A Psychosocial Analysis of Far-right Activists in Japan

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Abstract

Since the mid-2000s, the rise of far-right movements has become a major concern in Japanese society. This thesis argues that is necessary to understand the reasons why people join such movements, characterised as they are by hatred against minorities and a false understanding of history, and that it is crucial to engage with these people and acknowledge their painful feelings as the first step to creating a more inclusive society where antagonising discourses on ‘others’ do not garner support. The current study therefore aims to explore the appeal of the far right to some Japanese people by adopting a psychosocial perspective, which exposes the dynamic relationship between people’s political leanings and their social and personal circumstances over the course of their lives.

Fieldwork was conducted in Japan with various far-right groups from July 2018 to March 2019. Free Association Narrative Interviews were undertaken with 25 participants. Five cases are chosen to illustrate different types of psychosocial dynamics. The study shows how poorly defined painful feelings, the cause of which participants did not fully articulate, tended to motivate interest in the far right and its ideologies. Because the social factors triggering people’s painful feelings were obscured by overwhelming memories of more personal experiences, they saw these painful feelings as evidence of shameful personal shortcomings. They projected their fears of failure onto outgroups whom they regarded as insidious enemies, including people with foreign origins and neighbouring countries who seemed to be conspiring against them. One of the contributions of the current study is its finding that the visibility of minorities is not a necessary condition for racism in Japan. The life stories of the far-right activists interviewed are characterised by a scarcity of direct contacts with the *zainichi*. The thesis reveals that invisibility of minorities can render racial categories even emptier in terms of their meaning, enabling activists to project their wildest fantasies and delusions onto them. This emptiness allows nation-centred thinking—not only within the far right but also by many mainstream populist political figures—to collapse the distinctions between a nation-state and its people, as if the latter embody the former.

The thesis concludes by arguing that it is necessary to allow for the possibility of a subject being invested in multiple narratives that contradict each other. Such a perspective will enable a researcher to have a nuanced understanding of the painful experiences that can drive subjects to embrace far-right movements. Moreover, this perspective will help to prevent binary categorisations of people as either racist or non-racist.

Declaration

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Chapter 1 Introduction

Why Study the Far Right, Why Study Japan?

A report published in 2021 highlights the reality of racism in Japan. It illustrates various forms of discrimination faced by *zainichi* students (Koreans residing in Japan) at high school, college and university, in various aspects of their daily lives (The Korean Scholarship Foundation [hereafter KSF], 2021). According to the report, 30.9% had experienced verbal abuse and 39.4 % had experienced discriminatory treatments in the previous three years (KSF, 2021, p.3). 33.7% had uncomfortable experiences due to their ethnic origins at schools where the majority were Japanese (KSF, 2021, p.30). These figures are shocking when compared with statistics on racial harassment in other countries. For instance, a survey on university students' experiences of racial harassment in the UK shows that 13% of the overall respondents and 29% of Black students had such an experience since their courses started (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2019, p.13). The report of the KSF has added to evidence against the claim that there is no racism in Japan, a claim which emerged on social media networks with regard to issues rooted in racism, such as Black Lives Matter movements (The Mainichi, 2021).

One of the contexts for the publication of the KSF's report is the rise of the far-right groups in Japan. As we will see below, such groups emerged in the mid-2000s. They visited Korean schools, Korean towns and other locations to carry out hate-filled and sometimes violent street protests. Indeed, 75.7% of the respondents of the KSF's survey had watched or heard about the rallies or street agitations carried out by these groups (KSF, 2021, p.34). Their rallies, which feature hate speech, are disturbingly redolent of the pre-war massacres that took place in the wake of the Great Kanto Earthquake in 1923, where thousands of Koreans were killed by civilians and the police and the military: they feared that Korean 'terrorists' were conspiring to attain the independence of Korea which Imperial Japan had colonised in 1910 (Mizuno and Mun, 2015). Indeed, glorifying Japan through denying the atrocities it caused is an essential element of their activities. The strength of the populist right in other contexts such as the US and Europe, where the same two core elements, antipathy towards 'others' and denial of facts, are also present, makes the far-right phenomenon impossible to ignore. Even if there are no signs so far that these movements have established a firm place in Japan's national politics, some politicians of the Liberal Democratic Party (which is the party in power) share similar ideologies. In particular, it has been pointed out that former members of the Japanese far-right groups, some LDP politicians, conservative academics and journalists, and other

actors whose connections are at least partly coordinated by Nihon Kaigi (the Japan Conference), cooperate with each other to fight what they call the 'history war' (*rekishisen*), or attempt to disseminate propaganda that denies Japan's wartime atrocities (Mizohata, 2016; Yamaguchi, 2020). Exploring the far-right activists' mindsets is likely to produce an insight about why such political ideologies garner support.

