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The War at Home, the War Abroad

(Trans)Formations of Far-Right Activism in Contemporary Japan

MDP in East Asian Studies / Faculty of Social Sciences

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The past decade has been a period of rising nationalism and right-wing populism all over the world. It is evident that the influence of conservative right-wing ideologies is increasing, and with it the radical elements of the movement are empowered to push their ambitions more visibly and actively.

Therefore, interest in the study of the far right, rather than the more prominent 'mainstream-populist right', is not misplaced. On a general level, research on radical movements can inform us what attracts people to controversial ideologies; how marginal organisations gather support, and how they go about realising their goals. On a normative level, it can also instruct us on how to counter such movements.

In mid-2000s, a new strain of far right emerged in Japan and caused upheaval with their xenophobic rhetoric and activism, leading up to the formulation of Japan's first hate speech law in 2016 and showing that the Japanese far right is not a fixed presence. Instead, it is something that evolves according to its changing environment, and thus it would be unlikely that the global developments would leave the Japanese far right unaffected.

This thesis analyses the transformation of the contemporary Japanese far right movement by means of a qualitative case study. It adds to the literature on Japanese far right and broader study of far right in general by calling attention to the strategies and rhetorics contemporary Japanese far right groups utilise, and how those features compare with the past. The two case study organisations, Nadeshiko Action and Nihon Seishinsha, are chosen for their key aspects within the right-wing spectrum, but also on a 'most-different' basis in relation to each other, to allow for a more informative comparison between the cases and better generalisability. Data on the two groups is gathered from online publications and blog posts on their own websites and analysed via inductive content analysis. Social movement theory, with special emphasis on the concepts of advocacy and framing, is used to evaluate the degree of change and identify rhetorical trends in the activism of the case studies. The findings show that the Japanese far right is highly adaptable, and despite their core ideology remaining constant, the lines between the different strains of the movement are blurring as they try to relocate themselves from the marginal to the mainstream, while simultaneously seeking new, effective ways to mobilise support and promote their agendas.

Key words: Japan, Far Right, Nadeshiko Action, Nihon Seishinsha, Social Movements

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1 Introduction

The past decade has been a period of rising nationalism and right-wing populism all over the world. Far-right terrorist incidents, such as the Utøya Island massacre committed by Anders Breivik in Norway in 2011, a car attack against counter-protesters at a white nationalist rally in Charlottesville, US in 2017, or the Christchurch mosque shootings in New Zealand in 2019 have evoked fear and insecurity among people. Far-right movements such as the Tea Party movement in the US or Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) in Germany have also penetrated into mainstream politics, facilitated by the rise of populist right-wing leaders like Donald Trump, Jair Bolsonaro, or Rodrigo Duterte across the globe. It is evident that the influence of conservative right-wing ideologies is increasing, and with it the radical elements of the movement are empowered to push their ambitions more visibly and actively. Therefore, the interest in the study of the far right, rather than the more prominent ‘mainstream-populist right’, is not misplaced. On a general level, research on radical movements can inform us what attracts people to controversial ideologies; how marginal organisations gather support, and how they go about realising their goals. On a normative level, it can also instruct us on how to counter such movements. The significance of the topic is underlined by the abundance of literature written on it, and in today’s world that significance is only growing greater.

In Japan, too, mainstream politics have moved towards a more conservative and nationalist course ever since the second administration of Prime Minister Abe Shinzō (26 December 2012-24 December 2014). Extreme conservative organisations, such as the Nippon Kaigi (‘Japan Conference’), have gained power through their close connections with Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) politicians, and issues that have long been on the right-wing’s table, such as constitutional revision, have gained traction among the political leadership (Yoshifumi, 2017). More radical elements of the spectrum have remained less prominent than in the West: the Japan First Party, founded by Sakurai Makoto in 2016, continues to be the only far right political party in Japan, and achieved little success in the Tokyo gubernatorial and Japanese general elections, where it ran in 2021. Far right organisations make newspaper headlines only sporadically, and even then usually only related to crimes their members are suspected of committing (see e.g. *Asahi Shinbun*, 2022; *Yomiuri Shinbun*, 2022). The statistic in Japanese National Police Agency’s white paper (2021, p. 203) show that the amount of far-right organisations engaging in direct protest activities fluctuates around one and a half thousand, although the amount of members attending the protests only rises up to around

3500 people at most (in protests against China), suggesting a relatively small number of active members and the commonly small size of far right organisations in general. But if the Japanese far right movement holds so little prominence, why do they matter?

In mid-2000s, a new strain of far right called the Action Conservative Movement (*kōdō suru hoshu undō*; hereafter ACM) emerged and caused upheaval with their xenophobic rhetoric and activism, leading up to the formulation of Japan's first hate speech law in 2016 (these developments will be discussed in more detail in chapter 5 of this thesis). It shows that the Japanese far right is not a fixed presence, but instead something that evolves according to its changing environment, and it is unlikely that the global developments would leave the Japanese far right unaffected.

This study will analyse the transformation of the contemporary Japanese far right movement by means of a qualitative case study. It adds to the literature on Japanese far right and broader study of far right in general by calling attention to the strategies and rhetorics contemporary Japanese far right groups utilise, and how those features compare with the past. The two case study organisations, Nadeshiko Action and Nihon Seinensha, are chosen for their key aspects within the right-wing spectrum, but also on a 'most-different' basis in relation to each other, to allow for a more informative comparison between the cases and better generalisability. The findings show that the Japanese far right is highly adaptable, and despite their core ideology remaining constant, the lines between the different strains of the movement are blurring as they try to relocate themselves from the marginal to the mainstream, while simultaneously seeking new, effective ways to mobilise support and promote their agendas.

1.1 Research questions

Why transformation? Why is the topic of this study not merely what contemporary Japanese far right *is*, but rather how it has *changed*? As will be discussed in the next chapter, literature on Japan's right-wing is already quite numerous and broad, and hence can provide a fairly comprehensive picture of its current state. What the approach from the perspective of change and a broader timeframe contributes is a sense of *direction*: the movement has a certain background, but it is also going somewhere, and it is this sense of orientation that is at the core of the question. By understanding where the movement comes from, how it has evolved and what has affected it, it is also possible for us to make predictions about where it might be heading in the future. The word *transformation*, instead of just plain 'change', also implies that the developments persist; that they have modified the essential quality of the far-right

groups under study, at least to an extent. While change is the easiest to assess in a temporal context, this thesis will also attempt to do it horizontally, namely between the two cases in relation to each other. The analysis will not focus only on what is done differently, but also on what is said differently. These qualities will be examined through the following two research questions:

1. To what extent has Japanese far-right activism changed in the 21st century?
2. How does the far right conceptualise their relationship with the state and society?

The first question focuses on the more concrete facet of ‘transformation’. It refers to practical activities of the case groups, as well as to their goals, communications and ways of structuring their organisations. It is based on the assumption that change, indeed, has occurred, but that assumption is one that is reasonable to make, both based on the secondary literature discussed in the coming chapters and the general timeframe of approximately twenty years. However, the question does not presume that the change has completely overturned the totality of the Japanese far right movement, and is implicitly backed by the author’s hypothesis that older forms of far right activism in Japan have been more resistant to new developments, and therefore it is necessary to try to evaluate the degree of change. It does not emphasise only what is different, but also what has remained the same, and thus the analysis of empirical data will constitute a comparison between the start and the end of the chosen timeframe, and between the results found in this study and other literature written on the subject before that. The 21st century, i.e. the timeframe between 2006-2021 (based on the availability of data) is chosen as the reference point due to the emergence of the ACM, which marks a decidedly new form of far right activism in Japan, within that time, as well as the social and economic transition Japan has undergone since the economic bubble burst of the 1990s.

The second question is slightly trickier. Conceptualisations tell us about how one views the world and identifies with it. Unlike the first question, this one does not directly gauge a transformation in right-wing thinking, but it can be compared to earlier findings in other studies. The difficulty lies in investigating conceptualisations – in this study, it will be done mostly through examining the rhetoric and communications of the two cases, but those are always constructed for an audience. It is therefore impossible to determine with the data used in this thesis, if the conceptualisations identified in the analysis are ones the members of the case organisations truly believe in, or if they are just strategic interpretations of the world meant to persuade supporters or target audiences to benefit the organisations’ goals. However,

if we consider these conceptualisations a feature of the far right's *activism*, a way for them to present themselves to their supporter base and the general public, it does not matter if the ones using these notions genuinely believe in them or not. The reason the question focuses on the far right's relationship with the state and society rather than just their general world view or perception of those two things is to narrow the scope of the research, and to highlight any changes in the traditionally marginal, anti-establishment identity of Japanese far-right groups.

Together, these questions draw a more comprehensive picture of the transformation of Japanese far-right activism. They address the practical, systemic and ideological dimensions of change, and do not presume that any developments are total. Both are also qualitative in nature, and thus require those characteristics to be reflected in the theoretical and methodological approaches. Social movement theory aims to explain how social movements develop and the ways they operate as rational actors, and as such yields well to qualitative questions and methods. Discussing the findings through a theoretical framework based on social movement theory creates a more comprehensive and nuanced picture of far-right activism in Japan today. Content analysis, on the other hand, can be used both as a quantitative and qualitative method, but its inductive variety suits qualitative inquiries better. It enables the identification of major trends and features in the case organisations' texts at a sufficiently deep level. The character of the research is largely exploratory – it attempts to map the landscape of Japan's contemporary far right from a temporal perspective, and while doing so, show that there is value in more comprehensive analytical approaches as opposed to purely narrow, issue-focused research.

The thesis is divided into seven chapters: the introduction is followed by a literature review, which discusses the academic discourse on Japanese far right and its major topics from the postwar period to recent years, setting the work in its broader academic context. It also introduces the academic literature written on the two case studies previously. The third chapter presents the theoretical framework used in the study. The first section of the chapter links the work to the concept of a global 'far right' and discusses its suitability in the Japanese context to situate the movement in its global context, and the second part reviews social movement theory and especially two of the concepts associated with the study of social movements: advocacy and framing, which constitute the core of the analytical framework. The fourth chapter explains the methodological approach. The first section will delve into the

analytical subject, the case, whereas the second section discusses the analytical method, content analysis. The final section of the chapter identifies some of the methodological challenges in studying far right movements. The fifth chapter discusses the development of the Japanese right-wing since the end of the Asia-Pacific War, presenting it in its social and political context and introducing the background to the analysis. The sixth chapter begins by describing the data collection and analytical processes alongside some preliminary categorisations of the data, and then presents the results of the analysis, beginning with Nadeshiko Action and followed by Nihon Seinensha. A discussion comparing the findings and linking them to the broader theoretical and academic frameworks wraps up the chapter. The thesis is concluded with a summary of results, some general notions, and identification of the limitations of the study and some further avenues of research.

2 Study of the Japanese right-wing – a literature review

This chapter discusses the academic literature on right-wing activism and its developments in Japan, situating the thesis in its wider academic context. Far right and extremist conservative movements have in general received copious amounts of attention in the academia, a trend which has only deepened due to the increasing populist and nationalist tendencies in politics all around the world. Major themes in literature have included for example far right populist politicians and parties and their support (Bangstad et al., 2019; Froio, 2016; Lazaridis, 2016), online activism (Darmstadt, Prinz and Saal, 2018; Hermansson et al., 2020; Simpsons, 2015), mainstreaming of far-right rhetoric and symbols (Karl, 2018; Miller-Idriss, 2018; Miller-Idriss, 2020) and the transnationalisation of rightist movements (Macklin, 2013; Doerr, 2017). Far right civil associations (as opposed to political parties) have sometimes been examined as representatives of a so-called ‘uncivil society’, to both highlight the civilian aspect of their membership and supporters as well as draw parallels with the strategies and rhetoric of the traditional, progressive civil society (Ruzza, 2009; Umland, 2020; Gøtzsche-Astrup, 2019; Youngs, 2018). Predominantly, the studies have focused on right-wing parties and movements in Europe and the US, but in the recent years, areas outside the Western cultural sphere, such as Brazil and India, have also received their share of scholarship (see e.g. Youngs, 2018; Feffer, 2021; Jeraj, 2013), making it a truly global topic of interest. The departure from the previously extremely strong eurocentric approach (to be discussed in more detail in the next chapter) has drawn a more nuanced picture of different formations of right-wing activism and its local variations, embedded in their social and cultural contexts.

Right-wing in Japan has gathered interest from scholars mainly since the end of the Second World War. Morris (1960), for instance, discusses post-war evolution of the Japanese far right extensively, tracing the history of the contemporary far right groups to their pre-war intellectual roots. However, until the 1990s, academic literature on Japan’s right was largely eclipsed by research on the Japanese left, including both the student and popular movements of the 1960s and 70s as well as its subsequent decline (see e.g. Fuse, 1969; DeWitt Smith, 1970; McCormack, 1971; Asada, 2000; Kersten, 2009). It was not until the rise of the so-called ‘history debates’ and the conservative backlash against the ‘apologist’ line in Japanese politics, characterized for example by the 1993 Kōno statement on comfort women acknowledging the role of the Japanese military in coercing and forcing the women into sexual slavery (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 1993), or the 1995 Murayama apology

on Japanese aggression in Asia during the war (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 1995), that scholars began to take broader interest in popular right-wing activism in Japan (for some literature from before the 1990s, see e.g. Dixon, 1972, 1975; Takagi, 1989). Some works have aimed to draw an overarching picture of the contemporary movement (see e.g. Smith, 2018; Kumpis, 2020), but most have focused on more narrow areas. The rest of this chapter will present an overview of the prevalent academic discourses on Japanese right-wing since the 1990s in a semi-chronological order and show that a social movement-based approach can add to the existing literature by highlighting the structural, strategic and contextual features shaping the formations of popular right-wing activism in Japan today.

The first major academic discourse regarding Japan's right-wing emerged around historical revisionism, mainly revolving around the two topics of revisionist history textbook controversies and the issue of the so-called 'comfort women'. It has sought to explain the roots and psychology behind the movement, their tactics of engagement, and their domestic and international political impact. The history textbook issue surfaced along the conception of the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan (LDP) in the 1950s and escalated in the two 1980s textbook controversies (see Nozaki, 2005), but began to receive academic attention mostly in the late 1990s with the establishment of the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform (*Atarashii Rekishi Kyōkasho wo Tsukurukai*; hereafter *Tsukurukai*) and their openly nationalist publication *The New History Textbook*. Simultaneously, the issue of comfort women emerged in large scale when former comfort women in South Korea began publicly conveying their stories and Yoshimi Yoshiaki's (2000) research proved the Japanese military's involvement in the comfort women system, further fanning the flames of a conservative backlash. The early works (in English) have looked at conservative historical revisionism for example through the lens of narrative building and historical truthfulness (Morris-Suzuki, 2001), state power and regulations (Nozaki, 2005), and the relationship between historical memory and politics (Saaler, 2006). Common to all these texts is the concern over the influence of revisionist, neonationalist views in the Japanese society, although especially Saaler contests the degree of such influence and the attention given to certain ultranationalist key actors, such as the former Tokyo governor Ishihara Shintarō or the manga author Kobayashi Yoshinori. Since its conception, historical revisionism has remained a staple in literature on the Japanese right-wing, and newer research has been able to conduct more longitudinal inquiries into the history debates, adding long-term examinations of the

impact of Japan's domestic and international political contexts on the issue (see e.g. Fukuoka, 2018; Yoshifumi, 2018; Kim & Sohn, 2017) to the body of literature.

Since the early 2000s, broad attention has also been given to the ACM, which marks a new, xenophobic strain of the right-wing movement. Smith (2018), in his division of the Japanese right-wing spectrum into three distinct strains: the 'Old Right' rooted in the prewar nationalist groups, the 'New Right', which emerged largely from the ritual suicide of Mishima Yukio (together the 'establishment conservatives'), and the ACM, shows how the ACM departs from the previous strains due to its strategies and focus against Japan's ethnic minorities (especially Chinese and Korean) rather than anti-communism or romanticization of the emperor-centric prewar state. Rooted in the history debates of the earlier decade and the *netto uyoku* ('online right-wing') (Gill, 2018), the ACM became known especially for their online presence, popular protests against ethnic minorities in Japan and blatant hate speech, which led to the adoption of Japan's first Hate Speech Act in 2016. The above issues have often also been the topics of academic interest: Yamaguchi (2013) examines ACM usage of online platforms to spread their message, arguing that they have been relatively more successful in doing so than their progressive counterparts. Kitayama (2018) and Shipper (2018) discuss the general rise of xenophobic activism and hate speech in Japan since the 2010s from educational and comparative perspectives.

Much research on xenophobic activism in Japan involves one group in particular: Zainichi Tokken wo Yurusanai Shimin no Kai ('Association of Citizens against the Special Privileges of Resident Koreans'), or Zaitokukai, which could be considered the most influential ACM organisation of the late 2000s and early 2010s. They were responsible for many of the popular protests organised against ethnic minorities and provoked various racist incidents, and thus have often been taken up as a representative of the new forms of right-wing political extremism (see e.g. Shibuichi, 2019; Schreiber & Wetherall, 2017; Park, 2017). ACM's connections to the political establishment have been examined in Yamaguchi's more recent work on the comfort women issue, which shows that in addition to popular protest, the ACM also attempts to influence mainstream politics through personal and organizational connections to conservative politicians and decision-makers (2018).

