency, ethics and ontology, which encourage political actions in postmodernity.

9.2 Findings (Chapters 2 & 3): Social struggles in the postmodern condition

Chapter two examined the process of 'losing political voices' using the concepts of the sociologist Masachi Osawa (2008). Post-war Japanese society used to have a clear model of life and society, which Osawa (2008) calls "the era of the ideal." The democratic system and the material affluence of the United States became a role model. The student movements in the 1960s and 1970s challenged this role model in their protest against the revision of the Japan-US security treaty and the Vietnam War. However, in the complex post-industrial society, the source of oppression became "intangible" and the distinction between the oppressor and the oppressed became unclear (Iida, 2002). The *Zenkyoto* movement in the late 1960s articulated the hegemonic nature within the protesters' identity, claiming that their way of life unwittingly supports the dominant power. In this sense, the movement needed a "new language" (Miyauchi, 2006) to fight against the intangible hegemony; nevertheless, their radical politics that aimed to change society could only be explained by another rigid political project based on Marxism (Kosaka, 2006;

Oguma, 2012). Some student groups became extremely radicalised to exterminate the 'enemy within'.

The student uprising and the search for a new political language in the Japanese sixties movement have much in common with Western society. While these struggles in Western society seemed to remain as the 'counter-culture' and broadened the political spectrum (Stephens, 1998), Japan's booming economy provided for the legitimacy of the dominant system. Due to economic stability, the lives of many Japanese people were safely protected by the fluid and complex society; and they could enjoy consumption without exposing themselves as the labour force of this fluidity and complexity (Iida, 2002; Azuma and Kasai, 2003).

This 'high noon' of the consumer society is what Osawa (2008) called the "era of the fictive." The outside of this prevailing norm was sought by young people who pursued spiritual satisfaction in a materially affluent society. Yet their imaginary has appeared not as a counter-culture movement against hegemony but more like a self-enclosed 'subculture' within the system, where young people reflect their hope for change in the fictional story of nuclear war (Osawa, 2008; Uno, 2011). The sarin attack on the Tokyo metro in 1995, conducted by the religious cult *Aum Shinrikyo,* was thought of as the actualisation of this fictional imaginary of the anti-real, with their apocalyptic narrative and practices for spiritual perfection (Castells, 1996; Iida, 2002).

Osawa (2008) calls the period since 1995 "the era of the impossible", in which the pursuit of 'an outside' itself was discarded. On the one hand, the *Aum*

incident left the lesson to "live an endless everyday life" (Miyadai, 1998) instead of hoping for an 'outside' of it. This lesson still seems to be largely shared in Japanese society. A young sociologist, Furuichi (2011), claims that his generation are 'satisfied' with their self-contained lives.

On the other hand, this self-contained stable life was threatened more than ever in the post-bubble economic recession. Those who slipped down the "sliding society" (Yuasa, 2008) face poverty and alienation while Japanese society still operates under the narrative of the era of economic growth, considering that those who are poor should accept their own 'self-responsibility' (Allison, 2013). Mass murders such as the Akihabara incident occurred out of such a sense of 'no outside'; the perpetrator Kato was unable to accommodate himself to the dominant system, but he had no imagination of an alternative. With many young people feeling what Amamiya (2010) calls '*ikizurasa*' (pain of living), Japanese society needs a new political language to describe hope for change, before it gives way to self-enclosed cynicism or turns to violence against the self or others.

The sense of hopelessness in contemporary Japanese society signifies the failure of the existing political and social theories to provide any hope in the postmodern condition. While liberal political theorists emphasise the universal values of peace, equality and justice, Akagi (2011) claims that most of the promoters of such values are actually busy protecting their own stability of life in a complex society. Although sociologists are paying more attention to the alienation of young people, the proposal to provide 'recognition' lacks a political aspect, rendering young people passive entities to somehow be given

recognition.

Hence, chapter three attempted to construct a framework of 'postmodern' politics which is rarely discussed by Japanese political theorists. In contemporary society, the source of oppression is no longer identified in hegemonic institutions outside the subject; rather, the subject internalises a certain identity, role and way of life through which the power operates. Thus, the political struggle against oppression takes place in everyday life rather than as a battle against the state. It is a 'flight' from a certain enforced identity and role, seeking to change a way of living (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988; Day, 2005; Holloway, 2010a).