As will be shown in this study, nation-state plays a major role in the discourse of Japanese far-right activists. The increase in hate crimes elsewhere, notably in the UK during the process of Brexit and in Trump's America, is evidence that there is a close relationship between the rise of discourses on national identity and history and the prevalence of racism. Moreover, following on the surge of nationalistic sentiments that has already taken place, the coronavirus pandemic will engrave the presence of borders and nation-states more deeply on people's minds. The pandemic has exposed direct connections between the systems of bio-politics, the boundaries of which are drawn by racial/ethnic and economic stratifications in the nation-states, and the lives and death of individual citizens (Lorenzini, 2020). Under such conditions, exploring the role played by nationalism will become all the more important in understanding racism.

Why do people take part in the far-right movements in Japan? This is the central question of this thesis, and it is both timely and critically important. The thesis argues that it is necessary to understand the reasons why people join such movements, characterised as they are by hatred against minorities and a false understanding of history, and that it is crucial to engage with these people and to acknowledge their painful feelings as the first step to creating a more inclusive society where discourses that are antagonistic to 'others' do not garner support. The current study therefore aims to explore the appeal of the far right to some Japanese by adopting a psychosocial perspective, which exposes the dynamic relationship between people's political leanings and their personal and social circumstances over the course of their lives.

One of the contributions of the study is its finding that the visibility of minorities is not a necessary condition for racism. Inspired by Rustin's (1991; 2000) idea of race being an empty category onto which people can project a variety of negative emotions, and by Gadd and Dixon's (2011) incorporation of this concept in their psychosocial analysis of hate crime offenders and far-right activists, this thesis will assess how the concept of nation works in people's minds when they engage with far-right activities. The life stories recounted here are characterised by a lack or scarcity of direct contacts with the *zainichi*. The invisibility of minorities can render racial categories even emptier in terms of their meaning, enabling activists to project their wildest fantasies and delusions onto them. This emptiness allows

nation-centred thinking, not only on the far right but also by many mainstream populist political figures, to collapse the distinctions between a nation-state and its people and to view individuals as symbols of a nation-state.

Therefore, widening the scope of psychosocial analysis devised by Hollway and Jefferson (2000/2013), this study will expose the interactions between negative feelings (such as anxiety and shame), the concept of nation, and various aspects of social structures, which drive some people to join far-right movements that are oriented toward excluding others. It thereby makes a valuable contribution to research on the far right, not only because of the current paucity of studies that directly investigate the mindsets of far-right activists, but also because it employs psychosocial methods to explore how a combination of widespread nation-centred thinking, other social factors, and personal life experiences can come together to draw people into the far-right movements. Although they focus on Japan, these discussions will provide valuable insights into similar phenomena in different contexts.

The Rise of the Far-right Movements in Japan

The *zainichi* population in Japan is only 0.3 million while the total population is approximately 125 million (Ministry of Justice, 2017), which suggests that the majority of Japanese people are unlikely to have many direct contacts with the *zainichi*. It is not immediately obvious why contemporary Japanese should be concerned with the glory of the empire, which vanished more than 70 years ago.[1] Certainly, it is tempting to dismiss the followers of the far right as mere paranoiacs. However, the situation in other countries (especially in the US), where far-right ideologies and thought processes quickly became mainstream and caused serious social divisions (Andaya, 2019; Butt and Khalid, 2018), suggests that it is necessary to prepare for such a sudden upsurge of far-right ideologies in the Japanese political landscape. An important element of this preparation is understanding how and why people are attracted to the far-right movements. Unravelling the complex interplay of environmental and psychological factors in the formation of far-right attitudes will prevent us from becoming overly fearful and unnecessarily aggressive. It is especially crucial to make this effort at a time when some local

[1] In fact, most of the participants in a rightist group studied by Ueno (Oguma and Ueno, 2002) were not from the generation who experienced WWII. Only a handful of Higuchi's (2013) participants indicated that their political standpoints were influenced by their grandparents, who knew what it was like to live under the rule of Imperial Japan.

governments have started to introduce penalties to fight back against hate speech (Higaki and Nasu, 2021).