In line with Western literature on the far right, the discourse on Japanese right-wing has also discussed the rise of (neo-)nationalistic and populist currents in Japanese politics in the 2000s. This nationalist turn has often been studied in its global context, drawing parallels and

highlighting differences between the development of Western populism vis-à-vis Japan. The discourse shows that radical right politicians in Japan are similar to their European and US counterparts due to their ethno-centric and exclusionist views, but that nationalist sentiments in East Asia are more closely connected with the region's historical background rather than an influx of immigrants as in the West (Postel-Vinay, 2017; Higuchi & Matsutani, 2016). Literature on individual radical right-wing politicians or political groups from the 1970s (Babb, 2012) to more recent times (Togo, 2010; Horiuchi, 2014) demonstrates how the populist ideological current has benefited the newer 'assertive conservatives' to gain greater political success and influence (especially within LDP) than the pre-2000s Old and New Right factions. However, due to the overall relative lack of success of extreme right-wingers (as compared to more moderate views) in Japan's mainstream politics, this literature is not nearly as extensive as the discourse on ACM's popular, xenophobic activism.

Some attempts have also been made to define the characteristics of far-right supporters via sociological and anthropological inquiries. Along with the more general works aiming to construct a profile for the common far right supporter (see e.g. Jou & Endo, 2016, pp. 105-127; Higuchi & Matsutani, 2016; Yoshida, 2020), it is notable how many researchers of the contemporary Japanese right-wing address the increasing tendency of right-wing activists and supporters to identify themselves as members of a 'citizens' movement' (Yamaguchi, 2018; Asahina, 2019, p. 125; Kitayama, 2018, pp. 254-255), diverging from the more traditional self-identification of the Old and New Right groups as 'marginalised movements' (Smith, 2018).

Other approaches on Japanese right-wing activism have included the study of the so-called *netto uyoku* and its connections to Western movements, and conservative women's activism in Japan. The *netto uyoku* refers to online forums and subcultures promoting unrestrained exclusionist and authoritarian ideals, and it is strongly connected to the organisation and creation of the ACM groups, as well as the global phenomenon of online alt right. Hermansson et al. (2020, pp. 207-217) give a good account of the roots of the *netto uyoku*, its connections to the ACM and how Japanese online platforms such as the 2channel forum directly inspired the formation of the Western alternative right, whereas Hall (2021) offers a more comprehensive view of the use of online platforms by Japanese nationalist activists. Conservative women's activism in Japan has received increased attention in the 2010s through the work of scholars such as Osawa (2015) and Kim-Wachutka (2019). They highlight especially the perceived contradiction between the traditional woman's role in

Japanese culture as homemakers that many conservative women support, and their own political activism, showing how these women often justify their political participation despite the established gender roles through the idea of ‘protecting their children’ by safeguarding the quintessential national quality and traditions of Japan and by contesting the ‘propaganda’ set out by ‘anti-Japan’ actors, such as China or South Korea.

As shown above, most of the research on Japan’s right-wing have focused on topical issues, rather than the movement in general. Some of the earlier works have engaged with the two case studies utilised in this thesis, but neither has been extensively discussed before. Nihon Seinensha has often been mentioned in connection to the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands dispute due to their role in building the controversial lighthouses on the islands (see e.g. Deans, 2000, pp. 124-126; Chung, 2004, pp. 26-60; Nakano, 2016, pp. 173-174), but the group’s other activities or supporter base have not been examined in detail. As the related literature has always been tied to the territorial disputes, Nihon Seinensha’s activities since the late 1990s have gone virtually unrecorded in the academia.

Nadeshiko Action, on the other hand, has been acknowledged in many of the articles on ACM activists and conservative women’s activism, but has rarely been the main focus of study. More general notes of the network often mention only their participation in the anti-comfort women and revisionist movements (see e.g. Schreiber & Wetherall, 2017, p. 198; Horiuchi, 2014, p. 30; McCarthy, 2018, p. 374, for Japanese-language literature see Suzuki, 2017, p. 30; Ueda, 2021, p. 208; Muta *et al.*, 2018, p. 5). Kim-Wachutka (2019) elaborates on this by providing a more detailed description of Nadeshiko Action’s ideals and strategies (pp. 5-6, 13-14), although her analysis, too, centers around two other ‘patriotic women’s groups’, Soyokaze and Hanadokei. Unquestionably the most exhaustive analysis of Nadeshiko Action has been conducted by Tomomi Yamaguchi (2018; 2020), who describes their involvement in the comfort women issue and especially the network’s founder Yamamoto Yumiko’s personal history and political lobbying. However, on both case study organisations, all the works address how these two groups operate in relation to certain subjects – the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands dispute or the comfort women issue – and thus fail to sufficiently consider their overall functions and tactics of engagement, when doing so could provide a better perspective to how they appeal to their supporter bases and interact with the surrounding society.

This thesis will complement the existing literature by delving deeper in the ‘social movement’ aspect and strategies of the contemporary Japanese right-wing, as well as offering a

comparative perspective between the old and new strains of the movement. Rather than focusing on just one select issue, it aims to paint a picture of the overall operation of the two case organisations, contributing to the existing body of knowledge by offering a more nuanced perspective to the state of the Japanese right-wing today. The analysis on Nadeshiko Action also offers new insights to the literature on the ACM by drawing attention to the transnational dimension of the movement and new ways of structuring their activism. Japanese far right, preoccupied as it is with historical contention and Japan's imperial past, provides a valuable vantage point to non-Western right-wing activism, and thus the study also contributes to the wider literature on far right by showing how the mainstreaming and transnationalisation of far-right activism are global trends, despite the main focus of the activism remaining quite different from the organisations' Western counterparts.

3 Theoretical framework – a social movement approach to anti-social action

This chapter discusses the theoretical framework utilised in the thesis. The first section examines the global ‘far right’ as a theoretical concept and its suitability in the Japanese context. The second section looks at the field of social movement theory, and especially two concepts within it: advocacy and frames. In this study, advocacy is utilised to identify strategies of engagement, and framing to identify narratives used by the groups to depict themselves and the society around them, thus helping to answer the set research questions.

3.1 The ‘far-right’ as a theoretical concept

Study of the far right gained momentum in the 1970s, when debates about the term’s definition surfaced (Castelli Gattinara, 2020, p. 4). These debates were (and are) based on the sometimes very different ideologies, organizational structures and strategies of mobilisation of the various movements (Froio, 2016, p. 88; Lazaridis and Tsagkroni, 2016, pp. 242-243). Today, a broad academic consensus outlines the far right as a sphere of thought that considers humans as naturally unequal and places them in hierarchies of superiority and inferiority, yielding to ideas of authoritarian societies and exclusionist nationalism (Fielitz and Laloire, 2018, pp. 17-18; Castelli Gattinara, 2020, p. 4). This hierarchical construct, often built around the nation-state, but also the division of race, gender or other distinguishing features, is then seen as being threatened by some other force, leading to narratives of imperilment and (possibly violent) action against the ‘threat’ in the name of ‘self-defence’ (Marcks and Pawelz, 2020). These ‘threats’ may constitute of an outside entity, such as another nation, but commonly also of groups of people from a lower ladder of the far-right hierarchy, such as ethnic or sexual minorities. Dietrich’s (2014) book examines conservative movements as guarding ‘privilege’, i.e. stopping different communities of people from dismantling or changing a system that favours the conservative group members. The same applies to the far right: as members of the ‘superior’ group, they guard their own established hierarchy and exclude those who they deem do not belong.

‘Far right’ is used as an overarching term for more specific categories, such as ‘extreme right’, ‘radical right’ and ‘populist right’. The ‘extreme right’ refers to anti-democratic organisations that aim to create a new, authoritarian social order, whereas the ‘radical right’ opposes only some facets of liberal democracy, such as pluralism and representative

institutions (Castelli Gattinara, 2020, pp. 4-5; Fielitz and Laloire, 2016, p. 18). The ‘populist right’ is a newer term and is commonly associated with the activism of populist far right-wing politicians and parties; however, the distinction between ‘populist right’ and the previous two is quite blurred due to the populist tactics used by contemporary extremist and radical right organisations, and as such it is often grouped together with one of them (*ibid.*; Froio, 2016, p. 88). These definitions are, nevertheless, entrenched in Western conceptualisations of far-right activism, as Castelli Gattinara (2020, pp. 8-10) notes. He also criticizes the research on contemporary far right for being limited in its focus on electoralism and party politics in favour of studying grassroots movements and informal collective action (*ibid.*), which will be the focus of this thesis.

Due to its eurocentrism, the concept can be difficult to directly apply to non-Western movements. In the case of Japan, the common denominators between the different strains of the far-right movement are less xenophobia or anti-immigration policies (as in for example Europe), and more the glorification of Japan’s imperial past and the contemporary issues emerging from it, as discussed in the previous chapter. An argument could therefore be made that ‘far right’ is not the correct term to denote the contemporary Japanese movement, but they should rather be called ‘(neo-)conservatives’, as the groups nowadays often prefer to call themselves. However, as the previous chapter and chapter 5 of this thesis on the background of Japanese far-right activism show, these movements fit the general definition of far right presented above: Their ideologies are based on wartime ideas of Japanese supremacy and maintain conceptions of authoritarian order (the New Right) and nationalist exclusion (the ACM). Until the 2010s, the right-wing organisations also commonly referred to themselves as ‘far right’ (*uyoku*), and it has not been until recently that the groups have tried to distance themselves from the term. Thus, despite its insensitivity to local variations, there is merit in using the concept of far right to denote the Japanese movements, as it allows the research to be set in its broader global context and adds to the conceptualisation of far-right movements outside Western societies.

3.2 Social movement theory

Social movement theory is a collection of theories, which focus on the study of collective action and contentious politics, for example protest movements or civil society networks. Like the study of far right, much of the scholarship on social movements has focused on North America and Europe, but since the 1990s it has been used to study also other parts of the

world (see e.g. Engels and Müller, 2019; Clark, 2003; Tsutsui, 2006). As Futrell, Simi and Tan (2019, p. 618) note, the study of social movements has often focused on (Western) progressive movements. Nevertheless, following Diani's (1992) definition of the concept as 'networks of informal interaction between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organizations, engaged in a political and/or cultural conflict, on the basis of a shared collective identity' (as quoted in Hutter, Kriesi and Lorenzini, 2019, p. 323), their goals or perceived civility are not what defines a social movement. As grassroots movements formed outside established institutions and aiming to challenge existing practices, structures and authorities, right-wing movements fall just as well under the scope of social movement research (Futrell, Simi and Tan, 2018, pp. 618-620; Johnston, 2019, p. 638). Applying social movement theory concepts to the study of far right allows the analysis to encompass both the opportunities for activism as well as the structural restrictions of the surrounding society.

Although social movement theory covers a wide variety of different topics and approaches, three or four concepts are often identified as basic to it: resource mobilisation, political opportunity structures, framing, and sometimes collective identity, which have aimed to explain the logical rationale of why social movements form and act the way they do, instead of treating them as irrational and emotionally driven (Nulman and Schlembach, 2018, pp. 379-382; Engels and Müller, 2019, pp. 75-78). Resource mobilisation focuses on the necessity of social movements to gain material, organizational and social resources to enable collective action, whereas the political opportunity structure approach examines the socio-political context and how said context shapes and constrains the mobilisation and strategies of social movements (*ibid.*). Framing, further discussed below, explores how social movements actively identify and shape how certain issues are viewed, and use that for mobilising support. Finally, the collective identity approach emphasises the shared identity and internal process negotiation of the members of a social movement (Engels and Müller, 2019, p. 77). In order to answer the research questions set in this study, two concepts from within social movement theory have been chosen as particularly suitable: advocacy and framing.

3.2.1 Advocacy

Advocacy, while a contested concept with no one comprehensive definition, is commonly understood as the efforts undertaken by a certain group of people trying to promote the interests and ideas of their constituent public, to mobilise support, or to prevent the spread of ideas harmful to their cause (Desantis and Mulé, 2017, pp. 5-10; Hindman, 2019, pp. 2-4). It

is closely connected to political opportunity structures, as the strategies and targets of advocacy are largely defined by the overall possibilities for political engagement in a given context. Non-profit advocacy organisations engaged in policy advocacy in the fields of for instance medicine or environmental issues are broadly discussed in academic literature (see e.g. Andrews and Edwards, 2004; Child and Grønbjerg, 2007; Leroux and Goerdel, 2009), but advocacy can also be understood purely as activities undertaken to promote the interests of and gather support for social movements other than organisations primarily focused on political lobbying. Some strains of literature have also directed attention to transnational advocacy networks and coalitions forming at grassroots level (Keck and Sikkink, 1999; Flora *et al.*, 2006; Martin, 2002). As with social movement theory, the concept of advocacy is commonly used to study progressive or liberal actors, especially the non-profit sector and civil society organisations, but I argue that far right organisations are inherently political and attempt to promote a certain kind of agenda and narrative to influence policy and the views of the wider society – i.e., engage in advocacy, and therefore connecting the two concepts is feasible.

The debates on the definition of advocacy often concern the question of what activities advocacy includes, or in other words, should one adopt a narrow perspective of only direct policy influence, or a broader one incorporating also organisational building or grassroots mobilisation (Mukundi Wachira and Karjala, 2014, p. 105). The narrow perspective has a tighter focus and therefore gives more comprehensive and clear criteria of what exactly constitutes advocacy, but it has limitation in accounting for all the different strategies that social movements use to influence policymaking. Thus, this study will adopt the broad definition of advocacy to account for all possible tactics and forms of activism. Advocacy can also be divided into four main categories based on the target audience. Two of these were already touched upon above: transnational advocacy, which attempts to influence policy through transnational networks and institutions, and political advocacy, which refers to directly lobbying political actors. These are accompanied by media advocacy, which denotes the strategic use of mass media to achieve social change (Wallack, 1994, p. 421; McKeever, 2012, pp. 215-216), and social advocacy, which aims to influence and mobilise the general public (Jenkins, 2003, p. 308; Gardner and Brindis, 2017, pp. 48-49). These four categories will be utilised in this thesis as a means to analyse any possible change in the intended audiences and targets of far-right activism.

3.2.2 Framing

The second concept within social movement theory used in the thesis, framing, is useful in identifying narratives and attempts to influence public imagination. Framing has grown to cover a wide base of literature across disciplines, and definitions of the term often depend on the chosen approach (Benford and Snow, 2000, p. 611), but the concept is widely criticized for being ambiguous in its definition and what constitute frames, as well as for overlapping with other theoretical concepts and conceptual models, such as agenda-setting, schemas and scripts (Chesters and Welsh, 2004, pp. 314-315; Cacciatore, Scheufele and Iyengar, 2016, pp. 7-9). In very general terms, framing could be understood as attributing certain meanings and values to a specific issue or act (Chong and Druckman, 2007, pp. 104-106).

In the field of social movement studies, framing has traditionally been discussed in regard to so-called ‘collective action frames’, in which social movements are considered active agents in producing and maintaining interpretations for locating, perceiving, identifying and labelling problems and solutions, often shared within the collective and utilised for mobilisation of support (Benford and Snow, 2000, pp. 613-618; Nulman and Schlembach, 2018, p. 381). A basic classification by Benford and Snow (2000, pp. 615-618) divides these frames to ‘diagnostic’, ‘prognostic’ and ‘motivational’ framing, i.e., frames designed to identify the problem, propose a solution, and offer a purpose to engage in collective action respectively. However, as Chesters and Welsh (2004, pp. 315-316) point out, these shared ‘master frames’ aligned to the prevailing political opportunity structures are no longer such a core unit of analysis due to the increasingly globalised and network-oriented formation of social movements, and instead more attention should be given to frame resonance and alignment within the given movements. It should also be noted that as the frames produced by a social movement are designed to *influence* members, potential supporters and the movement’s opposition, they cannot be uncritically taken as representatives of the members’ actual beliefs or ideology, and that they are largely influenced by the institutional and/or structural context (Nulman and Schlembach, 2018, pp. 381-382).

Framing has been widely used in the study of far right, for example examining how far right populist parties have created successful frames to attract the electorate and gain legitimacy, and in the normalisation of extreme far right rhetoric and ideas (Marcks, 2016, pp. 66-67; Castelli Gattinara, 2020, p. 12). In this thesis, framing allows the identification of ways in which the right-wing organisations attempt to depict themselves and the society they operate

in. The study will examine what kind of frames the two case studies, Nadeshiko Action and Nihon Seinensha, evoke about Japan and their place in it, and whether those frames change over time, thus answering the second research question and shedding light on the broader transformation of the far right in Japan. It will also allow us to elucidate the rhetorical strategies in which the case study groups attempt to influence public opinion, although evaluating the so-called ‘framing effect’, i.e. the extent of influence of certain frames (Chong and Druckman, 2007, pp. 109-110), is outside the scope of the thesis. As Chesters and Welsh explain (2004, p. 316), while analysing highly value-based frames, as for example in the case of political views, it is important to acknowledge the interaction between the frames produced by the subject of the study and the frames that the researcher in turn constructs from those frames. Thus, special attention will be paid to keep the analysis as objective as possible, although some influence of my own world view will no doubt remain.