However, the question of who might be the agency of such micropolitics of 'flight' is controversial. While situationist theory encourages people to reject enforced identity based on their authentic desire for lived experience (Debord, 1983; Vaneigem, 1983), the capitalist system captures such desires, pours them into commodities and endorses its system. When this dominant system provides values and meanings in our life, the outside of this system becomes unimaginable.

In a post-industrial complex society, almost everyone's life becomes precarious. Hardt and Negri argue that these lives penetrated by the global network-power can form a collective resistance as "the multitude" (2000, 2004) based on this network; however, being in the network does not automatically construct a new collective identity for resistance, as Newman (2007) points out. Our desire for a better life may render us protective. In

order to avoid instability, we may end up accommodating ourselves to the oppressive norm. We become self-enclosed because we are connected and its connection brings instability to our live. We self-subjugate to the existing hegemony because it provides us with stability. As Holloway (2010b) notes, we need to overcome our own complicity.

As well as the problem of agency, the goal of political action has become unclear in a complex society, which makes many people hesitate to join actions for social change. Liberal theorists consider that our human rationality enables us to re-establish shared universal values if we find an appropriate condition (Rawls, 1999; Habermas, 1990). However, more 'post-structuralist' theorists claim that a rational and moralistic subject is almost impossible when we are living with uncertainty and surrounded by a huge amount of information which affects our sense of value (Call, 2002; Newman, 2007).

Hence, the role of emotions is being reconsidered in contemporary political theories (Goodwin *et al.*, 2001). Social movements are considered to channel people's emotions into politics. The embodied experience in mobilisation constructs cognitive demand, expands knowledge and generates motivation for further actions (McDonald, 2006; Chesters and Welsh, 2006). Although there are different views on whether this emotional politics in activism eventually constructs 'unstable universalities' to become a coherent project (Newman, 2007) or creates rhizomatic dissemination of actions (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988; Call, 2002), these theories signify that politics is possible without a rational subject and without any predetermined blueprint of a coming society. A subject who is penetrated by the influence of a complex

network can still politically motivate him/herself with his/her own emotions. This provides an alternative picture to the politics of fixed identities, intentions, purposes and totalising ideologies.

9.3 Findings (Chapters 4, 5 & 6): Identity and ethics in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements

The post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements emerged from political disillusionment in Japanese society. The Fukushima disaster was the actualisation of the imaginary of "war" as Akagi claims, which violently intruded on people's everyday lives. Although there is a negative evaluation that the disaster has not changed Japanese society (Kainuma, 2012; Miyadai, 2014), it has certainly triggered the largest political mobilisation since the 1960s. It is meaningful to examine this movement and explore how politics have become possible in the 'postmodern' condition.

As I argued in chapter four, social movement research has been trying to discover a general model for mobilisation by analysing social movement organisations, their resources, surrounding structures, strategies and frames, etc (McCarthy and Zald, 1977; McAdam *et al*., 1996; Benford and Snow, 2000). While these analyses focus on the already established collective identities, organisations and political interests, my research explored the potential of politics for those who have no access to these resources. My argument was that social movements generate collective identities, political demands and desires through countless encounters in the mobilisation.

Therefore, my research was devoted to articulating the knowledge created "by"

the movement, rather than objectively describing knowledge "about" this movement (Chesters, 2012). The purpose of my fieldwork was to examine how each post-Fukushima protester comes to engage in politics and keeps motivating themselves. As well as interviewing key activists and demonstration organisers, I also paid close attention to the non-ideological participants in the street protests in Tokyo, because their condition reflects the nature of 'postmodernity' very well; those were the people who usually remain 'apolitical' because they do not have any predetermined political identity in the entangled power structures of contemporary society.

Chapter five mostly examined these protesters' motivation for an initial political commitment after the Fukushima disaster. I identified that the Fukushima disaster had evoked strong emotions such as anger, fear and confusion. The disaster shattered their belief that their lives would be stable as long as they clung to the dominant norm. In this sense, I argued that the disaster brought an experience of "deterritorialisation" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988).

The protesters joined the street demonstrations as a response to their emotional turmoil. Although such an emotional reaction is criticised as inconsistent, Goodwin *et al*. (2001) point out that emotions are not always short-lived, especially when they arise from relationships with other people. I articulated that the protesters' sense of regret was such a key emotion. They regret that their previous indifference to politics shielded the nuclear plants from critical attention, thus allowing the huge accident to occur. They also found that the Fukushima nuclear plant was generating energy not for the

Fukushima people but for themselves in Tokyo. The disaster unmasked the precariousness of lives and entangled social relationships in postmodernity, where they are unwittingly threatening the lives of other people as well as themselves. It evoked their sense of responsibility for social commitment.