Civil far-right activism in Japan is collectively referred to as Kodo suru Hoshu Undo (the Action Conservative Movement, hereafter ACM). It was a far-right civil activist Nishimura Shuhei and his civil group Shuken-kai (Shuken Kaifuku o Mezasu-kai, the Group Aiming to Recover Sovereignty) who laid the foundation of the ACM's style of activities, characterised by street agitations and chanting (Yamaguchi, 2013). Zainichi Tokken o Yurusanai Shimin no Kai (The League of Citizens Intolerant of the Privileges of the *Zainichi*, hereafter Zaitoku-kai), established around the end of 2006/the start of 2007 as a study group, began taking to the streets under the influence of Nishimura. Zaitoku-kai conducted their demonstrations in the areas where the targeted minorities (especially Koreans) gather and live, harassing the residents, shop-owners and schoolchildren (Yasuda, 2012; Nakamura, 2014; Shibuichi, 2015). Their activities even resulted in the arrest and subsequent conviction of some members. For example, in 2010, members of Zaitoku-kai and other affiliated groups stormed the office of Tokushima Prefectural Teachers' Union, calling the staff 'dogs of Koreans' and 'traitors to the country'. Eight perpetrators were convicted of the forcible obstruction of business and intrusion into buildings (Asahi Shimbun, 2014; Sankei, 2016). Sharing the videos of these violent activities is no less important than the activities themselves in attracting audiences, whose reactions will in turn motivate the participants (Yamaguchi, 2013).

Zaitoku-kai's primary object was the abolition of what they called *zainichi tokken* (privileges of the *zainichi*). The literal translation of the term *zainichi* is 'residing in Japan'. The term is used to refer to 'a population of colonial-era migrants from the Korean peninsula that settled in the Japanese archipelago and their descendants' (Lie, 2008, x; for a wider variety of meanings of the term, see Chapman, 2008, p.3). These *zainichi* people have special permanent resident status (*tokubetsu eiju*), unless they make choices like naturalization. The *zainichi* are highly integrated culturally and socio-economically into Japanese society. Fifty-percent of the *zainichi* usually use *tsu-mei*, the Japanese names they have in addition to their Korean names, and 35.6 % use both *tsu-mei* and their Korean names according to the occasion (Matsubara, 2001). Ninety-percent of the *zainichi* go to Japanese schools (Okano, 1997, p.528). (Other options include going to Korean schools, in which ethnic education in Korean language and history is conducted). In terms of their socio-economic status, the situation of the *zainichi* has improved. The job opportunities in public service and private companies have increased for the *zainichi* as employers' discrimination against candidates on the basis of nationality has decreased (Kim, 2016). The income level of Koreans in Japan is slightly higher than that of

Japanese (Kim, 2003, p.8). The population of the *zainichi* having the status of special permanent residency in Japan was 308,809 at the end of 2019 (Ministry of Justice, 2020), while in 2009 their population was 405,571 (Ministry of Justice, 2010). The primary reason for this decrease is naturalization, in which, according to Mizuno and Mun (2015), marriages between the Japanese and the *zainichi* have played an important role. In 1973, 50.6% of the marriages in which one of the partners was Korean were marriages between Korean men and Korean women, while in 1994, this was the case in only 17.5 % of marriages and 81.7 % were between Koreans and Japanese (Kim Yŏng-dal, 1996, p.179 cited in Ryang, 2000, p.6).

Ito (2014) notes that Zaitoku-kai members mentioned the following *zainichi* 'privileges': being exempted from the duty of paying tax, the licence fee for NHK (Japan's public broadcasting system), and water bills; being entitled to a huge amount of social aid to the extent that they can live without working; the convention of their use of *tsu-mei*, which allegedly enables them to open bank accounts with fake names and to commit illegal transactions; being able to get away with committing crimes without their real Korean-style names being reported; a higher crime rate; and the special permanent residency status, which was not enjoyed by other foreigners. The first two claims, about exemption from tax and licence fees, are untrue (Ito, 2014). As for the third point, it is true that the *zainichi* can use *tsu-mei* when they open their bank accounts, but the Japanese can also do so using non-real names, such as stage names. As for the points regarding the *zainichi*'s crimes, the media have reported their Korean names when they commit crimes and there has never been an official count of their offending rates relative to other ethnic groups (see Chapter 7). The Japanese government grant the *zainichi* permanent resident status because of their unique status as former Imperial subjects, therefore it would be wrong to assume they obtained such status illegitimately. At least it is not a privilege vis-à-vis the Japanese who make up the majority of the ACM activists. Zaitoku-kai members typically believe that the *zainichi* control Japan. Zaitoku-kai's claims around this point are often tautological, for they tend also to assume that anyone who opposes them is actually a *zainichi* (Yasuda, 2012).