4 Methodology

This chapter will explain the methodological approach of this study in reference to the theoretical framework introduced in chapter 3 of the thesis. The chapter is divided into three parts: the first section discusses case study as a methodology, the second the analytical approach of inductive content analysis, and the third presents a short overview of the methodological challenges when studying right-wing movements.

As explained in the earlier chapters, the Japanese far right has been the topic of various intellectual inquiries. Often the research has taken a qualitative approach in order to take into account the multiplicity of the different strains of the movement and allow the in-depth examination of the motivations, ideologies or formations of far-right groups (see e.g. Smith, 2018; Suzuki, 2019; and Yamaguchi, 2018). The research questions set in the first chapter also require careful attention to both the forms of activism and narratives utilised by the contemporary groups, embedded in their surrounding context, and therefore a qualitative approach is suitable for answering them. The use of a qualitative case study, despite imposing some limitations on the generalisability of the results, will allow for a more in-depth examination of the far right's tactics and narratives, and will be easier to realise due to the relative inaccessibility and diversity of the target constituent.

Due to the space and time constraints of the research, two contrasting cases are chosen to highlight the commonalities and differences prevalent in the contemporary far-right movement in Japan instead of a comprehensive study of the movement as a whole. In addition, because of the restrictions on travel imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic, which continued for most of the time of the current research, the primary data is collected entirely from online and textual sources available from Finland, including for example activity reports, publications and blogs of the target groups, which will then be subjected to a qualitative content analysis to identify broader themes and trends. As the generalisability of qualitative case studies is limited, the primary data analysis will be supplemented by secondary sources on both contemporary Japanese far-right organisations and trends in far-right activism globally in order to understand the findings in the wider context of growing conservative and populist movements all over the world.

4.1 Analytical subject – the case

Case studies have become a staple in the toolkit of social and political researchers. George and Bennett (2005) discuss how case studies, although often criticized for their lack of rigorousness or generalisability to broader phenomena, are especially strong in ‘achieving high levels of conceptual validity; their strong procedures for fostering new hypotheses; their value as a useful means to closely examine the hypothesized role of causal mechanisms in the context of individual cases; and their capacity for addressing causal complexity’ (p. 19). Thomas and Myers (2015, pp. 5-7) refer to case studies rather as defining the ‘subject’ of the study instead of calling it a ‘method’ in itself, or in other words choosing the ‘field’ for an in-depth study, embedded in its surrounding context. The subject is, then, the lense through which the ‘object’, i.e. the theoretical framework or set research questions, are examined with a set analytical method (*ibid.*). The far-right organisations chosen for this study, thus, reflect how the wider phenomenon of far-right activism manifests in contemporary Japan in interaction with the surrounding society.

The problem of rigorousness and generalisability can be alleviated to an extent by choosing multiple cases, which are subjected to the same questions and analytical method. A cross-case analysis allows the researcher to find commonalities and draw comparisons between the cases, helping to avoid what George and Bennett (2005, p. 68) call the failure to ‘accumulate knowledge’, while still providing the insightfulness of a qualitative analysis. Although a multiple case study would likely provide deeper insight into the forms of Japanese far right activism, due to the limited scope of this thesis, only two cases are chosen for analysis. There are various grounds on which multiple cases may be chosen: for example, Yin (2009, pp. 54-55) argues that the cases should be chosen on the basis of ‘literal replication’ or ‘theoretical replication’, in which the first predicts similar results and the second differing results due to anticipatable reasons. Thomas (2011), on the other hand, stresses that the cases should be selected based on the ‘dynamic of the relation between the subject and the object’ (p. 514), i.e. the cases and how they exemplify the wider phenomenon.

This study will utilize Thomas’s approach to multiple case selection, in that both the cases will represent what he terms ‘key cases’ (*ibid.*), being of inherent interest to the phenomenon, but having a different position and history in the wider far right spectrum. Nadeshiko Action functions as a ‘key case’, because it is a *women’s ACM network*, and thus a relatively uncommon specimen within the Japanese far right movement, and not much previous work

has been conducted on it, as shown in the literature review. Nihon Seishinsha, on the other hand, fulfills the criteria of a 'key case' by being one of the biggest, if not the largest, contemporary Japanese far right organisation with a long history, which allows the study to track changes over a long period of time. In contrast to Nadeshiko Action, Nihon Seishinsha will give a perspective of gradual change and the ways in which older groups have adapted to the contemporary environment. Together the two cases will be able to provide a more comprehensive picture of the transformation of the Japanese far right. Both cases have kept detailed records of their activities and publications online for the past decade, which makes data readily accessible, and as the topic of the study is the far right's public activism, the groups' own publicly available data will provide a solid base for analysis.

4.2 Analytical method – inductive content analysis

After the data from the cases' online resources was gathered, it was subjected to qualitative content analysis. Often used in for example health studies and communication research, content analysis is a tool to systematically analyse textual data with consideration to its contents and context, and can be used as both a quantitative or qualitative method (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005; Weber, 1990; Lacy *et al.*, 2015). Qualitative content analysis can be roughly divided into two possible approaches: 'deductive content analysis', where a pre-prepared coding frame is used to test select theories or models, and 'inductive content analysis', in which the researcher carefully engages with textual data to find and identify broader patterns and themes, enabling theory building and descriptive research (Graneheim, Lindgren and Lundman, 2017, pp. 30-31; Elo and Kyngäs, 2008, pp. 109-112). As the aims of my research are to identify changes and new forms of activism, the inductive approach will provide a systematic basis from which to code the data, create categories and ultimately be able to identify any recurrent themes, which can then be compared with secondary literature and between the two cases. The greatest issues of qualitative content analysis lie in the rigorousness of the coding process and the standard of reporting (Lacy *et al.*, 2015; Graneheim, Lindgren and Lundman, 2017). Due to the character of inductive content analysis, the coding schemes or reproductivity cannot be tested beforehand, as it is impossible to know what sort of categories emerge during the actual coding process, but to ensure the reliability of the results, a detailed account of the data collection and coding processes will be provided before the presentation of results in chapter 6.

As the study is based on online documentary sources, some remarks must be made about conducting documentary research. The quality of documentary sources can be evaluated based on four criteria: authenticity, credibility, representativeness, and meaning (Mogalakwe, 2009, pp. 52-55; Grant, 2018, pp. 17-18). According to Grant (2018), authenticity refers to whether the text is original, if the full text is available and if it is possible to identify the author; credibility evaluates whether the author relates events truthfully or tries to distort them; representativeness concerns whether the chosen documents are representative of all the documents from the same group; and meaning refers to the ability of the researcher to interpret the text in its original language and context (p. 17). The sources used in this thesis should be considered authentic, because they have all been collected from the original publishing platform, although it should be noted that in many cases (especially with the data on Nadeshiko Action), it is impossible to identify the author when they have not been explicitly reported in the text. The textual data should be considered biased and analysed as such, for example when identifying possible frames and their intended purposes. The documents gathered also cannot be considered representative of the whole Japanese far right spectrum, but due to the amount of individual sources published over a long period of time, are representative of the case groups' own activism and aims. Finally, I am not a native speaker of Japanese, but am nevertheless fluent in the language, and have focused almost exclusively on Japan in my university studies, and thus believe in my ability to accurately interpret the sources in their socio-political context.

When analysing documentary sources, special consideration should be given to understanding the author's intentions and the readership of the given text (Macculloch, 2004, p. 5). I have taken this into account in my own analysis by identifying the intended target audience and general purpose of each blog post (explained in more detail in the section on data collection and analysis), which defines how the text is then interpreted. Ethical considerations on collecting data from an online environment, for example regarding anonymity and informed consent (see e.g. Woodfield, 2017; Gaiser and Schreiner, 2009) were reviewed, but as the data was gathered from the target groups' open blogs and websites, which are comparable to for instance published magazines or flyers, they should be considered publicly available materials, and the only real people or organisations identified in the analysis are ones who were explicitly identified in the original source texts, ensuring that no breach of privacy is committed.

4.3 Methodological challenges in studying far right movements

Qualitative inquiries into far-right movements can provide us meaningful data as to why and how such movements gain popularity and operate, and consequently reveal ways to react to them. However, Toscano (2019, pp. 5-7) identifies two ethical and methodological issues the researcher must pay special sensibility to when studying the far right: the first is the difficulty to gain close-range access to study participants, and the second is the researcher's relation to the subject of study. The first problem is largely redundant in the case of this thesis, as the primary data used is collected from publicly available textual materials, but the second issue necessitates a short discussion. As Wieviorka (2019, pp. 13-16) shows, the debates over the relationship between the scholar and their subject and the 'subjectivity' of the researcher is in no way new, but he highlights that in the case of 'anti-social' movements the problem is often that the researcher's values are in direct opposition to the values presented by their subject of study. Hence, the same principles and interplay of preconceptions as was discussed in the previous chapter in regard to framing applies also to the wider methodology, and as such I must put in special effort to separate values from facts and stay objective in my analysis, while the lingering bias of my own perspective is duly recognised. The purpose of the analysis is not to judge the rhetorics or aims of the two case groups on any moral basis, but merely to identify them and point out their intended purpose.

5 Far right and the Japanese society in the postwar period

This chapter discusses the development of the Japanese far right in the postwar period embedded in its social and political context. Unlike the literature review presented earlier in this work, this chapter will not discuss the academic discourse on the topic, but provide a chronological recounting of the major right-wing incidents in Japan's postwar history, as well as developments in the Japanese society, which have contributed to forming the far right into what it is today. This is to provide a background for the analysis of contemporary far right activism presented in the following chapter and to introduce the context for the broader discussion. The chapter will begin with a short description of Japanese far right's roots in prewar nationalist organisations, and then move on to the discussion of contemporary far right from immediate post-1947 developments until the more recent events by the end of 2010s.

5.1 Japanese far right's prewar roots

Far right activism, to the extent that it can be characterised as such, has been present in Japan since the late 19th century. At the time, extremist groups tended to be very secretive, for instance carrying out propaganda, destabilization and disinformation operations, often abroad and with acknowledgment from the government, which used the operations to lay the groundwork for territorial invasions (Kumpis, 2020, pp. 8-9; Jacob, 2016, pp. 6-11).

In the Taishō period (1912-1926), radical ultranationalist groups such as the National Foundation Association (Kenkokukai) or the Black Dragon Society (Kokuryūkai) began gaining wider political influence, and eventually contributed to creating an increasingly militarist and totalitarian state leading up to the Asia-Pacific War (Skya, 2009; Saaler, 2014). They commonly emerged as a backlash against the parliamentarian and liberal developments of the 'Taishō democracy', protesting Western influences in Japan's imperial system, but often also having pan-Asian ideals about Japanese-led Asian community against Western imperialism (Saaler, 2014; Kumpis, 2020, p. 9). These groups and their prominent members often became the founders of later right-wing groups, and thus their ideals were passed down to the postwar far right, surviving in some form to this day (Skya, 2009, pp. 163).

5.2 Immediate postwar period and the resurgence of the right-wing

The nationalist movements experienced a serious decline immediately after the Asia-Pacific war, with reactions against them from both official and popular sources. Japan's defeat in

itself was a great blow to the groups believing in the superiority of the Japanese state, but in the late 1940s, the Occupation also took robust action to control and dismantle the roots of the ultranationalist ideology that was seen as the root cause behind the war. The Japanese military was dissolved, and the emperor had to officially renounce his own sacred origin, which was the cornerstone of the Japanese nationalist worldview and state Shintō (Morris, 1960, p. 22-24). The Abolition of Governmental Sponsorship, Support, Perpetuation, Control, and Dissemination of State Shinto directive in 1945 consequently abolished state Shintō and prohibited any subsequent government support for Shintō (*ibid.*, 1960, p. 2-3). In the International Military Tribunal for the Far East on 29 April 1946, Japanese wartime leadership (exempting emperor Hirohito) were charged with various war crimes and sentenced to both the capital punishment and imprisonment, and the postwar constitution adopted on 3 May 1947 cemented the abolishment of the wartime state by prohibiting any political involvement of the emperor and forbidding Japan from having an army. The government also began a political purge towards wartime and prewar nationalist leaders and officials, and by the time the purge ended in 1951, a total of 233 right-wing organisations had been disbanded (*ibid.*, p. 8-10). Nevertheless, despite the centralised form of state-nationalism being demolished, nationalist elements found new ways to survive. Far-right extremists scattered in little groups, mostly to the countryside, and tried to spread their ideas and influence in the localities. Maruyama later termed this phenomenon the ‘demobilisation’ of Japanese nationalism (Maruyama, 1969, p. 135).

However, the trend against Japanese nationalism did not last very long. The ‘reverse course’ in Japanese politics around 1950 relaxed the position of the right-wing groups, and consequently they managed to restart their activism and slowly mobilise new supporters (Morris, 1960, p.64-65; 160-164). In this period, anti-communist Old Right groups such as the People’s New Life Movement (Minzoku Shinsei Undō) or the Great Japan Patriotic Party (Dai-Nippon Aikokutō; founded by a founding member of the prewar Kenkokukai, Akao Satoshi) emerged in retaliation towards the increasing popularity of the left-wing (*ibid.*). They engaged in loud and visible demonstrations in for example airports, either protesting or supporting foreign dignitaries coming to Japan, distributed materials against foreign politics and trade unions, and participated in violent protests against left-wing rallies (*ibid.*, p. 189-191).

5.3 The 1960s-1970s leftist upheaval and the emergence of the New Right in a growing Japan

The 1960s saw an unprecedented rise in civil political activism in Japan, beginning with the anti-Anpo protests of 1959-1960 against the US-Japan Security Treaty. Millions of people mobilised against the treaty, including hundreds of thousands of people participating in street protests and demonstrations in front of the Diet building. The protests culminated in an incident on 15 June 1960, when student protesters breached the Diet building grounds. They collided with the police forces guarding the building, and in the fight between the two forces a Tokyo University student and a member of the radical leftist student organisation Zengakuren, Kanba Michiko, was killed (Hasegawa, 2003, pp. 88-90). Despite the demonstrations, the Security Treaty was pushed through in the Diet and the protest movement died down, although student radicalism persisted throughout the decade, culminating the extremely violent Tokyo University protests in 1969 or the United Red Army Incident of 1971-1972 (McCormack, 1971, pp. 43-45; Igarashi, 2007). Especially the latter one, with both the widely televised spectacle of the Asama-sansō hostage case and the following news of the intra-group killings and torture committed by the United Red Army members, remained long in the memory of the general public and alienated them from the political left, resulting in the 'death' and apparent disappearance of the Japanese New Left, which continued well into the 2000s (Asada, 2000; Steinhoff, 2018, pp. 38-45).

Right-wing movements opposing the Anpo protests and leftist student movements existed in the 1960s (Dixon, 1972; Kapur, 2020), but due to the prevalence of left-wing incidents during this period, the right received scant attention from the public or the press. However, there were a couple notable episodes worth mentioning here: the first was the assassination of Inejirō Asanuma, Socialist Party leader, in a political debate by a Great Japan Patriotic Party member in 1960, and the second was author Mishima Yukio's failed attempt at a military coup and his following ritual suicide in 1970. Mishima's ideology was based on the idealization of the old Japanese 'samurai spirit', which he thought had atrophied under postwar Japan's 'peace-constitution' and economic growth (Flanagan, 2014, pp. 8-11). Already before, he had participated in action trying to prevent 'a leftist revolution' by the New Left protesters of the late 1960s, but his efforts culminated in his attempt to raise the Self-Defense Forces behind him and achieve a constitutional revision by taking a SDF general hostage and holding a speech to the mass of soldiers, and upon failing to succeed he committed *seppuku* in the general's office (Inose and Sato, 2012). His ideals, combined with

his militarism and emphasis on action, stroke a chord with ethno-nationalist right-wing individuals who would reject the materialism of high-growth Japan and the Old Right's acquiescence with state actors and the industry, establishing New Right organisations with a high focus on anti-establishment 'revolutionary' activism and a philosophical and intellectual backbone (Smith, 2018, p. 241).

Casual nationalism was bolstered in the 1970s by the rise of *Nihonjinron* literature, a genre of essays and books discussing the 'unique' quintessence of Japaneseness. It attempted to define and set apart the Japanese national character by arguing that all Japanese share a set of values inherent to the Japanese culture, often using the concepts of Japanese culture, Japanese ethnicity and Japanese nationality interchangeably, and achieved immense popularity in the 1970s and 1980s (Sugimoto, 1999, p. 82). The tenets of *Nihonjinron* were accepted both on the left and the right (*ibid.*, p. 84), but the idea of a unique Japanese national character remained strong in the rhetoric of the New Right ethno-nationalists.