The post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements provide various types of "vessels" (spaces) where people can express their emotions. The vessel of the *Kanteimae* protest pressures the government by representing the unified will of the people. Thus, the protest remains normative and simple in order that many people might easily join it. On the other hand, there is another type of vessel, seen in the spaces created by *Shiroto no Ran* and NFS. They give emotions the more creative role of making affective connections with other people, reconsidering how to spend their time or money, with whom they want to live, and what they value the most in life.

Despite these different types of vessels, their politics with emotions are changing the manner of political participation and encouraging Japanese activism as a whole, as was seen in the subsequent actions against racism or the government's security policy. Nevertheless, the anti-nuclear movement had little impact on the general elections, which resulted in the restarting of the nuclear reactors. The series of elections since 2012 have revealed the gap between the inside and the outside of the movement. While the post-Fukushima protesters acquired confidence in activism, deepened their sense of responsibility and expanded their political commitment, many Japanese people did not share these experiences, and seem to remain apathetic. The same disaster "deterritorialised" some people and mobilised

them into politics, while other people just seemed to return to their self-enclosed lives. It is natural to ask what makes this difference.

Instead of identifying the general criteria which divide protesters and 'apolitical' people, chapter six reframed the question of *how* the protesters remain open to the outside and keep their commitment to society. I argued that their politics emerged from despair. People used to believe that their lives would be stable as long as they made an effort to live normative lives. However, the Fukushima disaster was the force of an outside which revealed that they cannot completely disconnect themselves from the unstable outside. This somewhat passive acceptance of openness is the beginning of ethics, as Critchley (2007) notes, because it forces the subject to keep responding to incomprehensible others.

In addition, chapter six argued that the disaster brought a sense of ambiguity of the self. The protesters seemed to know that their imagination is limited, and they are forgetful. While these protesters accept their incompleteness with a sense of humour, they still try to act ethically by mobilising their bodies onto the streets in order to encounter others who force themselves to feel and think. The protest space of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement constructs not only a political subject but also an ethical one.

In my interviews, several protesters explained that their political commitment was based on their own desire, rather than a sense of obligation to others. However, this does not mean that their desire is self-contained, and that they are using the movement for their own excitement or to achieve catharsis, as

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several scholars point out (Furuichi, 2011; Kainuma, 2012). The protesters'
self-identification seems to be embedded in an assemblage. They express
their satisfaction and a sense of pride for becoming a 'plus-one' to add to the
numbers involved in mobilisation. In addition, their concept of life itself seems
to be embedded in an assemblage, in which their somatic lives are penetrated
by the force that succeeded from the past and will pass to the future
generation. I argued that their desire seems to be the desire as this
intermingled self, or a dissolved self in an assemblage that lives in an
indiscernible status with the self and others. It signifies that politics motivated
by personal desires could be ethical.

One's body has a limited boundary and that is why people become forgetful
and indifferent to others. I concluded that this 'dissolved' self does not try to
completely eliminate this boundary. What the protesters signify is the agency
which crosses the border when necessary, as Day (2005) notes. In the politics
that emerged from the Fukushima disaster, each 'incomplete' body with
limited imagination is trying to respond to the unexpected force from the
outside. The post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements provide a space for
such bodies to interact, learn from one another, create new desires and make
changes to the self and to society.

9.4 Findings (Chapters 7 & 8): New political imaginary in the postmodern condition

The politics of disaster emerging in the post-Fukushima Japanese society
works by a different logic from conventional political theory, which presumes a
totalising ideology, a shared collective identity, or rational discourses to

describe an alternative plan. The absence of these aspects is usually considered a deficit in politics, whereas it actually signifies the existence of a different logic with a dissolved subject, affective connections and ethics of desire. The knowledge created in this activism has significant implications for a contemporary Japanese society immersed in a sense of hopelessness, because in this activism many protesters are experimenting with how to relate themselves better to other people, how to balance the openness of life with stability, and how to make their somatic lives more meaningful. The final objective of my thesis was to theorise this as a new political imaginary.