Their agenda was not limited to issues relating to the *zainichi*, as *rekishi shuseishugi* ('historical revisionism') was another major issue. In the context of Japan, 'historical revisionism' is defined as a:

> …highly politicized version of historiography that subordinates scientific method—however defined—to the achievement of political aims. These aims are re-assertion of national identity and the strengthening of citizens' allegiance to the state, and, as a basis

for these goals, the construction of a 'bright' or exculpatory historical narrative of Japan's recent past. (Saaler, 2005, p.23)

The rise of *rekishi-shuseishugi* is closely related to the dispute between the Japanese and South Korean governments over the atrocities perpetrated by Japan when the Korean peninsula was a Japanese colony. This dispute intensified in 1991, when Kim Hak-sun testified, using her own name, regarding her experience as a 'comfort woman' under the rule of Imperial Japan and sued the Japanese government. 'Comfort women', translated from the Japanese euphemism *ianfu*, were exploited by the Imperial Army of Japan to fulfill their sexual desire at the comfort stations (*ianjo*), which spread as Imperial Japan's territory expanded (Yoshimi, 1995, p.77; Soh, 2008, pp.132-133). Those women were from many parts of the areas controlled by the Japanese military, ranging from Japan, Korea, China, Taiwan and the Philippines to Indonesia, and some were from the Netherlands, accompanying their families stationed in the Japanese colonies in Southeast Asia. The estimated number of comfort women varies from 50,000 to 200,000 (Yoshimi, 1995, pp.79-80). The rise of the 'comfort women' issue is especially important because it 'represented a paradigmatic shift in the debate about war responsibility toward the public recognition of formerly neglected war victims...This in turn led to a more direct acknowledgement of Japanese as war and colonial aggressors', rather than seeing them as victims of the war under the totalitarian government (Seraphim, 2006, p.275). In conjunction with the issue of *choyoko* (forced labour) and other kinds of sufferings that Koreans experienced during the war, the 'comfort women' have been a major diplomatic issue between Japan and South Korea. The issue of acknowledging wartime atrocities also exists with China, most notably regarding the Nanjing Massacre.

In the 1990s, there was a rise in the discourses of denial of wartime atrocities and the legitimisation or relativisation of Imperial Japan's expansionist policies and its decision to fight against the US. Supporters of 'historical revisionists', who include not only ACM activists, but also conservative politicians, journalists, scholars, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, now call their efforts the 'history war', which happens in the form of propaganda in other countries, most notably the US (Yamaguchi, 2020). The most recent episode of the 'war' is that related to Harvard Professor Mark Ramseyer's heavily criticised article that argued that the harsh working conditions of 'comfort women' were decided as a consequence of the negotiations between brothel owners and the women, both of whom exercised free will. The article was published electronically in the *International Review of Law and Economics*, a peer-reviewed journal, in December 2020 and soon attracted attention for what could be seen as a 'historical

revisionist' claim. Scholars from various backgrounds criticised Ramseyer's poor use of sources, especially how he ignored evidence indicating the existence of coercion and deception (see Dudden, 2021; Gordon and Eckert, 2021; Morris-Suzuki, 2021a; Stanley et al., 2021), while 'historical revisionists' tried to protect him since they regarded his article as a weapon to promote their agenda (Morris-Suzuki, 2021b).

Other issues on which Zaitoku-kai and other ACM groups (including their de-facto successor, the Japan First Party [hereafter JFP]) are vocal include: territorial disputes with China and South Korea; North Korea's abduction of Japanese citizens; the behavior of leftists, whom they regard as 'anti-Japan' (*han-nichi*); and incidents involving other kinds of immigrants and minorities in Japan (Higuchi, 2014). It is noteworthy that nation-centred thinking is salient in ACM's ideologies. Higuchi Naoto (2014) argues that the rise of the hate discourse against the *zainichi* is due to the deteriorating relationship between Japan and affiliated countries. Smith (2018) argues that ACM's discourse is characterised by its use of logic associated with the ideology of the nation-state: legal/illegal binaries and discourses of entitlement to rights and of nationality. Indeed, as further detailed in Chapter 4, nationalism and racism are closely connected in the minds of the activists.