However, right-wing activism stayed largely invisible during the two decades. As was right after the war, many far right organisations relied on grassroots mobilisation to slowly increase their scope of activism in local environments (Yoon and Asahina, 2021, p. 370). A group of New Right politicians called the Seirankai tried to push for disassociation from relations with the People's Republic of China and a more independent foreign policy, but with little success (Babb, 2012). It was not until the 1990s, when the history textbook and comfort women issues emerged in greater force (discussed in more detail in chapter 2), that the lobbyist (and today political) organisation Nippon Kaigi with its historically revisionist agenda began to gather popularity and right-wing elements started to gain visibility and political influence once again (Yoon and Asahina, 2021, p. 370-371). Today, Nippon Kaigi has obtained considerable political influence, as it has deep connections to the political establishment and especially the LDP, with prominent politicians such as Abe Shinzō, Inada Tomomi and Koike Yuriko having been members of its Parliamentary League (Mizohata, 2016; Yoshifumi, 2017).

5.4 Post-bubble Japan, the new precariat and radical ethnocentrism in the 2000s-2010s

In 1990s, Japan's economic bubble burst, and it entered a period of economic stagnation nowadays called the 'lost decades'. The deep economic depression of the late 1990s and the following stagnation dismantled the standard life course of a university education and a lifetime corporate career for men and the life of a housewife for women of the earlier decades,

giving birth to the ‘new precariat’, whose lives were shaped by an insecure labour market and part-time jobs instead of a permanent, lifelong career (Aoki, 2012, pp. 106-108). New social issues, such as aging society, low birth and marriage rates, and the emergence of ‘freeter’, NEET (‘not in education, employment or training’) or *hikikomori* youth became prevalent topics of discourse in early 2000s, further signifying the divergence from the social system of the earlier decades (see e.g. Inui, 2005; Naohiro, 2001; Karan, 2005, pp. 164-202). In Japanese politics, Koizumi Jun’ichirō’s administration 2001-2006 paved way for a more populist and openly nationalist approach to politics, for example through his controversial visits to the Yasukuni shrine (Uchiyama, 2010, pp. 154-164; Yoshida, 2020), and internationally China’s rise, Japan’s history controversies with its neighbours and North Korea’s missile tests since the 1990s increased insecurity among the Japanese.

Within this context, new rightist elements started brewing on reclusive discussion forums in the depths of the Internet. The *netto uyoku* grew on forums such as 2channel, established in 1999, which did not regulate the messages of its users practically at all, and thus allowed members of the forum to use derogatory language and share hateful and discriminating opinions and materials (Hermansson *et al.*, 2020, pp. 208-209; Maslow, 2011). Many users of such forums were socially isolated or working in low-wage contract jobs, and their feelings of victimisation for being at the ‘wrong’ end of Japan’s socioeconomic development fed into their radicalisation, for example viewing the alleged ‘privileges’ of resident (*zainichi*) Koreans as unfair (Hermansson *et al.*, 2020, p. 209; Yoon and Asahina, 2021, p. 365; Gill, 2018, pp. 182-183). For instance, Sakurai Makoto, the founder of the Zaitokukai, was an irregular worker before he established the group in 2006 (Yoon and Asahina, 2021, p. 364). These fringe elements of the Internet then took to the streets, forming the various ACM groups and organising xenophobic rallies and demonstrations.

The peak of xenophobic activism was between 2009-2014, when nearly weekly demonstrations took place in Japan’s big cities, with ACM supporters for example picketing schools with immigrant or *zainichi* students or protesting in areas with a high density of Korean population (Park, 2017, pp. 66-67; Yoon and Asahina, 2021, pp. 384-385). The actions invited a backlash in the form of both popular protest and legal action, and in 2013 Kyoto District Court ruled Zaitokukai’s actions as racial discrimination and appeals against the judgement were rejected both in Osaka High Court and Supreme Court in 2014 (Park, 2017, pp. 67-68). A Hate Speech Act passed the Japanese Diet in 2016, but it does not impose any penalty for committing acts of hate speech, and has thus been criticised as ineffective

(Higaki, 2021). Nevertheless, the 2014 ruling has reduced the most visible and aggressive forms of ethnonationalist right-wing protests, but with the persistence of the nationalist trend in Japanese politics in the recent years, the far right continues to seek new ways of engagement and activism.

The above discussion recounts the most important circumstances and events shaping Japanese right-wing activism since the beginning of the 20th century. It shows that despite the overt repression of far-right actors in the immediate postwar period and the general alienation from confrontational political and social action by the mainstream Japanese public since the 1970s, the Japanese far right has managed to adapt to the changing environment, and new strains of the movement have emerged as a reaction to rising issues and ideologies. In the past couple decades, the far right has attempted to redefine their position in the Japanese society by subverting the negative legacy of Japan's war, but at the same time the ethno-nationalist radicals of ACM have provoked a wide-spread backlash to their offensive action and rhetoric. The analysis of empirical materials in the following chapter will delve deeper into the strategies and imagination of two contemporary far right groups and demonstrate how they endeavor to avoid the bad associations of violence and totalitarianism and establish themselves as credible social actors in Japan's political arena.

6 Case studies

This chapter presents the data and the results of the empirical analysis of the case studies. It begins with a detailed description of the data collection and analytical processes. The second section first presents an overview of the results on Nadeshiko Action, followed by Nihon Seinensha, and the final section discusses the results together, drawing comparisons and connecting them to the wider academic literature.

6.1 Data collection and analytical process

Data on Nadeshiko Action was collected from their main website from its establishment in 2011 until the end of 2021, and on Nihon Seinensha from 2006 until the end of 2021¹. This included data from each of the sub-pages on the websites, as well as blog posts detailing activities, goals and opinions. For Nadeshiko Action, a total of 569 blog posts and for Nihon Seinensha, a total of 231 posts were published within the respective timeframes and subjected to analysis. The blog posts combined with the rest of the websites' contents form the foundation for analysis via an extensive base of textual data, and the broad timeframe makes it possible to identify any major trends or changes over the decade since the two groups' establishment. In addition, in the case of Nihon Seinensha, the timeline of their whole history of activism until 2008 (Nihon Seinensha, 2008c) makes it possible for the findings to be compared with earlier activism to an extent, although as the timeline is compiled by the group in question, it cannot be considered to be comprehensive or totally objective.

During the collection phase, all the posts were extracted and stored in separate files on an annual basis. They were then subjected to a preliminary analysis, in which I identified their main format, purpose and content. After that, I conducted a more rigorous analysis of the data, in which I reconfirmed the categorisation created in the preliminary phase and constructed inductive content analysis node structures for both cases (see Appendixes 1 and 2 for the complete node structures).

¹ In the case of Nihon Seinensha, a list of all updates/posts can be found at the bottom of the main page of the website – notice that the Western calendar years of the list are in fact one year late, and the Japanese imperial years used within the posts themselves correspond to the actual year of posting.

6.1.1 Categorisation of Nadeshiko Action's data

In the preliminary phase, I divided the purpose of Nadeshiko Action's posts into five different categories: (1) Domestic activism, which includes protests organised within Japan, digital protests against domestic entities, such as city/prefectural councils or the Japanese government, and media activism, i.e. interviews, TV programs, or public events where Yamamoto Yumiko has participated and performed in her capacity as the founder of Nadeshiko Action; (2) international activism, which includes digital protests against any entities overseas, participation in the proceedings at UN Human Rights Committee, and active encouragement to participate and support similar activities organised by any of the collaborating groups; (3) messages and reports from any collaborating groups or individuals; (4) messages and reports from Nadeshiko Action members (usually anonymous, referred to as '*Nadeshiko nakama*' or 'supporter'); and (5) information sharing, which includes all posts not written by a related person/entity or directly encouraging the reader to take any action, for example sharing newspaper articles from domestic and international newspapers, archival documents related to the comfort women issue, book recommendations, or information about relevant TV and radio programs.

As Figure 1 below shows, over one third of the posts serve purely to share information among network members, whereas direct activism only comprises 30 % of the posts. The importance of cooperation with other groups is signified by 26 % of the total posts coming from collaborative groups or individuals, which is significantly more than the contributions by Nadeshiko Action's own members. Figure 2 depicts the yearly variation of the number of the posts and the relative share of their contents, showing how collaboration with other groups has become significantly more important since the network has become more and more well-established over the years.

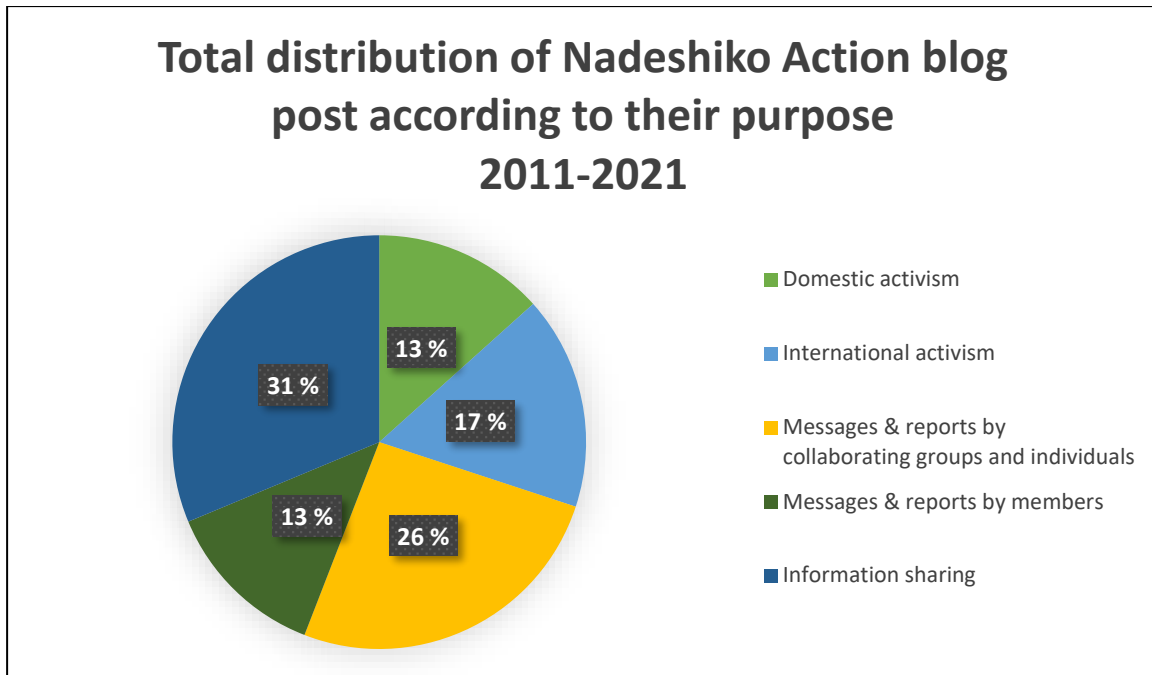


Figure 1. Total distribution of Nadeshiko Action blog posts according to their purpose, 2011-2021.

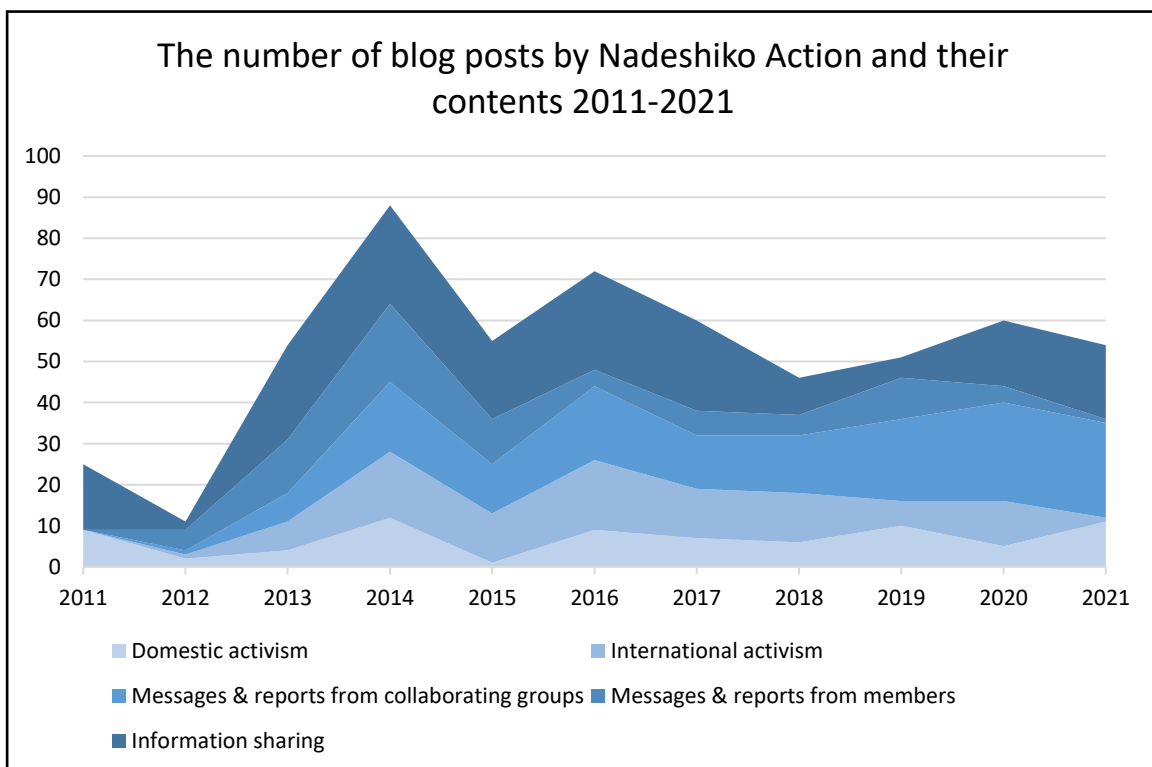


Figure 2. The number of blog posts by Nadeshiko Action and their contents 2011-2021.

6.1.2 Categorisation of Nihon Seinensha's data

The categorical division of Nihon Seinensha's posts is quite different from Nadeshiko Action's. This is due to the two most prominent post types being (1) essays, speeches and

lectures, which often discuss one (or more) of the group's topical themes, and (2) reports from annual conferences and activities that repeat the same every year. Common themes for the first category of posts include Nihon Seishinsha's own ideals and goals, the national character of the Japanese and Japan's current 'moral decay', 'mistaken' views of Japan's history, territorial issues, admirable historical figures, and Japan's current 'weakness' and lack of political and economic self-sufficiency. These are often embodied in one of the group's various slogans, for example 'signature activism to petition for a retrial of the Tokyo Tribunal' (*Tōkyō saiban saishin seikyū shimei katsudō*), 'improving ethics, morals, and character' (*rinri • dōtoku • hinkaku no kōjō*), and 'nature and co-existence; environment and harmony' (*shizen to kyōsei • kankyō to chōwa*). Within the second category, reports for each event were not always posted each year (and sometimes in the beginning of the next year), but the activities themselves were regardless annual. These seem to constitute the main bulk of Nihon Seishinsha's country-wide activism, and include the bi-annual nationwide representatives and executives convention (spring & autumn), the general collaborators and colleagues nationwide assembly (*zenkoku gi'in dōshi renmei • shayū sōkai*), 'Hokkaido caravan' (a tour to the shore opposite of the Kuril islands and around various Hokkaido cities on Nihon Seishinsha's soundtrucks), a visit to a shrine in Aichi prefecture's Sangane-mountain, where seven Japan's A-class war criminals that were sentenced to capital punishment are enshrined, and a visit to a Shinto park in Thailand's Kanchanaburi prefecture that Nihon Seishinsha participated in creating.

In addition to these two major categories, another two can be identified: (3) other activities (domestic and international), for example sending protest letters to Japanese ministers or foreign ambassadors, or taking part in disaster relief efforts; and (4) other posts, including for instance new year's greetings, member introductions and book recommendations. As with Nadeshiko Action, the distribution of posts between these four categories can be observed in the following figures: Figure 3 shows the total distribution of Nihon Seishinsha's posts according to their topic, and Figure 4 illustrates their yearly variation. As demonstrated by

Figure 3, the two first categories cover almost 70% of the total posts, whereas Figure 4 shows the relatively lesser amount and sporadic publication trend of the posts.

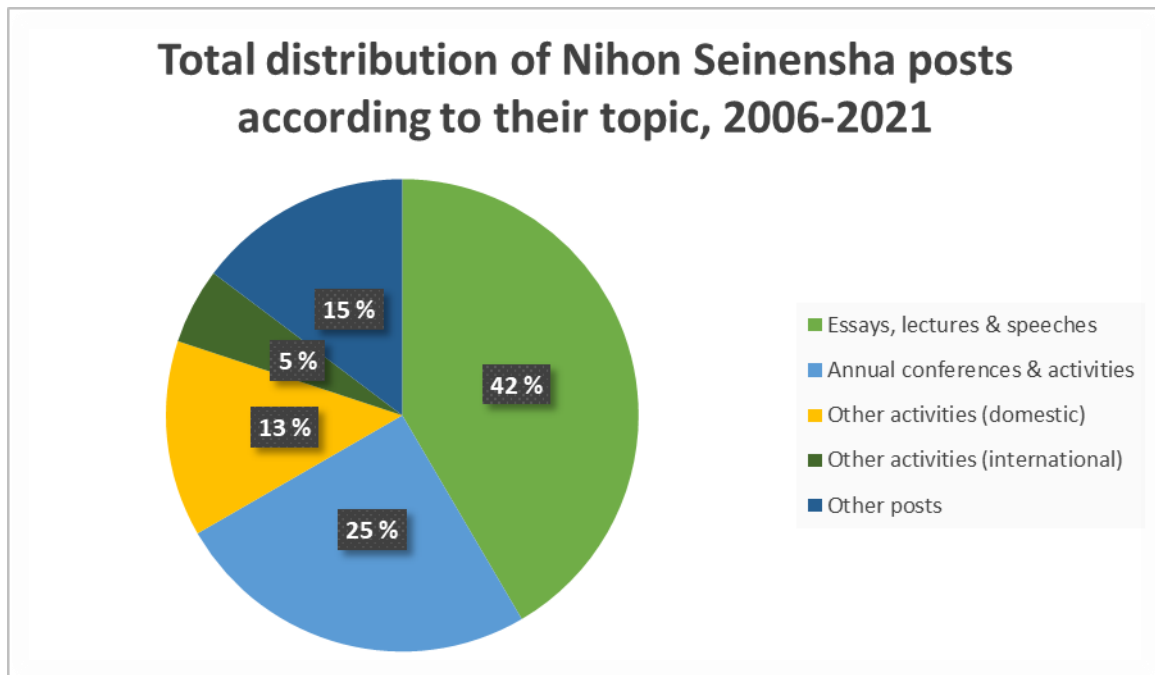


Figure 3. Total distribution of Nihon Seinensha's posts on their website, 2006-2021.