Chapter seven firstly compared the politics of the post-Fukushima activism with existing political theories which respond to a complex society. Some liberal theorists criticise the overdependence on rationality in politics and emphasise the importance of emotions for political engagement (Rorty, 1989; Mouffe, 2005). I found that the *Kanteimae* protest adopts a concept similar to Mouffe's (2005) agonistic democracy, which intends to 'pluralise' hegemony and make them compete in the political arena. The *Kanteimae* protest is establishing a counter-hegemony by legitimating and amplifying the participants' expression of anger. I argue that this tendency is also seen in the subsequent actions against racism and the government's security policy. In these actions, emotions and physical experience of activism reinvigorate the universal values such as justice and democracy.

The critics of this type of emotional activism ask how the protesters might prove the legitimacy of their claims. While Mouffe presumes the legitimate process of hegemonic competition by institutionalising antagonistic debate,

the politics on the street does not have this institutionalised rule. This is why their 'majoritarian' tendency is criticised as 'undemocratic' (Suzuki, 2012), because it may ultimately become the unchallenged hegemony outside representative politics and exclude minor voices from politics.

However, I argued that not all the emotional language amplified in the vessels of post-Fukushima activism have this majoritarian nature, as this movement also contains the anarchist trend. As seen in the politics of *Shiroto no Ran* and NFS, they celebrate emotional expression not for creating one unified will but for making new connections and creating different perspectives. I explored this "minoritarian" politics with post-anarchist philosophy (Call, 2002; Day, 2005; Newman, 2007), which claims that particular struggles in their everyday lives resonate with one another and create power to change society. This politics of affect is another 'emotional politics' which should be distinguished from the politics of legitimacy.

The criticism of post-anarchism is that it has the same nature as neo-liberalism, as it prioritises individual desires over the universal value and insists on liberating desires from social entities. However, while neo-liberals still presume that there is a solid self who utilises the logic of the market to fulfil his/her desires, the self for the post-anarchist is more heterogeneous, ambiguous and open to unexpected influence (Connolly, 2013). This tendency was in fact seen in the dissolved, intermingled subjectivity of the post-Fukushima protesters.

My fieldwork suggests that emotional language in activism can both

reinvigorate the liberal universal concept and constitute 'ethical' anarchist practices. The most crucial aspect lies in the fact that these major and minor politics are co-existing with and influencing one another. This becomes possible only because many people actually join both. This signifies that their ontology is different from the conventional one.

Conventional political theories mostly pursue one universal system or model. Although some radical political theorists, such as Mouffe, try to fluidise political processes by introducing emotions, their adherence to the articulation of one coherent universal model ultimately causes them to sacrifice flexibility. On the other hand, many of the post-Fukushima protesters actually sacrifice their own coherence and attend different actions, as they seem to consider politics as a force field of many different attempts resonating one another and bringing about a change in reality.

I described this ontology as "rhizomatic" thought, posited by Deleuze and Guattari (1988), which does not converge into one, but connects randomly and spreads without any central control. This rhizomatic ontology does not postulate a legitimate political system as a universal order; rather, it requires a new political agency whose constituents wander between various types of vessel; some may be majoritarian and others minoritarian. They are flexible enough to choose appropriate vessels in time and condition, and they provide whatever ability is necessary in each vessel.

Chapter eight further explored the potential of this thought to reconsider not only a political theory but also a broader philosophy of life. The Fukushima

disaster revealed that our political concepts are now too narrow to envisage a better life in a complex society. The political theorists seem to be preoccupied with articulating a legitimate system to coordinate already established claims based on a clear identity; however, this cannot explain how alienated subjects who are ambiguous about their political claim can ever take action.

The post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement is 'primitive' politics, in which people respond to the unexpected force coming from outside of their sensible world. This imaginary is probably rather the realm of ethics. Several moral philosophers, such as Jonas (1985) and Dupuy ([2002] 2012), try to extract new principles from the imaginary of disaster, regarding how we should act ethically in a complex society. However, I avoided the construction of any transcendental principles and instead explored ethics as the actual attitude with which to face the particular other.

I focused on the philosophy of Levinas and Deleuze, as they describe such ethics as opposed to establishing moral principles. It seems that what separates Levinasian ethics from that of Deleuze is, again, the notion of the self. While Levinas (1969) explains ethics as the self being a substitute for the other, such distinction between the self and the other itself is unclear from the beginning in Deleuze's philosophy. For Deleuze, all entities are, be they individual or social, a machinic assemblage in which a variety of forces intermingle. These forces, or "hecceities" (Deleuze and Parnet, 2006), are the individualities without signification or recognition although they still have the ability to make a difference to an assemblage. This is close to the ethics of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters, who explain the desire as a

'dissolved' self in an assemblage.