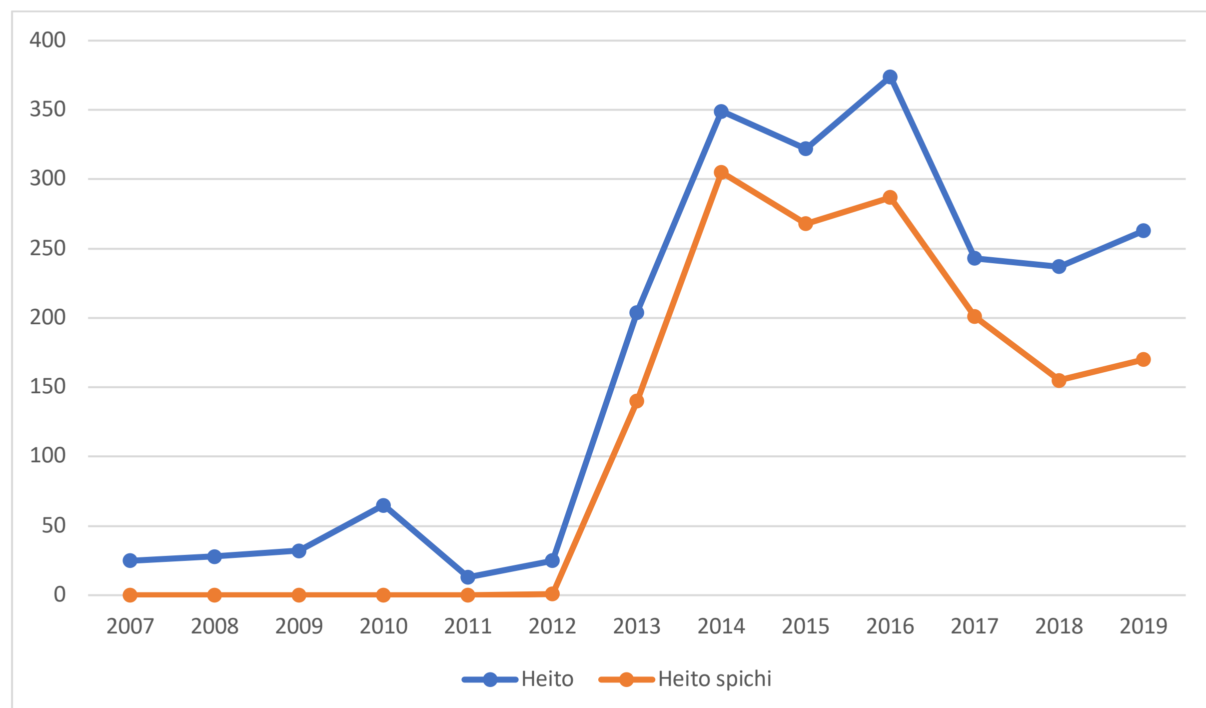
The ACM at Present

2016 seemed to be a turning point in the type of activity instigated by the ACM. After Sakurai's electoral campaign for Tokyo Governor in July 2016, he announced the establishment of the JFP (Gill, 2018). Ever since this campaign, the JFP has put up candidates for various elections to local assemblies. Finally, in 2020 a member was elected to the Naka city council (she later left the party). The same year saw Sakurai's second attempt to be elected as the Tokyo Governor; he gained nearly 180,000 votes, approximately 50 % more than in the previous election in 2016.

Elements of Japanese society have opposed ACM's activities. Figure 1.1 below shows the number of references to the term '*heito*' (hate) and '*heito supichi*' (hete speech), directly imported from English, in the articles of Asahi Shimbun (a quality newspaper which is among papers with a highest circulation). As Figure 1.1 indicates these terms became much more common in 2013. As racist problems attracted more attention, from 2013, grass-roots counter-activist groups, such as *Reishisuto o Shibaki-tai* (The Team Wants to Slap the Racists) and later, the C.R.A.C. (Counter-Racist Action Collective), began to intensify their activity. They countered the far right's street actions by surrounding them and chanting (Akedo, et al. 2015).