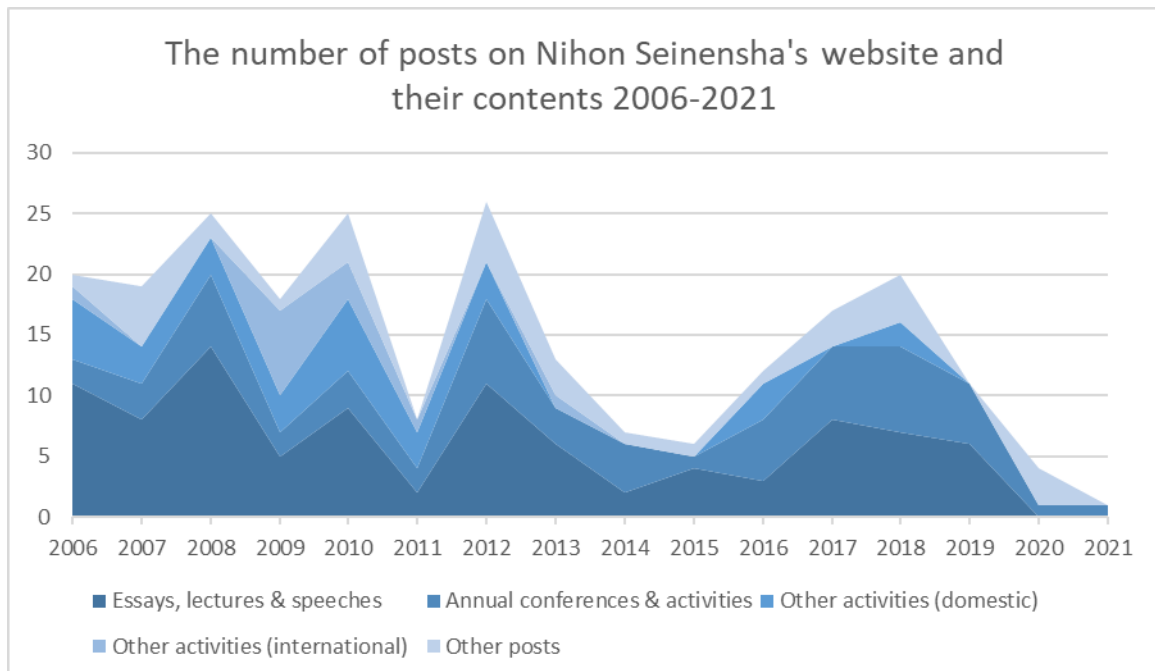


Figure 4. The number of posts on Nihon Seinensha's website and their contents, 2006-2021

6.2 Nadeshiko Action – a conservative women’s network

Nadeshiko Action (なでしこアクション; also known as ‘Japanese Women for Justice and Peace’ in English), was established in 2011 by Yamamoto Yumiko, former vice-president and secretary general of the anti-Korean ACM group Zaitokukai. Yamamoto got involved with the ACM after taking part in the right-wing conservative Japanese Culture Channel Sakura’s viewers’ meeting, where she was subsequently invited to appear on one of their shows. There she met Nishimura Shūhei, the founder of Shuken kaifuku o mezasu kai (‘Association for the Restoration of Sovereignty’) and Sakurai Makoto, the founder of Zaitokukai (Kitahara and Park, 2014, pp. 40-41), after which she began working with the Zaitokukai, which she then left in late 2011-early 2012 after establishing Nadeshiko action in 2011. The core of Nadeshiko Action’s activities lies in the denial of the so-called comfort women. They support the revisionist argument that comfort women were not forced into sexual slavery, but instead were well-paid prostitutes, who voluntarily worked in war-time brothels, basing their arguments on their interpretations of war-time documents and other research. In their own words, they aim to ‘preserve truthful history for the next generations’ by opposing the ‘groundless distortion of history’ regarding the comfort women (Nadeshiko Action, 2021c).

As a network, Nadeshiko Action does not have a fixed membership and operates mostly anonymously, with the only systematically named member being the founder, Yamamoto Yumiko. The network is female-centered, although men are not barred from participating. Nadeshiko Action has cooperated with various other conservative citizens’ groups both in Japan and in Japanese circles abroad, including for example Alliance for Truth about Comfort Women (‘Ianfu no Shinjitsu’ Kokumin Undō), the Global Alliance for Historical Truth (GAHT; based in USA), Australia’s Japan Community Network (AJCN), Himawari Japan (Canada) and International Research Institute of Controversial Histories (iRICH), apparent in the empirical data used in this study (see e.g. Nadeshiko Action, 2016a, 2017d, 2018d). Yamamoto herself is a board member of GAHT and the vice-president of iRICH. The network’s activities have mainly focused on digital protests and lobbying on comfort-women related issues in Japan and abroad, information sharing, and visits to different treaty bodies under the United Nations Human Rights Committee.

Nadeshiko Action’s role as a part of the ACM and subsequently as a broader example of the development of far-right activism in Japan is significant for various reasons. First, as a women’s network, it represents the entry of women into the traditionally male-dominated

field of radical right-wing activism, as discussed before in chapter 2 of this thesis. Second, due to its widespread connections to citizens' groups abroad, it marks an important shift of relocating political contention from the domestic sphere to the places where the civil contention is actually taking place today, i.e. the international field. Third, despite their active participation in the UN and contention of the comfort women issue, as well as Yamamoto Yumiko's extensive connections to various other groups and politicians, Nadeshiko Action has previously avoided wide-spread attention due to its structure as a 'network' rather than a formal organisation. While it is difficult to assess the impact Nadeshiko Action's activities have had on the Japanese anti-comfort women movement as a whole, the above-mentioned points make it a representative example of the newer forms far right activism has taken in contemporary Japan.

6.2.1 Activism of a collaborative network

Nadeshiko Action's activism can be divided into four distinct periods (illustrated in figure 5): the initial period when the network was still forming, the period of growing activism characterized by an expanding network and digital protests against international entities, the peak period during which Yamamoto Yumiko began to gain media presence as the leader of Nadeshiko Action and the network began actively collaborating with certain other anti-comfort women groups and commenced their activities in the UN (introduced in more detail below), and most recently a period of relative inactivity, in which most activity has concentrated on sharing information and reports by collaborative groups. These periods can be seen as a result of the natural growth and development of the network, but they have also been influenced by outside forces, such as the Japanese government's change in official stance over the comfort women issue in 2014, heightening pro-comfort women activity in the UN over the 2010s, the *Shusenjō*-controversy and lawsuit beginning in 2019, and in recent times the Covid-19 pandemic.

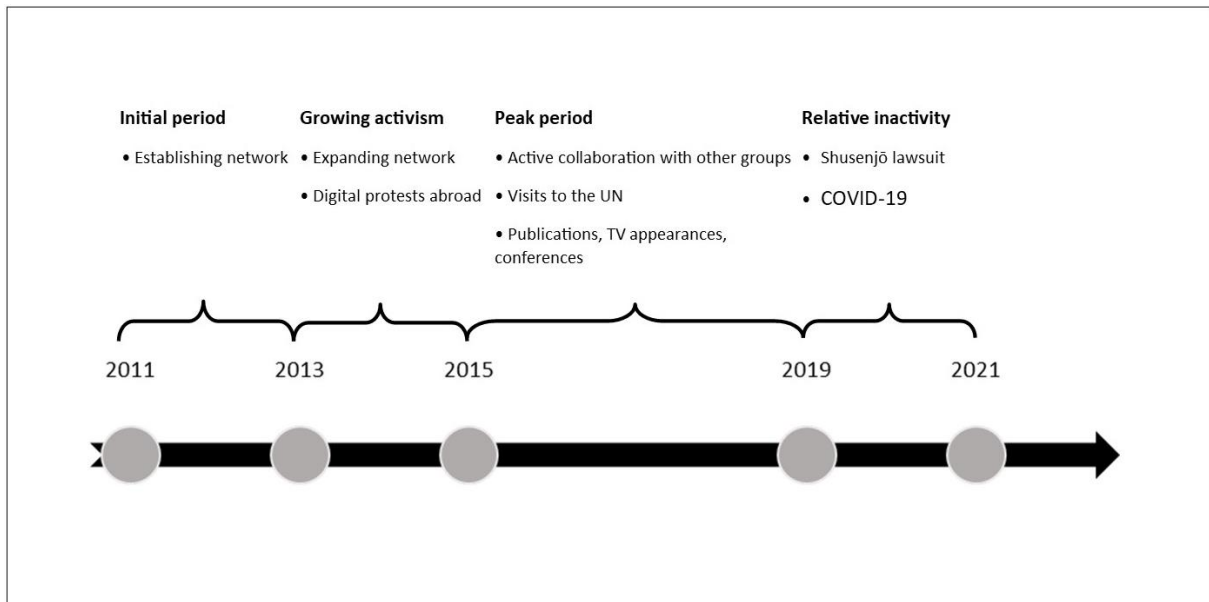


Figure 5. Different periods of Nadeshiko Action's activism

At the very initial stage, Nadeshiko Action was still trying to define itself and what kind of fights it would participate in. The very first advocacy campaign it organised was a series of written questions sent to Japanese city councils, who earlier had addressed a petition to Hatoyama Yukio's government to offer apologies and reparations to the former comfort women and teach about the comfort women system at schools (see e.g. Nadeshiko Action, 2011a, 2011b). The campaign did not reach any notable success, and henceforth Nadeshiko Action turned its eyes outside Japan, where the pro-comfort women movement was gaining momentum thanks to the efforts of mainly Korean NGOs and civil groups. While the US House of Representatives and the European Parliament had already adopted resolutions supporting comfort women in 2007 (H. Resolution 121, 2007; European Parliament, 2007) from 2010 onwards the civil movements began to achieve results in erecting comfort women statues and memorials outside South Korea, the first being the comfort women monument established in Palisades Park, New Jersey in 2010 (*The New York Times*, 2012).

It was these efforts that became the primary focus of Nadeshiko Action in the growth-period years, when they bombarded American city councils and media in areas where comfort women memorials were being planned with emails and later also petitions with signatures gathered online (Nadeshiko Action, 2013d, 2013e, 2014e, 2015d). At first, the email protests were completely freeform, with only the contact details of various local authorities, city council personnel and media representatives being published along with a request for as many people as possible to contact them and let them know their opposition. However, likely due to

the limited language skills of many of the supporters, very soon the requests started to be accompanied by detailed instructions on how to send an email in English, along with example drafts in English that the supporters could use (*ibid.*, 2013d, 2013e, for later examples see e.g. *ibid.*, 2014f, 2015f, 2017a). Signature gathering was introduced a while later (*ibid.*, 2013i, 2014b, 2014g). Both of the methods were also used by the pro-comfort women movement, and aimed at demonstrating the mass support behind their claims and heighten the possibility of media noticing and taking up the protest. Nadeshiko Action's own instructions mentioned multiple times, how the content of the messages does not matter that much, and that 'the amount of signatures determines the influence' (*ibid.*, 2013d, for other similar statements, see e.g. *ibid.*, 2013e, 2014f). These attempts, too, were not particularly successful, and the only place where the opposition managed to stop the plans for a comfort women statue was Buena Park County in California.

Digital protests against various actors have continued since the beginning, but from late 2014 they were joined by more concentrated efforts to achieve change through the channels of international civil society. Most notably, these included participation in the NGO-hearings of multiple treaty bodies of the UN Human Rights Committee, for example the Committee on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 2015 and 2016, and petitioning the UNESCO Memory of the World Register in 2017. These efforts were not conducted by Nadeshiko Action alone, but as a part of a larger anti-comfort women alliance. The anti-comfort women movement's actions in the UN were bolstered by the Abe government's denunciation of comfort women having been forced into sexual slavery by the Japanese army, which gave the alliance confidence that their claims finally had official support. Yamamoto Yumiko's participation in these events as the representative of Nadeshiko Action gave both the network and herself previously lacking visibility, and afterwards she began actively speaking on the UN proceedings and comfort women as an international issue in conservative TV programs, events and newspapers (see e.g. *ibid.*, 2016d, 2016f, 2018a, 2018c). At the same time, Nadeshiko Action's contacts with other anti-comfort women groups grew more defined, and for example GAHT, AJCN, Himawari Japan and iRICH emerged as important partners at this time, other collaborators including for example the Sankei newspaper and Yuukan Fuji, who published a series of Yamamoto's columns on the issue (*ibid.*, 2016f, 2017f), and the non-fiction author Nagao Hidemi, who began sharing his essays (both in Japanese and in English) on comfort women and the history controversy on Nadeshiko Action's webpage (see e.g. *ibid.*, 2019a, 2019c, 2020a).

In 2019, many notable proponents of the anti-comfort women movement got entangled in a controversy surrounding the documentary film *Shusenjō*. The director of the film, Japanese-American Miki Dezaki, had interviewed many of them for the documentary he was making as a final project for his degree at Sophia University. However, in the final product, the anti-comfort women advocates were presented in a way that many of them did not find respectful or fair. They protested the usage of words such as ‘nationalist’ or ‘right-wing’ attached to their interviews, and claimed that Dezaki had not disclosed that the film would be given for international distribution after finished (*ibid.*, 2019b, 2019d). Finally, a group of plaintiffs including Yamamoto took Dezaki to court over the documentary, but in January 2022, Tokyo district court dismissed the lawsuit on the basis of a director having the right to distribute their film both locally and internationally. It is likely because of this, followed by the Covid-19 pandemic, that from 2019 onwards, Nadeshiko Action entered a period of relative inactivity, during which it has mostly shared information about the activities of the collaborating or like-minded groups, especially a Korean anti-comfort women group, who began weekly protests in front of the comfort women monument in Seoul in the aftermath of the fraud accusations against the former head of the Korean Council for Justice and Remembrance for the Issues of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan, Yoon Mee-Hyang (see e.g. *ibid.*, 2020b, 2021a, 2021b).

The main focus of Nadeshiko Action’s activism has since its establishment been to create a cooperative, low-threshold network of Japanese entities and individuals around the world to confront the pro-comfort women movement in the international arena. The main network functions ensure that information, people and resources are mobilised and disseminated through the network to where they are needed, and communication between the various entities is facilitated via creating connections and offering assistance for example with foreign languages by providing translations. Nadeshiko Action’s website forms a sort of an ‘information hub’, where not only reports from the network’s own members and collaborative actors, but also original articles, videos and material by both external and opposition actors is published and shared in their original forms, keeping the community up to date with the latest developments surrounding the comfort women issue. Often the external texts are accompanied by an initial commentary by Nadeshiko Action, commonly either criticising (*ibid.*, 2013a, 2014n, 2015c) or praising (*ibid.*, 2014j, 2016c) their contents, but just as often the materials are shared plainly by sharing a link to a newspaper article or copy-pasting an excerpt of a discussion from for instance city council proceedings with no further notes (see e.g. *ibid.*, 2013b, 2016b, 2019f). Mobilisation, on the other hand, takes place mainly via

supporter engagement, including requests for signatures, information or donations, and calls to join protests organised by the network itself or collaborative actors. It is notable that the network reaches out to its members and appeals to them to join the activities, but Nadeshiko Action as an entity is not an active participant in them, i.e. the members always become agents individually, not as a part of an organisational structure.

Taking the role of an active agent as an entity has been a secondary, although still relevant strategy in Nadeshiko Action's repertoire. Its active role in advocacy culminates in the person of Yamamoto Yumiko, and thus the network itself has often faded to invisibility in the background. Approaches aiming for direct influence have included media presence and participation in collaborative activities, such as the visits to the UN, which Yamamoto has joined as a representative of Nadeshiko Action. While these ventures are undoubtedly intertwined with Yamamoto's personal ideals and goals, her speaking on Nadeshiko Action's behalf in press conferences, seminars and TV programs creates visibility and influence for the network as a whole, and the same holds true for Yamamoto's membership in various anti-comfort women alliances as the spokesperson of Nadeshiko Action. This makes the network a credible and unified actor at least in the minds of the audience, even if the actual structure of the network is loose and dispersed and it is impossible to tell how many and which key persons actually coordinate its operations.