This desire seems to have been underestimated in conventional political and social studies, as they mainly focus on tangible and observable factors to establish invariant models. Such attempt is criticised by philosophers such as Bergson and Deleuze, who consider that the world is constantly changing, and invariant models cannot grasp this dynamism. What they provide is more situational knowledge to respond to the changing situation, which is explained in the concept of 'self-organisation' (Connolly, 2013; De Landa, 2013).

In the self-organising system, each entity organises itself as a response to the surrounding entities. Such entities do not have solid identity as the self, because they are already entangled in a complex network and constantly affected by the variety of force. However they still have their own desire for creation, and they have ability to make a difference to the assemblage they constitute. A new creation emerging from the resonance of the component in the assemblage, and it can neither reduced to the 'essence' of component nor to the predetermined intention as a whole (De Landa, 2013).

The process of knowledge production in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movements is like this self-organising system. The 'deterritorialised' subject responds to the unimaginable force from the outside by expressing their creativity, and seeks a way to live in a radical openness, instead of enclosing him/herself within the small territory or becoming completely nomadic in chaos.

I believe that this movement gives a powerful message to the alienated lives in postmodern Japanese society. Now their lives are devoted to completing themselves into a certain norm in order to gain recognition, meaning or stability. In other words, these are "[fighting] for their servitude as stubbornly as though it were their salvation" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1984, p.38). The practices of the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement do not suggest a general solution to this self-subjugation. Rather, it shows many ways of how to open the self and relate with the other. The openness of anarchism is not acceptable to everyone, but its life influences the way we think. I argued that it is 'affective' knowledge rather than normative knowledge.

What seems to be common to this politics of disaster is their effort to open themselves to an outside, to mingle their force of desire with that of others, and to co-create a new way of responding to the changing problem. It suggests to live in a force field, where our bodies encounter with the various outside forces; we create new forces in this intersection, and this new force goes beyond our somatic bodies to affect other bodies. It signifies a new way to relate with others and to affirm lives, which composes a new political imaginary. Such affirmation of life is probably not acquired by gaining recognition or signification as a solid self. The affirmation of life needs to be described as dignity. It stems from our own desire to create a difference and make our lives significant.

9.5 Implications and contributions

"Hope goes out of our lives, hope goes out of our work, hope goes out of the way we think"— I started my thesis with these words of John Holloway (2002),

because that was exactly how I felt in Japanese society. Just as Akagi claims that his "hope is war" (2007), I found all the existing terms to describe hope, in particular the term 'peace', empty. I found Holloway's words very ethical, because he starts his quest for knowledge by describing a sense of hopelessness. Moreover, he describes it with the term 'we', with no clear identification of who 'we' are (Holloway, 2002).

This sense of 'us' is not usually allowed to be expressed in academia, because it cannot be logically explained. However, I believe that it is the very starting point of any political struggle. I feel hopeless, and when I see the news about a young mass murderer, I somehow connect my frustration to that of the perpetrator, and gain this ambiguous collective identity that 'we' are hopeless. Although people can feel this sense of 'us', it cannot become political collective identity. Few political theorists try to grasp what connects this 'us'. Holloway (2011) explains that it is an emotional scream to say "no" to reality, and our desire for "dignity".

The current 'emotional' turn in political theories (Goodwin *et al*., 2001; Gould, 2004) signifies that political scientists have now come to realise the importance of this intangible internal factor to motivate people to act. However, it is the nature of scientific knowledge to capture things, articulate them as independent variables and establish laws between them (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994; Ansell-Pearson, 1999; May, 2008). Thinking about politics, for many theorists, means thinking about legitimate political processes, although efforts are now being made to reflect fluid emotions to its theory. In sociology, emotions are also the object of analysis to identify certain problems

to be solved. When alienated young people try to express their language-less desire with their bodies, our quest for knowledge is preoccupied with efforts to rationally understand it through categorisation or generalisation, and we try to solve it by establishing a new system.

I am not claiming that such knowledge is useless. It is absolutely important; however, it does not bring 'hope'. Hope is not given by anyone as the ultimate answer. I believe that it must come from within ourselves, and it is an immanent driving force rather than a transcendental solution. The post-Fukushima activism shows that emotions and desires are the energy for creation. In the assemblage, the participants are affected by the desire of other people, receive energy from them, and create new knowledge of how we might live. This seems to be an ethical attitude to the desires of other people. Rather than analysing them and discovering some truth about them, we connect with their desires and create something new together with them. We need this type of knowledge for connection in politics, as well as knowledge for analysis.