6.2.2 Rhetoric of Nadeshiko Action

Three features stand out in Nadeshiko Action's use of rhetoric: the divergence between communication meant for internal and external audiences, polarisation between them and the 'anti-Japanese' forces they are fighting against, and their self-identification explicitly as a women's conservative network. The first of these reveals a sort of a 'double-speak' used by the network, showing how their communications are tailored according to the target audience. This is immediately clear when comparing letters and messages sent to outside actors, often foreign policymakers and institutions, with reports and messages written for the supporter base. Messages to external audiences are always polite and highlight the good purposes, such as women's rights, that the recipients are trying to support, only via mistaken means (*ibid.*, 2014h, 2015a, 2017a, 2017c). They try to appeal to the values of the intended audience, such as 'justice' and 'fairness' in the case of the US (*ibid.*, 2013d), and claim to be an apolitical entity promoting 'harmonious co-existence' themselves (*ibid.*, 2015a, 2015d, 2016e). Outside communications also try to appear as objective as possible and based on scientific evidence,

such as wartime documents and think tank reports, while simultaneously pointing fingers to the wrongdoings of other countries, trying to undermine the credibility of their position (see e.g. *ibid.*, 2017a, 2016e, 2013e). Especially messages to Western policymakers attempt to frame the comfort women issue as a political matter of bilateral relations between Japan and its neighbours, in which foreign countries have no place to interfere (see e.g. *ibid.*, 2015d, 2014h, 2013e).

In contrast, Nadeshiko Action's internal communications are usually very emotive and full of antagonistic language. The most apparent examples of this are the messages sent by Nadeshiko Action's own, often overseas members, where they recount their experiences living abroad as Japanese, and how the emergence of the comfort women issue to the public consciousness has allegedly affected their lives in their countries of residence (*ibid.*, 2014c, 2013f, 2013h). Another category of texts written for the membership are the reports from various comfort women-related locations and events around the world, where some member of the network went scouting and then share their findings in the form of a blog text and photographs. These differ from the previous category in that they tend to be more antagonistic, relating in an appalled manner the texts and public locations of the comfort women memorials, worrying about how many people are exposed to the 'lies and fabrications' (*uso, netsuzō*) spread by the pro-comfort women movement (*ibid.*, 2014l, 2013c, 2013g). As the authors of these texts are not published, it is impossible to tell if they are authentic, but they all share a very emotional style, which is completely opposite to the objective touch of the outside communications. This 'double-speak' is evident also in the name of the network: the Japanese name, 'Nadeshiko Action' refers to the image of an ideal Japanese woman, *nadeshiko*, who is taking 'action' to protect her country, whereas the English name 'Japanese women for justice and peace' takes a less emotive role of 'Japanese women' and associates it with positive words that are generally supported by everyone.

The antagonistic rhetoric creates a very polarised view of the world, where the victimised Japanese fight against the misunderstandings and falsehoods spread by hostile, 'anti-Japanese' (*han-nichi*) forces of mainly Koreans, Chinese, and progressive actors. Nadeshiko Action sees themselves as participating in an 'information war' (*ibid.*, 2014a) raging around the world, where their role is to guard the 'truthful' history and thus protect Japan's dignity and honor (*ibid.*, 2016a, 2018d, 2019e). They present the West as being manipulated by the Koreans, calling them 'mistaken' and 'naïve' (*ibid.*, 2014k) rather than purposefully harassing Japan. The rhetoric sets Japan and the Japanese in the role of a victim, further reinforced by notions

of vulnerability attached to the Japanese communities living abroad. One of the main arguments Nadeshiko Action gives for opposing comfort women memorials and ‘anti-Japanese education’ is that they will cause bullying and discrimination of children of Japanese descent (*ibid.*, 2013f, 2015d, 2016e). Texts aimed at supporters also lament the disorganized nature of Japanese expat communities as compared to Koreans or Chinese (*ibid.*, 2014m). The image of Koreans as hostile entities is so ingrained that it gives way to completely baseless assumptions, such as when one of the network’s overseas members going to report on a comfort women memorial says she did not dare to leave her car to take pictures because ‘scary [Korean] men were outside’ and therefore took the photos from inside the car (*ibid.*, 2013c), or when a blog text asserted that a reporter called Japan-Korea relations ‘Japan-Korea’ only because the reporter was assumedly Japanese, and had they been Korean, the term would have likely been ‘Korea-Japan relations’ (*ibid.*, 2013a).

Nadeshiko Action aims to further reinforce their position by adopting the rhetoric of a civil movement and highlighting their identity as female activists. They often introduce themselves as a ‘civil group’ (*shimin dantai/shimin gurūpu*) or a ‘group of worried Japanese mothers’ in public speeches or open letters sent to various international or domestic authorities (*ibid.*, 2014j, 2017e, 2018b). They overtly reject the labels of ‘right-wing’ (*uyoku*) or ‘nationalist’ (*nashonarisuto*) in reference to themselves, preferring to identify themselves as ‘conservatives’ (*hoshukei*) or ‘patriots/nationalists’ (*kokkashugisha*) (*ibid.*, 2014d, 2019e). Especially the distinction between ‘*nashonarisuto*’ and ‘*kokkashugisha*’ is interesting: they reject the international understanding of ‘nationalism’ and the baggage the term carries, instead adopting the ‘Japanese’ version and its associations. At the same time, they identify their opponents both in Japan and abroad as ‘liberals’ and ‘left-wing’. Particularly Japanese opposition is commonly referred to as ‘leftist’, likely in order to utilise the bad connotations of radical leftist activism from the 1960s-70s. For example, their adversaries are defined as ‘the leftist Asahi Newspaper’ (*saha Asahi Shinbun*) or the ‘far-left citizen’s groups’ (*sayoku shimin dantai*), who try to undermine Japan’s prestige and honor (*ibid.*, 2019e, 2016a). Thus, Nadeshiko Action implicitly positions itself opposite ‘leftist’ forces and in the right, while simultaneously attempting to avoid any negative connotations associated with the traditional right by choosing to emphasise their status as a civilian movement and ‘conservatives’. Their (conservative) womanhood is emphasised by their use of feminine, deferential language (more apparent in Japanese due to the use of *keigo*) and their adoption of the role of ‘mothers protecting their children’ (*ibid.*, 2013f, 2017d, 2017e), which both serves to legitimise their

arguments on the deeply gendered issue of comfort women and gain sympathy from potential audiences and supporters.

Nadeshiko Action has a clear strategy in both its methods and communication. Instead of waging their war in their own bubble, they have taken the fight to the arenas to which liberal and progressives had already advanced in the previous decades, making careful use of international structures and channels for protest, as well as the digital environment. The network-formation of Nadeshiko Action also diverges from the more strictly structured groups of the Old and New Right. Their approach seems calculated to be as effective as possible – many of their tactics resemble ones adopted by liberal civil society in terms of advocacy, engaging in international, political and media advocacy, and their rhetoric aims to relocate them from the bad connotations associated with the traditional right-wing nationalist forces, while simultaneously attempting to enforce negative labels with their opposition, creating new frames of self-identification and social status.

6.3 Nihon Seinensha – from Old Right to populist New Right

Nihon Seinensha (日本青年社, 'Japan Youth League') was established in 1961 as right-wing group Kusunoki Kōdōtai (楠皇道隊) by Kobayashi Kusuo, who was a director-general (*honbuchō*) of the Sumiyoshi-kai yakuza syndicate. In 1969, the name of the organization was changed to its current form, and in a formal founding ceremony Kobayashi took place as its first chairman. The group's initial activities focused largely on anti-communist and anti-Soviet protests, where they participated with the typical soundtrucks utilised by the Japanese far-right, and on expanding their operation throughout the country by establishing local regional units. Since 1978, they have mostly been known for their involvement in the construction of two lighthouses in the controversial Senkaku/Diaoyu islands, which since the early 1970s have been the subject of a territorial dispute between Japan and China. The first lighthouse was built on Uotsuri island in 1978 and the second in 1988, and Nihon Seinensha made regular visits to maintain the lighthouses until 2012, when the Japanese government nationalised the Minami-Kojima, Kita-Kojima and Uotsuri islands of the island group. They also publish the group's own magazine *Seinen Senshi*.

Smith (2018, p. 240) classifies Nihon Seinensha as a part of the Old Right, characterised by reactionary anti-communism, nostalgia towards imperial Japan, faux-military uniforms, and soundtrack protests. The group has a highly systematic organisation structure, divided into

main and local units, as well as sub-units based on their main responsibilities, such as ‘disaster unit’, ‘agriculture unit’, or ‘IT unit’. An accurate number of Nihon Seinensha’s members cannot be confirmed, but it is considered one of the largest right-wing organisations with approximately 1500-2000 active members. The membership is predominantly male, although Nihon Seinensha also includes a women’s sub-unit. Nihon Seinensha has cooperated with other far-right groups, such as the Great Japan Patriotic Party, in organising protests since its conception, and allegedly their activism surrounding the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands has received support from the right-wing of the LDP (Deans, 2000, pp. 124-125). The group has strong linkages with for example Ikeguchi Ekan, a Buddhist high priest and writer known for his close ties to North Korea and conservative revisionist writings. In recent years, they have made it to headlines in Japan’s mainstream newspaper mostly due to criminal charges, such as extortion, libel and swindling charges, against the group’s former and current members (see e.g. *Asahi Shinbun*, 2014; *Yomiuri Shinbun*, 2013; 2019).

In this thesis, Nihon Seinensha represents the transformation of the traditional Japanese far-right, balancing the overall argument. Examination of Nihon Seinensha’s current activism and rhetoric in comparison to its earlier years highlights the strategies of adaptation by the older groups in the contemporary social and technological environment, and comparison with Nadeshiko Action’s activism provides a counterpoint to broader overall change. At the same time, it also points out more permanent features of older right-wing groups and their tactics.

6.3.1 Grassroots mobilisation in the Internet age

Nihon Seinensha’s activism is characterised by an unchanging backbone of core activities and ideals, and complementary variables that change according to the surrounding political and ideological environment. The core elements constitute of the annual conferences and events and the constant proclamation of Japan’s ‘moral and social crisis’, whereas the variables refer to their other activities, shifting themes of the essays and speeches, which often revolve around major events in Japan or its international relations, and slight changes in strategy.

The core activities of Nihon Seinensha are customs repeated over decades, and as explained in the section on data collection, include the representatives and associate assemblies, ‘Hokkaido caravan’, Sangane-mountain shrine visits, and visits to the Shinto park in Thailand. Before 2008, these activities also covered weekly soundtrack protests at Shinbashi station’s SL square in Tokyo, and yearly maintenance visits to Senkaku/Diaoyu islands until their nationalisation. These activities generally aim to form grassroots connections with the local

citizens and spread the word of the ‘truth of Japanese history’ by taking symbolical actions and engaging the other people present. For ‘Hokkaido caravan’, this takes the form of a road trip to cape Nosappu in the north-easternmost point of Hokkaido, where the protest group chants shouting towards the Kuril Islands. On the way, they stop by in various Hokkaido towns and villages to chat with the locals and to arrange public demonstrations for the return of the ‘Northern territories’ in Sapporo (see e.g. Nihon Seinensha, 2006b, 2012c, 2017b). At Sangane-mountain, Nihon Seinensha takes part in the shrine festival and prays to the spirits of the seven level A war criminals enshrined there (see e.g. *ibid.*, 2007, 2017a). In Thailand, they send a group of representatives on a courtesy visit to a local orphanage and to the annual festival organised at the Shinto park as a part of the ‘Japanese Committee for Peace in Asia’ (*Ajia wahei nihon i'inkai*), which collaborated in Thailand to create the park for enshrining the spirits of Japanese soldiers who had died overseas during the war and whose remains could not be repatriated (see e.g. *ibid.*, 2008b, 2013b, 2018c).

These core activities are then complemented with other direct action depending on changes in the political and social environment. The first and perhaps the most important of the major turning points is the self-defined transformation from a ‘nationalist right-wing movement’ to ‘conservative nationalists’ of 2008 (*ibid.*, 2008a). It was an official ideological shift decided on by the group’s executives, and marks a clear distinction from Nihon Seinensha’s earlier means of activism. Along with rhetorical shifts, such as the word ‘right-wing’ (*uyoku*) almost disappearing from the group’s texts and speeches, it also included practical changes, such as stopping the weekly soundtrack protests and halting the use of soundtracks in most other activities (they continued to be used in some instances, however; for example the Hokkaido caravans would still include protests in Sapporo’s central Ōdōri park). In addition, the official statements by Nihon Seinensha executives began stressing cooperation with the masses and representing the (imagined) interests of the wider public, for example declaring how ‘Nihon Seinensha will fight alongside the masses’ for a brighter future (*ibid.*, 2009c). In part, this change built upon the previous shift of ‘right-wing nationalist reformation year’ of 1999 (*ibid.*, 2008c), when the group for example began wider scale collaboration with other conservative actors and established the yearly associate conventions, but the complete abandoning of official identification as ‘right-wing’ and the attempt to reach wider public support signify a serious effort to relocate the movement from the marginal towards the mainstream.

The second turning point of a changing (international) context followed right after the first in 2009-2011 during the DPJ administrations, and revolved around Nihon Seinensha's visit to Russia in 2009, the rising tensions surrounding the Senkaku islands in 2010, and the Fukushima nuclear disaster in 2011. The events both built on Nihon Seinensha's previous ideological turn and made them to increasingly question Japan's ability to 'protect' itself. The visit to Russia was a result of a longer process, which began already in 2006 when the Russian embassy invited representatives from Nihon Seinensha to visit and discuss the issue of Northern territories. It culminated in a delegation meeting Russia's former Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov, visiting Russia's foreign ministry, having a meeting at the headquarters of Russia's contemporary Communist Party, and joining an event at the University of Saint Petersburg (*ibid.*, 2009a). Over the years, the effects of the visit have proven quite insignificant in resolving the Kuril Islands issue, but at the time Nihon Seinensha considered it a major success that marked a new turn in Russo-Japan relations, and took it as proof of their ability as a civil group to influence political issues too controversial or difficult for the government (and especially the DPJ administration, which they deemed weak and ineffective) to handle (*ibid.*, 2012b). Along with the rising tensions around the Senkaku issue since 2010, it made international relations and Japan's military capabilities the most prominent theme of Nihon Seinensha's activism in the 2010s. The Fukushima nuclear disaster, on the other hand, underlined Japan's reliability on outside resources, which brought the issue of self-sufficiency to the table. These years saw an increase in petitions and written protests sent to both domestic actors, such as Prime Minister Hatoyama and Prime Minister Kan (*ibid.*, 2010a, 2010c), as well as international actors, such as the Chinese embassy in Tokyo (*ibid.*, 2010d). Since the visit to Russia, Nihon Seinensha also made it a part of their annual Hokkaido caravan to go visit the Russian consulate in Sapporo. In addition to these activities, Nihon Seinensha also mobilised their members to take part in several street protests, for example against the oppression of ethnic minorities in China (*ibid.*, 2010b, 2011a).

The third 'turning point' has been a very gradual shift since the second Abe administration, to the extent that it could be argued that it cannot be called a 'turning point' at all, but it still has meaningful implications. One change that can be observed is a light alleviation in rhetoric ever since Abe came to power. If the period between 2009-2011 was filled with an impression of catastrophe due to the DPJ administration, to the extent that one of the NS executives called it an unseen disaster even greater than the Great East Japan Earthquake (*ibid.*, 2013a), Abe's politics received critical but much more moderate discussion, and a sense of emergency

has mostly been linked to the international situation. A slight change can also be seen in Nihon Seinensha's post contents – whereas for the most part the group has focused on philosophical and essay-like texts, in the recent years they have become increasingly person-focused, for example introducing their own members or writing their essays around stories and lives of historical figures (see e.g. *ibid.*, 2016b, 2018b).

Nihon Seinensha has noted the usefulness of the Internet in sharing ideas directly with like-minded individuals without 'manipulation' by mass media, but it has not become a major channel of mobilisation for the group. The post on the functions of their IT unit states, for example, how 'the spread of Internet in the countryside made it possible for our citizens to know the truth and context of history that they couldn't know previously' (*ibid.*, 2018a), implying that the Internet played a critical role in spreading historical revisionist ideals. The same post applauds the Internet and *netto uyoku* forums such as 2channel as enabling true expressions of freedom of speech. Despite these claims, Nihon Seinensha does not utilise online platforms to organise activities and mobilise their support base, instead opting to continue using their magazine *Seinen Senshi*, grassroots connections and conventions as their main channels of influence towards supporters, and in-person protests and written petitions towards targets of activism. Internet, including Nihon Seinensha's website and social media are mostly used for ideological discussions and reporting results, and often the processes for certain kinds of activism have already begun a long time before they are actually mentioned publicly online, as was the case of for instance the visit to Russia, or go altogether undiscussed, as with the APEC protests of 2010 (first mentioned in a post on 24.7.2016).