The politics of disaster that emerged in post-Fukushima Japanese society is affective politics (Protevi, 2009) rather than politics based on legitimacy. This politics entails affective ethics rather than moral obligation. Hence, what the movement created is affective knowledge rather than knowledge about discovering truth or establishing a model. My research questions, concerning 'how to change society' and 'how people might be political', can never be described as a general model, but only as affective knowledge.

Hence, I have no intention of claiming that post-Fukushima social movements are 'the hope' in contemporary Japanese society. Nevertheless, my research demonstrates that new knowledge is constructed when each 'deterritorialised' subject, who has no idea what to do, tries to respond to the outside force with their own creativity and with countless encounters with the desire of the other people. Then, the encounter with such practices enabled me to co-create a new imaginary of how I might live. In this sense, this thesis is my struggle to face my own hopelessness, encountering unfortunate desires for a dignified life which turned into violence, learning from more creative political attempts by the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear protesters, and responding to all by envisaging a new political imaginary.

What I constructed is the knowledge as machine, as Deleuze (1995) claims, which is to be connected with other entities to generate new meanings. As a contribution to Japanese society, my theoretical exploration offers many examples of how we might better live with our desire for fulfilled lives. As a contribution to academic knowledge in social and political studies, this research provides a new perspective of emotions and desires; they should be seen not only as the object of modelling, but also as a creative force to drive people's perceptions beyond their own intentions, and to invent a new way of living. Such 'affective' knowledge for connection and experimentation needs to be more valued in social and political studies, because a life is always more than the theories of 'what it is' and 'what we should be' might suggest.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: List of interviewees (those who appeared anonymous)

1. Female (30s) Participant in the Kanteimae protest, 3 January 2013.
2. Male (60s) Participant in MCAN's 'Tokyo Big March',11 March 2012.
3. Male (50s) Participant in in the Kanteimae protest (MCAN's 'One million people's large occupation'), 11 November 2012
4. Female (60s) Participant in the Kanteimae protest, 23 November 2012.
5. Female (20s) Participant in MCAN's 'Tokyo Big March', 11 March 2012
6. Female (60s) Participant in the Kanteimae protest, 23 November 2012
7. Male (20s) Participant in the Kanteimae protest, 2 May 2014
8. Female (30s) Staffer of the Kanteimae protest, 28 December 2012
9. Male (40s) Staffer at the NFS meeting, 15 March 2012
10. Female (40s) Participant in the Kanteimae protest (MCAN's 'One million people's large occupation'). 11 November 2012
11. Female (40s) Participant in the Kanteimae protest, 30 November 2012
12. Female (60s) Participant in the Kanteimae protest, 19 December 2014
13 Female (20s) Participant in Nuclear Free United Action, 9 March, 2014)
14. Female (60s) Participant in the Kanteimae protest, 21 February 2014
15. Male (10s) Participant in the Kanteimae protest, 21 December 2012
16. Female (50s) Participant in the Kanteimae protest, 23 November 2012
17, Male (60s) Participant in the Kanteimae protest, 30 November 2012
18. Female (60s) Participant in the Kanteimae protest, 21 December 2012
19. Male (30s) Participant in the Kanteimae protest, 30 November 2012
20. Male (60s) Participant in the Kanteimae protest, 21 December 2012
21. Male (50s) Participant in the Kanteimae protest, 11 January 2013
22. Female (60s) Participant in the Kanteimae protest, 16 November 2012
23. Female (50s), Participant in the Kanteimae protest, 14 December 2012
24. Female (60s) Protesters in Tokyo Big March, 11 March 2012
25. Female (30s) Protesters in Tokyo Big March, 11 March 2012
26. Male (50s) Protesters in front of the governmental office, MEXT, 23 November, 2012

Appendix 2: Fieldwork schedule

First Fieldwork (11 March 2012- 6 May 2012 at Tokyo)

11 Mar 2012	One year from the Tohoku earthquake
11 Mar 2012	Tokyo Big March (Observation, Participants interview)
15 Mar 2012	Interview with Y. Nakamura (NFS) NFS meeting (observation), interview with other members
19 Mar 2012	Interview with Amamiya
25 Mar 2012	Twitter Demo (Participants interview) Interview with Nawa (NFS) Interview with Hirano and Misao Redwolf (MCAN) MCAN meeting (Observation)
30 Mar 2012	Visiting Tento Hiroba (Participants Interview) NFS meeting (Observation) Interview with Ikeda (NFS)
5 Apr 2012	Interview with Izumori (NFS)
6 Apr 2012	The Kanteimae protest (Observation) Interview with Matsumoto (Shiroto no Ran)
8 Apr 2012	NFS meeting (observation)
10 Apr 2012	Interview with Harada (NFS) Visiting Tampoposha (Interview) Visiting Tento Hiroba (Interview)
15 Apr 2012	NFS festival Interview with Yohane Yamamoto (NFS)
20 Apr 2012	NFS meeting (Observation) Interview with Fukushima (NFS)
25 Apr 2012	NFS meeting (Observation)
27 Apr 2012	The Kanteimae protest (Observation) Interview with Misao Redwolf and other staffs MCAN meeting (Observation)
1 May 2012	NFS meeting (Observation)
5 May 2012	Visiting Tento Hiroba (Interview)
5 May 2012	All nuclear reactors stopped due to inspection
6 May 2012	NFS demonstration Interview with M. Nakamura (NFS)

Second Fieldwork (11 November 2012-13 January 2013 at Tokyo)

11 Nov 2012	A million people's occupation (MCAN's protest) (Participant's interview)
16 Nov 2012	Dissolution of the lower house of parliament
16 Nov 2012	The Kanteimae protest (Participatory observation, participants interview) Kamome no Hiroba general assembly
19 Nov 2012	Interview with Y. Nakamura (NFS) NFS meeting (Observation)
20 Nov 2012	MCAN's protest against LDP (Participants interview) Interview with Misao Redwolf (MCAN) Anti-TPP protest (Participants interview)
23 Nov 2012	The Kanteimae protest (Participants interview) Kamome no Hiroba general assembly (Participatory observation) Interview with Matsunaga
25 Nov 2012	Twitter Demo (Participatory observation, participants interview)
30 Nov 2012	Zenkyo Oneday Occupy Demonstration (Participatory observation) The Kanteimae protest (Participants interview) Kamome no Hiroba general assembly (Participatory observation)
3 Dec 2012	NFS meeting (Observation)
4 Dec 2012	Interview with Matsunaga
5 Dec 2012	Anti-poverty protest (Observation, Participant interview)
8 Dec 2012	Yamamoto Taro's election campaign (Observation)
9 Dec 2012	Nuclear Free Nakano meeting (Observation)
14 Dec 2012	The Kanteimae protest (Participant interview)
15 Dec 2012	Sayonara Nuclear energy rally and demonstration (Participatory observation, participants interview) Taro Yamamoto's election campaign Interview with Matsumoto and other participants
16 Dec 2012	General election
17 Dec 2012	Interview with Nawa (NFS)
21 Dec 2012	Kanteimae protest MCAN meeting (Observation)

22 Dec 2012	Participating the event titled 'how to stand against the new government?'
	Todenmae action meeting (Observation)
24 Dec 2012	Nishiogi anti-nuclear demo (Participatory observation)
	Joining a talk event by Noma (MCAN) and Ikeda (NFS)
25 Dec 2012	Protest against Keidanren (Participatory observation, Participant interview)
	Interview with MCAN staffers
	MCAN meeting (Observation)
28 Dec 2012	MCAN meeting (Observation)
	Interview with Noma, Takenaka (MCAN)
	Kanteimae protest (Participatory observation)
3 Jan 2013	Interview with Uematsu
	Interview with a participant in the Kanteimae protest/ Kamomeno hiroba general assembly
6 Jan 2013	Joining MCAN's new year's party
11 Jan 2013	Kanteimae protest (Participatory observation, Participant interview)
	Interview with Hattori and other staffers
13 Jan 2013	Interview with M. Nakamura (NFS)

Follow up Fieldwork (7 Feb 2014- 6 June 2015 at Tokyo)

7 Feb 2014	Tokyo governor electoral campaign (Participant interview)
	Kanteimae protest (Participant interview)
9 Feb 2014	Tokyo governor election
21 Feb 2014	Kanteimae protest (Participant interview)
9 Mar 2014	Demonstration for 'Nuclear Free United Action' by MCAN (Participant interview)
11 Mar 2014	Three year from the Tohoku earthquake
14 Mar 2014	Kanteimae protest (Participant interview)
16 Mar 2014	Anti-racist counter action (Participatory observation)
16 Apr 2014	Interview with Misao Redwolf (MCAN)
2 May 2014	Kanteimae protest (Participant interview)
3 May 2014	Demonstration against the State Secret Protection Law (Participant interview)
17 May 2014	Interview with Matsunaga