Much of Nihon Seinensha's strategy consists of direct action aimed at creating grassroots ties, such as the annual visits, disaster relief efforts and for instance cleaning work in different localities, or to directly influence decisionmakers through petitions and street protests. However, equally significant are their actions for internal development: the essays, lectures, and continuous reflection on the organisation and its goals. Most of the material published on Nihon Seinensha's website is clearly targeted at their own membership, and often discuss the character of the group's ideals and goals (see e.g. *ibid.*, 2011c, 2018d). Their purpose is not necessarily to share these views with outside audiences, but to define and display them to the supporter base. The lectures and panel discussions serve the same ends, engaging in a continuous negotiation of Nihon Seinensha's place and role in the society, which also lays the groundwork for any official shifts in stance. Nevertheless, not everyone takes part in these discussions. Lectures, panels and essays are all produced by members higher up in the

organisation's hierarchy, whereas common members can normally only contribute with short and anonymous personal accounts from one of the group's annual trips (see e.g. *ibid.*, 2011c, 2017d). This highlights the top-down structure of the group, where ideology is formulated and aligned by the upper echelons and then delivered to the wider membership.

6.3.2 Rhetoric of Nihon Seinensha

Nihon Seinensha's rhetoric largely follows the same pattern as their activities: there is a common core rhetoric, which then adapts to changes in the surroundings. Nihon Seinensha's core ideology closely resembles the traditional perception of the Japanese far right, incorporating idolisation of bushidō and Meiji thought, historical revisionism and militant rhetoric. A great majority of the essays and speeches posted on Nihon Seinensha's website discuss either what Nihon Seinensha considers 'Japanese morality', or their understanding of Japan's modern history. They subscribe to the common right-wing arguments that Japan's actions during the Second World War were not a war of aggression but a war of liberation; a coloured nation's struggle against Western white imperialism in Asia (see e.g. *ibid.*, 2015b). The group claims that almost all of the problems contemporary Japan is facing are rooted in the postwar constitutional and social reforms imposed by the occupation powers led by the Supreme Commander for Allied Powers (SCAP), Douglas MacArthur (see e.g. *ibid.*, 2007, 2014, 2015b). Thus, both the constitution and the postwar system should be reformed, preferably along the lines of Meiji thought. Their near obsession with Japan's loss in the war is also apparent in the way that practically all of their speeches, discussions and essays begin by stating how many years it has been since the end of the war.

The militancy of the group shows in both of their structure and rhetoric: different units of Nihon Seinensha are called 'tai' (隊), which is also the term used to signify units or corps in the army, and their monthly magazine is called *Seinen senshi*, or 'Young Warrior'. The same term is used to designate members of the group in their member introductions in more recent years (see e.g. *ibid.*, 2017c, 2018b). They call for the (re-)adoption of bushidō as the main moral guideline of both Nihon Seinensha members and the Japanese as a whole (*ibid.*, 2012b). Authors of various texts present Japan as being engaged in various 'wars', for example stating that 'the world is currently in the middle of an information war' (*ibid.*, 2006a) or that 'China and South Korea are challenging us to a groundless history war' (*ibid.*, 2015a), in which their activities are a part of a 'fight' (*tatakai*) to protect Japan and the Japanese. The kanji used for 'fighting', 闘う, is different than the commonly used one, 戦う, and implies a

‘fight’ to overcome a challenge, a (continuous) struggle, rather than a direct confrontation with a concrete enemy.

In addition, core messages are characterised by a constant sense of crisis and threats towards Japan and Japaneseness both domestically and internationally. The crisis is centered around Japan’s ‘weakening’ (*jakutaika*), both in terms of political and military power (international sphere) and of national character (domestic sphere). Nihon Seinensha is extremely concerned about Japan’s constitution and especially its Article 9, which they mockingly call to have been ‘drawn up by American students’ (*ibid.*, 2014). By emphasising USA’s role in writing Japan’s current constitution, they attempt to undermine its validity and assert the need for reform in order to ensure Japan’s international status. A second point of concern is climate change, the basic cause of which is seen to be the explosive global population growth, and which they think will result in a worldwide food crisis (see e.g. *ibid.*, 2012a, 2017d). This crisis would be especially dangerous for Japan, who suffers from a low self-sufficiency rate in both food and resources, and thus Nihon Seinensha supports a wide-scale agricultural reform, which would allow for large, industrial-scale farms and export of agricultural products. The most common theme by far, however, is Japan’s ‘moral crisis’, which according to them is rooted in the postwar education and the ‘masochistic view of history’ and materialistic values it has been pushing, and if nothing is done about it, it will lead to the collapse of the whole Japanese society.

The aforementioned features of Nihon Seinensha’s rhetoric remain throughout the data collection period, but similarly to the varying activities, the political context shapes the emphasis and tone of the messages. The most visible of these changes is the ‘conservative nationalist’ turn of 2008 already discussed above, but similar developments can be seen after the second ‘turning point’, when Nihon Seinensha took a very strong anti-nuclear stance after the Fukushima nuclear disaster, which they connected to their earlier slogan of ‘nature and co-existence’ (*ibid.*, 2011b). In the same way, the visit to Russia quickly transformed the former enemy-discourse to one of cooperation and tentative hopefulness. During the third period, while until then the sense of crisis permeating their rhetoric had mostly been focused on domestic issues and the ‘moral crisis’, now constitutional reform and the international environment began to occupy more space. Often any discussion on political or strategic issues, such as anything related to the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands or Japanese economy, are contextualised with extensive essays on their backgrounds from Nihon Seinensha’s own perspective.

Nihon Seinensha's historical contextualisation, philosophical discussions and value-embedded rhetoric all serve to construct their own view of reality and their place in it. They are 'warriors' striving to 'protect' Japan, both from outside forces but also from internal decay. As argued above, most of the materials are meant for an internal audience, and therefore the main purpose of them is to define Nihon Seinensha's identity and role in the minds of its supporters, encapsulated in the various slogans. Different tactics are used to make the message more approachable, for example by raising up individual members' voices in emotive, diary-like reports from visits and protest (see e.g. *ibid.*, 2013b, 2016b). At the same time, the core of Nihon Seinensha's activities has remained largely the same since the early 2000s, with only slight variations in emphasis or strategies. Their fixed organizational structure and tradition-oriented approach to activism has made change very gradual. However, that is not to say that they are not adaptable or responsive to outside influences – the 'conservative nationalist' turn of 2008 shows conscious effort to redefine Nihon Seinensha's standing in society, upon which the later shifts have built. In fact, Nihon Seinensha's activism in the recent years does not quite fit into Smith's (2018, p. 240-241) definition of Old Right groups; while they still adhere to the core ideological characteristics of being anti-Communism, anti-Teacher's Union and pro-Emperor, since the late 1990s they have engaged in very New Right-like activism, such as publishing, study groups, walking demonstrations and political pressure. Since 2008, they have also rejected the New Right's marginal identity, and instead integrated ACM-style presentation of representing 'the Japanese' as a whole, giving the group a slightly populist tint, but without ACM's overtly racist rhetoric and focus. It can be said, then, that Nihon Seinensha has attempted to adjust their ideology and tactics to the demands of contemporary Japanese society, but only within the constraints of their existing organizational structure.

6.4 Discussion

Structure and strategy-wise, the two cases show very different approaches to activism, but rhetorically they are quite similar to each other. Nadeshiko Action largely focuses on transnational and media advocacy, targeting institutional and structural entities such as city boards or UN councils and actively endeavoring to gain media presence, for example through Yamamoto Yumiko's column series and TV appearances. It is significant how they almost exclusively focus on disputes abroad and spend a considerable amount of resources on tracking any developments over the comfort women issue at a global level. Simultaneously, Nihon Seinensha's focus is on social and political advocacy: creating social ties at a

grassroots level through inherently political tours and conferences, but also via more uncontroversial activities, such as disaster relief efforts and courtesy visits to areas where their activism is centered, for instance Hokkaido or the small islands close to Senkaku/Diaoyu. Most of their direct activism targets (domestic) political actors in the form of protest letters or walking protests. That is not to say, however, that these are the only kinds of advocacy the case study organisations conduct; Nadeshiko Action engages also in political and social advocacy, and Nihon Seinensha in transnational and media advocacy, but the majority of their efforts lie in the aforementioned categories. Both of the cases use advocacy to promote their interests and mobilise support, but especially Nadeshiko Action also heavily emphasises ‘correcting’ ideas and discourses that go against their own beliefs, attempting to counter the opposing arguments with their own evidence and spreading their message to as wide an audience as possible.

At least some of these differences are due to the structural characteristics of the case groups. Typically to ACM organisations and their online-roots, Nadeshiko Action mobilises through the Internet in very free and flexible ways. In a network where most members are anonymous, commitment to the cause is more difficult to achieve, but at the same time the threshold to join at least some activities is lower than in a more formal organisation. Thus, Nadeshiko Action creates a platform where like-minded people may gather and push towards a common goal, without requiring any formal obligations. In other words, Nadeshiko Action operates as a transnational advocacy network, which Keck and Sikkink (1999) define as a network ‘includ[ing] those actors working internationally on an issue, who are bound together by shared values, a common discourse, and dense exchanges of information and services’ (p. 65). The purpose of the network is not as much to convince its members of the righteousness of their objectives – they are already there out of their own will and free to leave at any time, after all – but rather to provide them with the opportunity to effectively advance those goals by providing information and coordinating the efforts. At the same time, most influence can be directed outwards, to persuade opposition, policymakers and prospective new supporters, rather than trying to align the views of the existing membership. As Keck and Sikkink (*ibid.*) continue, ‘[a]ctivists in networks try not only to influence policy outcomes, but to transform the terms and nature of the debate’ (p. 66), which seems to be the core tenet of Nadeshiko action’s efforts: not only to stop the establishment of comfort women memorials around the world, but also to redefine the debate from a human rights issue to an internationally

politicised issue, and have the anti-comfort women movement be recognised as a valid player on the field.

On the other hand, Nihon Seinensha is an established, hierarchical organisation that requires commitment from its members, and as such must use more resources to concentrate efforts and ideologies. In order to properly function as a unified entity, the group must have a common ideology and methods, and thus a large part of their communications and activities target internal rather than external audiences. Nevertheless, the consolidated structure as parts of a single whole, instead of separated entities gathering together, allows Nihon Seinensha to pursue a more general worldview, for example extending their advocacy outside the scope of only the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands issue and engaging in economics, domestic politics and global questions. Equally important to the overarching goals of the organisation is belonging to the organisation and committing together to the various actions. Nadeshiko Action, with no established supporter base, is much more limited to its special focus on comfort women, as otherwise it would be difficult to keep the supporter base committed.

Rhetorically, both cases seem to follow the same main lines: they both hold that contemporary Japan is under a dire threat from hostile forces, and they themselves are fighting to protect their homeland. Similar words and phrases, such as ‘anti-Japan’, ‘masochistic history’ and ‘lies about Japanese history’, but also ‘returning Japan’s honour’, ‘peace’ and ‘the Japanese spirit’ permeate their texts, using frames of conflict, emotion and morality to create a very black and white view of the world in order to clearly define their enemies and make their message more appealing to their audiences. Simultaneously, it is not enough to have identified the threat, but something also must be done about it: Japan must become stronger, or more confident, or less constrained, and it is the right-wing/conservative actors who champion this development. This shows a certain alignment in the two groups’ diagnostic, prognostic and motivational frames. Entrenched in a shared set of values and frequent repetition, these frames are durable and robust for in-group members, but due to their emotional character, might lack influence towards outsiders that more ‘objective’ frames could have.

Nevertheless, there is also a notable difference between the two cases. Nadeshiko Action’s rhetoric is generally much more aggressive, and they seem to consider their enemies to be mostly people: Koreans, Chinese, comfort women supporters, et cetera. Contrarily, Nihon Seinensha usually opts for less emotive, ‘objective’ philosophical language, and mostly

criticises institutions or issues. In a way, it could be said that as a generalisation, Nadeshiko Action goes through *institutions* to target *people*, whereas Nihon Seinensha goes through *people* to target *institutions*.

Shared by the two cases are also their claims of representing the general Japanese public and rejection of the traditional marginalised right-wing identity. This highlights the common goal of both Nadeshiko Action and Nihon Seinensha: mainstreaming their message and gaining public credibility. Following Miller-Idriss's discussion (2020, p. 46), mainstreaming is critical to a far-right organisation's growth, because it helps them recruit, radicalise and mobilise supporters while avoiding a wide-scale public backlash. She also points out how encountering extremist ideas more frequently in the public sphere makes engagement with the far right smoother and thus increases the rightist groups' (political) influence by softening their beliefs (*ibid.*). Nadeshiko Action and Nihon Seinensha are both clearly aware of this challenge of legitimising their views, and consequently have taken action both to make their messages appear more respectable and engage in forms of activism that seem less distasteful to the general public, as well as to seize platforms in mass media and online to make their arguments more accessible. Their (re-)location as 'citizen's movements' borrows from the rhetoric of the liberal civil society, although to different extents, underlining their capacity to make strategic choices based on the current social environment and to adjust them to fit their own narrative. It also underlines their wider capability and willingness to adapt: Nadeshiko Action has been quick to try different strategies and abandon those it has deemed ineffective, and made key assets out of features previously largely non-existent in Japan's far right, their femininity and international orientation, whereas Nihon Seinensha's transformation has been more dynamic over multiple decades.

Overall, it seems that the division between different strains of the Japanese far right is blurring. Nihon Seinensha has moved from distinctly Old Right-style activism to philosophical New Right with a populist tint, and shares core ideological and rhetorical blocks with Nadeshiko Action, even when their general approaches to right-wing activism differ. Based on the data analysed in this study, it seems that the far-right movement shares certain 'collective action frames', which define the movement as a whole and are well aligned between different actors within it. Especially the diagnostic and prognostic frames that the two groups produce are very close to each other, implying the existence of a common 'master' frame. They show that right-wing actors have a common understanding of the essential parts of their world view – that Japan's history is being distorted by malicious actors,

that Japan is currently stuck in a hostile environment, and that Japan's honour and essential quality must be guarded. The roots of right-wing ideology have not changed since the postwar period, only new threats have been identified. Thus, the transformation of Japanese far right has mostly taken place in the realm of strategies and their (alleged) position in the society, rather than having undergone a complete renewal of perspective.

The scope of the thesis does not allow for an in-depth examination of the underlying causes behind this transformation, but some conjectures can be made here. As discussed in earlier chapters, the legacy of political violence has rendered confrontational ineffective due to public alienation (Shibuichi, 2019, pp. 26-30; Steinhoff, 2018, pp. 38-45). Disruptive activism is frowned upon, and thus any group hoping to gain support from the public should avoid it, which, together with the bad image of pseudo-military Old Right activists, is likely why Nihon Seinensha gave up on their soundtrack protests and opted for more constructive methods of engagement with the public. It is also likely the reason behind the creation of the new identity frames for both case study organisations. The Internet has provided new avenues of influence, making it easier to reach both wider audiences and specific people directly (Van Laer and Van Aelst, 2011, p. 231), and both case groups have made use of this opportunity to promulgate their ideas. However, the online world is increasingly competitive, and the far-right groups have to compete over space and attention with plethora of other influencers.

Many of Nadeshiko Action's tactics, such as signature petitions, participating in UN proceedings and email protests follow the new 'repertoire of collective action' of Internet-supported and Internet-based activism (*ibid.*, 2011, pp. 236-245), demonstrating their use of new kinds of political opportunity structures, such as new platforms for advocacy.

Nevertheless, these tactics are only utilised towards foreign actors, not within Japan.

Pekkanen (2006) describes the Japanese civil society as a 'dual civil society', where local civil associations focused on creating social capital are encouraged, but large, professional civil advocacy organisations are discouraged. Thus, the political structures do not encourage lobbying or political engagement by civil organisations, and as such direct methods such as written questions or protest letters have rarely yielded results for the two case groups. Nihon Seinensha and Nadeshiko Action therefore concentrate on direct connections with politicians and for example media advocacy locally, and can only capitalise on other kinds of methods at the global level. At the same time, both have managed to establish themselves as advocacy organisations, and continue to actively pursue their goals and assert their views.

The developments of Japanese far right identified in this study correspond to certain global trends, namely attempts to mainstream far right rhetoric and imagery, and the defense of privilege. In Japan, right-wing actors have attempted to formulate their ideology in a more approachable format, for example nationalist and revisionist mangas or documentaries (Hall, 2021, pp. 23-24, 44-45.). While the two case studies have tried to achieve similar results by forcefully claiming themselves as representatives of the general public via new identity frames, this rhetoric is unlikely to yield much results in actually gaining mass support. Rather, these identity frames aim to *present* mass support to the targets of their activism and their own support base in order to bolster their (perceived) influence. This is not quite comparable to the commercialisation of far-right ideology in the West, for instance through memes, material products and music festivals (see e.g. Miller-Idriss, 2018; Karl, 2018, pp. 74-76), but nevertheless the trajectory shows that the Japanese far right is aware of the possibilities and benefits of infiltrating their messages to the mainstream, and show a conscious effort to reach it.

The two case groups also both convene in the defense of privilege, apparent in their discourse of ‘protecting’ Japan. Demanding responsibility for Japan’s wartime actions is considered a threat exactly because it questions the image of Japan as an advanced and ‘honourable’ nation, and consequently the favourable reputation and status of the Japanese themselves. It also manifests in more common ways in Nadeshiko Action’s anti-Korean stance, although disguised in the debates over the comfort women issue. Dietrich (2014, p. 13) points out how conservative movements are able to claim the role of a victim by appropriating a mainstream identity (in this case, ‘Japan’ or ‘the Japanese’), applying some restrictive criteria to it and presenting themselves as the only ‘true believers’ of the identity, and then accusing the mainstream of not accepting their ideological definition of the term. Further, they aim to maintain their privilege by restricting the access to it only for those who fulfill their criteria to the mainstream identity and assent to their values (*ibid.*, p. 14). In the discourses of Nadeshiko Action and Nihon Seishinsha, Japan, while in reality still an economic and political powerhouse, is the target of a global conspiracy of actors trying to dismantle its status, and in the process ‘common Japanese’ fall victim to the effects, again evoking frames of conflict and emotion.

However, despite Japan’s relatively high state of well-being at the global level, it cannot be said that all Japanese right-wingers are inherently privileged. As discussed in chapter 5, many of the supporters of far right in Japan are people in a precarious state themselves, for instance

NEETs or employees with short-term contracts, and so Japan's changing international status and domestic economic and social conditions in the globalising world directly influence their living standards. This provokes a reaction in defense of said living standards from any perceived threats. The two case groups both use their diagnostic and prognostic frames to offer enticing explanations for the uncertainties in the supporters' lives, and offer an alternative to improve it via their advocacy.

The results show that two case groups' relationship with the state is still slightly apprehensive, but ever more accommodating since Abe's rise to power. Out of the two, Nihon Seinensha has remained slightly more critical towards the establishment, but they have seen the developments towards a constitutional revision and the more active foreign policy of the Abe administration in the 2010s in a favourable light and have emphasised cooperation with the state rather than challenging it. They have also attempted to adopt the position of political actors addressing issues that the establishment is unable to handle itself. This goes in direct opposition of the traditionally anti-state Japanese New Right (Smith, 2018, p. 240), which could be considered a strain of the 'extreme right' as defined by Castelli Gattinara (2020, pp. 317-318). Nadeshiko Action, on the other hand, has been extremely supportive of the LDP administrations ever since their official turn in stance on the comfort women issue in 2014. In fact, many of the two cases' core beliefs reflect the ideals of the 'radical right', who in Castelli Gattinara's definition 'oppose some key features of liberal democracy, notably pluralism and the protection of minorities' (*ibid.*, p. 318), while many of their outwards tactics are very similar to the tactics of the 'populist right'. This, again, reflects the blurring of different strains of the Japanese far right movement, where their goals and strategies are beginning to resemble each other more and more despite the different formulation of ideas and structures of mobilisation.

Despite aligning with global trends to an extent, it is still important to note the distinct qualities of the Japanese far right. At the root of Japan's right-wing ideologies continues to be the preoccupation with Japan's history, both as the foundation of their ideal morality and the major issues their activism revolves around. The legacies of Japan's political environment also remain: the lack of violence and direct political influence in the form of radical right-wing political parties (aside from the Japan First party established in 2016, which has not achieved any considerable success), have their roots in the still developing civil action in Japan and the general distaste for confrontational politics. These features heavily contrast the predominantly anti-immigrant focus and increasingly disruptive and visible activism of

European and American far right (Castelli Gattinara, 2020). While the ACM has gained a lot of attention in the recent years due to their clamorous protests and openly hateful rhetoric, they by themselves are not representative of the whole far right movement and its different facets. This formation around a different set of core ideas proves the Japanese far right to still be a valuable subject of study, contributing a sense of nuance of different productions of right-wing ideology and activism to the overall research on the global far right.

7 Conclusion

The last two decades in Japan have been a period of economic stagnation and major changes in domestic and international political environment. The standard life course of the growth years has been overturned, giving way for new lifestyles and paths, and new challenges in the form of Japan's demographic crisis and increasing instability in East Asia have emerged. These shifts have also affected the Japanese far-right movement, for example giving birth to the ACM, a new strain of right-wing activism focused on opposition of ethnic minorities – a feature that had been largely absent from earlier far right groups. This thesis has examined the transformation of contemporary Japanese far right based on two qualitative case studies, Nadeshiko Action and Nihon Seinensha. Data on the two groups was gathered from online publications and blog posts on their own websites and analysed via inductive content analysis. Social movement theory, with special emphasis on the concepts of advocacy and framing, was used to evaluate the degree of change and identify rhetorical trends in the activism of the case studies. The results presented in the previous chapter show that while the far-right movement's core ideological traits remain the same as before, they have adapted their strategies and rhetoric to make them more acceptable to the general public and extended their activism outside domestic bounds to gain wider influence and advance their goals at a global level. This shows that the far right in Japan, although still limited in power, is highly adaptable and far from fading out, and thus its developments should continue to be tracked and investigated, lest their aspirations begin to increasingly influence public opinion and policymakers.

A transformation of the far right's strategies and rhetoric is apparent from the results of the analysis. Nihon Seinensha, with over 50 years of history, exemplifies the more traditional strains of the movement, although the analysis shows that the lines between the Old Right, New Right and ACM are blurring with the older group mostly abandoning their soundtracks and military uniforms, and claiming to act as pioneers, leading the general population to a new period of greatness for Japan. On the other hand, Nadeshiko Action, a women's ACM network, demonstrates the completely new avenues of far-right activism, for instance through their loose and informal structure of an anonymous network, and the focus on overseas advocacy instead of the traditional domestic street protests and lobbying. The proliferation of the Internet has provided the far right with new platforms on which to spread their messages and mobilise support, and especially Nadeshiko Action has made good use of the new

technologies. At a rhetorical level, the case study organisations reject their right-wing identity and claim to represent the wider public, producing and utilising new kinds of identity frames. These developments show a trajectory towards more ‘mainstream’ forms of activism and mirror more general trends of the global far right. The populist tendencies of trying to speak for the ‘common people’, appealing to people’s insecurities with emotional language and polarisation, and reframing complicated issues as easily understood, simplified and often misleading renditions have been a staple in radical right-wing parties’ tactics in Europe for a long time, and have now clearly made their way also to Japan.

At the same time, the transformation cannot be said to be too far-reaching. While Nadeshiko Action’s structure as a transnational advocacy network signifies a departure from previous targets or methods of engagement, Nihon Seinensha, as before, continues to focus on creating grassroots ties as a form of social advocacy and otherwise on political advocacy by contacting high-level policymakers directly. Violent incidents have continued to be basically non-existent in Japanese right-wing activism, despite the case groups’ indirect relationship with more violent elements: Nihon Seinensha’s persisting problem with their (former) members being involved in various crimes, and Nadeshiko Action’s close relations with hate speech groups, whose activities, while not physically violent, are most definitely damaging to the targets’ well-being and sense of security. Furthermore, while nationalism is a core piece of the Japanese far right movement, explicit or implicit xenophobia remains the distinct feature of only the ACM, whereas the older strains, as exemplified by Nihon Seinensha, are more concerned with political issues, and might even take a stance in favour of (foreign) ethnic minority groups due to their idea of an ethnically homogeneous, independent nation. Perhaps most importantly, however, the essence of Japanese far-right ideologies is still grounded in Japan’s history. Their reality revolves around the construction and reconstruction of the past, and despite their constant worry for the future, the reference points to rectify the situation all remain firmly rooted in history.

The diagnostic and prognostic frames the two case study organisations produce make Japan seem to stand in an extremely precarious position. Being actively targeted by some hostile, foreign powers, continuously misunderstood by their allies, and simultaneously having to deal with global issues such as climate change and the lack of sustainable resources, Japan is under a severe threat, all by its itself. And that is not all: Japan is not only in danger from outside forces, but also domestic left-wing actors, who try to dismantle the traditional Japanese way of life and in the process sacrifice Japan’s dignity and well-being. For the future generations,

Japan must be made great again – the misconceptions about Japan's history must be corrected, the weak peace constitution revised, and Japanese honour and morality restored. rallying in the defense of privilege, 'protecting' the Japanese from rising competitors in the East Asian region as well as minorities within the country. The imagery of deep peril can reflect the precariousness of the members' own lives, or the uncertainty caused by the fast-paced changes in society and international context, where the glorious past of the imperial Meiji Japan seems to slip further and further away.

Thus, the Japanese far right's relationship with the surrounding society is redefined. Japan and the Japanese are seen as a unified entity, of which the far-right actors are a part of, as opposed to the 'outside' foreign powers. While some wariness towards the establishment still remains, the attitude seems to have shifted more towards working with it, not against it. In other words, far-right actors no longer present themselves as people seeking to change the society from the outside, but as members of the society aiming to change it from the inside, along with their peers. It is likely, however, that as the far right imagines itself as a part of the mainstream, some other elements are in turn driven to the margins. This could include for example the left-wing forces identified as enemies by the case study organisations, or alternatively they could be considered hostile forces within the society both belong to – further study would be required to determine this distinction.

The literature on contemporary Japanese far right is very extensive on topical issues, such as online activism, typical supporters or controversial historical issues, but lacks depth when it comes to examining the different groups or strains as complex, multifaceted wholes. The rise of the ACM and the attention it has gained has eclipsed the older strains of the movement almost completely, and even the newer organisations are mainly discussed through a single one of their features, for instance women's activism or hate speech. As the results of this study show, a topical approach has some severe limitations: the general view of a certain group's activism and all the diverse things that shape it are overlooked, and less conspicuous transformations go undetected, until they suddenly spring again to the general consciousness via a new incident or a prominent figure. The same insensitivity to subtleties can be said to afflict the broader literature on far right. The overwhelming amount of literature on right-wing activism in Europe and the US with its focus on anti-immigrant xenophobia and populist right-wing parties definitely addresses important issues, but simultaneously it ignores the different formations far-right activism may take in different contexts. It can still be exclusionist; it can nevertheless be anti-establishment or aim for an authoritarian society; but

the foundation of the activism does not necessarily have revolve around xenophobia, nor must it organise itself in ways similar to its Western counterparts. Thus, more studies on far-right activism in non-Western contexts are required to polish the definition of the concept and what kind of issues research on the far right can address.

Japan's international and domestic situation is under a constant change, and consequently also the far-right organisations continue to change. On 6 March 2022, ten days after Russia began their attack on Ukraine, Nihon Seinensha published a protest letter addressed to the Russian embassy in Tokyo. They expressed their disappointment over the lack of progress on the Kuril Islands issue during Vladimir Putin's presidency, and strictly condemned the attack on Ukraine, calling Putin 'an enemy of mankind' (Nihon Seinensha, 2022) and demanding Russia to stop the war immediately. Since 2009, Nihon Seinensha has been tentatively hopeful about interacting with Russia, visiting the Russian consulate in Sapporo often and inviting a Russian academic to speak at their conferences. Such a message is therefore a significant departure from their earlier line, addressing an issue that is not directly connected to Japan. It could possibly be another attempt at virtue signaling and gathering support, a way to bolster Japan's claims on the Kuril Islands, or a genuine expression of dismay against a nation waging war on its neighbour – or perhaps all of them at once. Certainly, the war and other future global and economic challenges will continue to necessitate Japan's far right movements to respond to them, and undoubtedly they will also do so. They will continue to adapt, to seek new ways to push their message and mobilise support to realise their ideal view of the world – and we must continue to investigate them, to dissect and evaluate their tactics and rhetoric, to understand their aims and their ways of getting there, so we, in turn, can adapt and act.

This study contributes to the existing body of literature on far right in Japan as well as the study of far right in general by offering a more nuanced picture of the state of the contemporary Japanese far right and how it has evolved in the past couple decades, and by highlighting the connections (and discrepancies) of these developments to global trends in right-wing activism. Its focus on grassroots movements and informal collective action also supplements this particular strand of literature on the far right, which has been identified as a gap in knowledge by Castelli Gattinara (2020, pp. 8-10).

However, both due to its format of a Master's thesis and its methodology, the study has certain limitations that must be acknowledged. First, it analyses data on only two Japanese far right groups. Although care was put into selecting the two case studies based on their individual characteristics and the availability of data, it is clear that the results gained in this study are not generalisable to the Japanese far right movement as a whole, but only indicate certain changes that have taken place within some parts of the movement. Second, the reliance on online sources influences the results to some degree: especially with Nihon Seishinsha, Internet is mostly used for ideological discussions and reporting results, and often the processes for certain kinds of activism have already begun way before they are actually mentioned publicly online. Thus, some of Nihon Seishinsha's activities, especially at a local level or via on-paper publications such as *Seinen Senshi*, might have gone unnoticed, affecting the analysis. At the same time, the scope of this thesis was not enough to examine the social media accounts of the two case groups, which particularly for Nadeshiko Action seems to be an important channel of communication. Third, I admit to having a bias towards the object of study: while I do not consider myself to be politically partisan, I do tend to lean more towards progressive views, and find certain very conservative or exclusionist notions personally distasteful. I have done my best to remain objective in my analysis, but the reader should still be aware of the possible bias. As the thesis only touches upon certain parts of the broader far right spectrum in Japan, further studies could be conducted to build a more nuanced perspective of the transformation of the Japanese far right. For example, evaluating the effectiveness of the far right's mobilisation techniques, more in-depth examination of the rhetorics of the different strains of the movement, or assessing the current degree of division between said strains could expand upon the results of this study and bring valuable input to the overall research on the Japanese far right, as well as the study of far right as a whole.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Node structure of the analysis of Nadeshiko Action's data

| Level 0 | Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 | Level 4 |
|--------------------|---|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| Activism | Strategies | Direct influence | Media presence | Press conferences |
| | | | | Seminars |
| | | | | TV programs |
| | | | Collaboration | Sharing messages from other groups |
| | | Participation in collaborative projects | | |
| | | Network functions | Information sharing | Sharing names & contact details |
| | | | | Sharing original articles & excerpts by external actors |
| | | | | Open communication of failures |
| | | | Supporter engagement | Sharing materials and activities by opposition |
| | | | | Collecting signatures for petitions |
| | | | | Calls for in-person protests |
| | | | | Social media protests |
| | Requests for information | | | |
| | Language support | Translation of articles | | |
| | Templates for messages in foreign languages | | | |
| | Rhetoric | Double-speak | Internal audience | Demonstrating support by external actors |
| | | | | Commentaries & criticism |
| | | | | Emotive personal stories |
| | | | | Highlighting successes & visibility |
| | | | | Highlighting individual's capabilities |
| | | | External audience | Cordiality |
| | | | | Evidence-based arguments |
| | | | | Appealing to values |
| | | | | Whataboutism |
| | | | | Claiming apoliticality |
| | | Issue of bilateral state politics | | |
| | | Polarization | Victimization | Making baseless assumptions |
| | | | | Apparent dismantling of Japanese values and image |
| | | | | Notions of vulnerability |
| | | | Japan vs. the world | "Anti-Japanesess" |
| | | | | West being manipulated |
| | | | | Bashing Koreans/Chinese |
| | | | | Opposition as spreading falsehoods |
| Identity formation | | Womanhood | Identification as women and mothers | |
| | | | Feminine language | |
| | | | Action for the sake of children | |
| | Opposing comfort women as women | | | |
| | Rejection of rightist identity | Claiming to represent the general public | | |
| | | Left-wing as enemies | | |
| | | Labelling self as conservatives | | |
| | | | | |

Appendix 2: Node structure of the analysis of Nihon Seinensha's data

| Level 0 | Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 | Level 4 |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Activism | Strategy | Direct action | Annual events | Hokkaido caravan |
| | | | | Sangane-mountain visits |
| | | | | Thailand Shinto Park visits |
| | | | | Conferences |
| | | | Protest activities | Street protests |
| | | | | Petitions to political figures |
| | | General welfare | Disaster relief efforts | |
| | | | Cleaning localities | |
| | | Internal development | Publications | Essays |
| | | | | Lectures |
| | | | <i>Seinen Senshi</i> | |
| | | | Continuous reflection | Discussions and workshops |
| | Setting overt goals and ideals | | | |
| | Rhetoric | Identity formation | Spirituality | Relationship with nature |
| | | | | Emperor worship |
| | | | | "Revival of Japanese values" |
| | | | | Anti-materialism |
| | | | Militarism | <i>bushidō</i> |
| | | | | Protecting Japan |
| | | | | Warrior rhetoric |
| | | | | Abhorring weakness |
| | | Reality construction | Sense of crisis | Japan's "moral crisis" |
| | | | | Foreign hostility |
| | | | | Economic and political downturn |
| | | | Historicality | Admiration of Bakumatsu and Meiji figures |
| | | | | Japan's war of liberation |
| | | | | "Winner's justice" |
| | | | | Perceiving the present via its relation to history |
| | | | | |
| | | Adaptability | Responsiveness | "Conservative-nationalist" turn |
| | | | | Visit to "former enemy" Russia |
| | | | | Awareness of contemporary issues |
| Post-Fukushima anti-nuclear stance | | | | |
| Support for minority nationalities | | | | |
| Cooperation with the masses | | | | |
| Persuasion | | | Slogans | |
| | | | Storytelling | |
| | Contextualising topics | | | |
| | | | | |