5 Jul 2014	Demonstration against the Abe government (Participant interview)
28 Jul 2014	No Nukes Day demonstration (Participatory observation)
14 Dec 2014	Lower house general election
19 Dec 2014	Kanteimae protest (Participant interview)
5 Jun 2015	Interview with Yumi Nakamura (NFS) Protest against the Abe government by SEALDs (Participatory observation)

Appendix 3: Sample of interview questions

(1) General questions for activists / organisers / participants

History, experience
- When was your first time joining the anti-nuclear protest movement?
- How often do you participate in anti-nuclear protests?
- How did you find out about this protest?
- Have you ever joined social movements before this? Which one?
- Are you joining any other social movements?

Identity/Perception
- What was your initial thought when you saw the Fukushima disaster?
- What was your initial motivation in joining the anti-nuclear movements (or other movements)?
- What was your previous image of activism?
- What was the reaction of your family/friends to you joining the protest?
- What kind of people do you think are joining this movement?
- What is the motivation for you to keep protesting?
- Are there any particular slogans in the movement that agree or disagree with?

Change
- What kind of impact do you think this action can make?
- In your opinion, who/what should be changed the most, in order to accomplish a nuclear free society?
- Do you find any change (in you, in society etc) through mobilization? If so, what is that?
- What kind of action do you wish to take in future to realise a nuclear free society?

Elections (before)
- What do you think about the coming election?
- Are you going to vote? Have you already decided which party/candidate to vote?
- Are you joining the electoral campaign too?

Elections (after)
- What do you think about the result of the election?
- To whom/which party did you vote?
- How do you find the present political situation?

(2) Optional questions for activists / organisers

Organisational issues
- Have you found any problem in the movement?
- What do you think about other actions in the post-Fukushima anti-nuclear movement?
- Is there any disagreement in your organisation, or between other organisations? What is that, and how do you manage it?

Strategies, Objectives
- How do you evaluate your previous actions?
- What is your next action?
- How do you describe the goal of your action? What is your ideal society?
- How do you try to mobilise those who still remain apolitical?
- What do you (does your organization) plan for the coming election?

Others
- In your opinion, with whom can we make solidarity?
- How do you balance your personal life with activism?
- What do you think about the global social movements in 2011, such as the Occupy Wall Street movement and the Arab Spring?

Appendix 4: Sample of cover letter

My name is Azumi Tamura and I am an MPhil student at the University of Bradford, researching social movements. As part of my dissertation, I will be looking at the newest form of Japanese street protest movement which are sometimes described as similar to a 'carnival' or 'parade'. As an organiser/participant of this form of movement activity I would be grateful if you could take part in my research through participating in an interview about your involvement in this type of activity.

The interview will be conducted at your convenience from March until the end of April. It should take between one or two hours. This interview is to examine the strategy of these social movements and the motivations and perspectives of participants, and organizers of these movements.

The purpose of this research is to assess the effectiveness and potential growth of this form of collective action. I hope that my analysis could contribute to a discussion in Japanese society about how these movements might actually change our society.

The protection of your identity is taken seriously. Your name or personal details will not be identified in the research unless you agree. Confidentiality will be assured and pseudonyms or other appropriate identifiers will be used for data analysis. Your data will only be used for the purpose of this research project.

Appendix 5: Interview consent form

Research project:
Who needs social change? How can autonomist theories of social change explain social movement mobilization in contemporary Japanese society?

Interview Consent Form

Name:_____

Contact address:_____

_____

1. I have received the information about the research project. ☐

2. I agree to be interviewed for the purpose of the research. ☐

3. Please choose   a) or b):

    a)   I agree that my name will be used for the purpose of the research.

    ☐

    b)   I do not wish my name to be used or cited, or my identity otherwise

    disclosed, in the research. ☐

    My preferred pseudonym:_____

4. I am aware that I can choose either to have the conversation recorded or

    notes made about the discussion between me and the researcher. ☐

5. Please choose   a) or b):

a) I agree that my conversation can be recorded by electronic device.

☐

b) I do not with the interview to be recorded. ☐

6. I agree that a copy of the recording and notes taken during the interview

will be stored in a secure location by the researcher. ☐

7. I am aware that I will be provided with a copy of the recording at my

request. ☐

I declare that I am willing, of my own free will, to participate in this research project.

Signed _____

Date_____