After the introduction of anti-hate speech by-laws in Osaka and Kawasaki (cities with large *zainichi* communities) the national parliament decided to pass the Hate Speech Elimination Act (hereafter HSEA) in 2016. While the HSEA did not criminalise the act of hate speech, it declared that words and actions that threatened the life and property of those from outside Japan and their descendants were unacceptable. Kawasaki city has since then gone further by introducing a punitive measure, albeit only effective in very limited situations. According to the by-law introduced in 2020, the mayor can impose a fine of up to 500,000 yen (approximately £3,300) on those who do not comply with the mayor's order not to engage in and not to let others engage in conducting hateful activities.

Figure 1.1: The Progression of the Number of the References to the Words 'Heito' (hate) and 'Heito Supichi' (Hate Speech) in Asahi Shimbun



These counter-movements against hate might have been successful in changing the trend. The police noted that after the introduction of the HSEA, some rightist activists became hesitant to use harsh words and behaviour in their marches and street agitations (National Police Agency, 2017, p.43). The police witnessed events which involved 'hundreds of participants' in 2013 and 2014 (National Police Agency, 2014, p.21; 2015, p.24), but their subsequent reports did not refer to such major activities, implying that there was a reduction in the scale of such street events. The number of demonstrations by rightist groups recorded by the police declined from about 120 in 2014 to about 30 in 2018 (National Police Agency, 2015,

p.24; 2019a, p.34). Though these police documents indicate that the rightist groups are suffering setbacks as stated by Gill (2018), the extent of these should not be overstated. As Akedo (2018, p.5) noted, the number of demonstrations recorded by the police only includes street marches, the use of which requires permission from the police, while their spontaneous activities in other public spaces are not recorded. More importantly, as described above, they now participate in electoral campaigns, which are not counted in the abovementioned police record.

Although the JFP has put many resources into the electoral campaigns, the extent to which it has distanced itself from Zaitoku-kai's culture of praising confrontation on the streets is questionable. It is fair to say that a tension exists within the JFP between those who see possibilities in electoral campaigns, and others who prefer activities of the Zaitoku-kai type, which feature provocative words and conduct. A notable sign of the JFP's transition away from Zaitoku-kai's culture was the case of a female activist well known for clashing with the police and counter-activists during their street activities, who resigned as head of the JFP women's bureau in January 2018. In addition, some of my interviewees questioned, or even criticised, 'activist-style' street demonstrations as meaningless or counter-productive in their impact on the public. At the same time, there have been signs that some JFP members (especially former Zaitoku-kai members) continue to praise, or at least accept, violence. In February 2018, when *uyoku* members fired bullets at the gate of the Chosen Soren building (North Korea's de-facto embassy in Japan), the Twitter account of JFP's Hokkaido branch praised the act as '*gikyo*' (an act of justice), thereby provoking discussion inside the party (Nippon Dai'ichi-tou, 2018). An activist closely linked to the JFP was arrested in January 2019 for injuring a counter-activist (The Sankei News, 2019). On 14 October 2019, the JFP held an 'anti-immigrants' day (*han-imin dei*) and called for party members to engage in street agitations and demonstrations in their places of residence (Ishibashi, 2018). A branch of the JFP periodically holds a street agitation in Kawasaki (where there is one of the biggest communities of the *zainichi*) to 'discuss freedom of speech', only to provoke trouble in front of Kawasaki station (Sankei Shimbun, 2018). In November 2020, one of the leaders of the JFP was arrested for an attempted murder in a quarrel with a counter-activist (Sankei Shimbun, 2020). Other groups in the ACM are divided on their engagement in the electoral campaigns. Some groups, such as Gokoku Shishi no Kai and Gaikokujin Hanzai Tsuihou Undo, supported an independent candidate for the nationwide local elections in 2019, occasionally cooperating with the JFP. Others, such as Zaitoku-kai members who did not join the JFP, continued their street-based activities. It remains to be seen which direction the far-right movements will take in the future.

The Structure of This Thesis

Following this Introduction (Chapter 1), in Chapter 2, the thesis will review research on the Japanese far-right movements and Anglo-American research on hate crime and crime in Japan. Then Chapter 3 will explain the methodology used in this research. The psychosocial method developed by Wendy Hollway and Tony Jefferson (2013), which features the Free Association Narrative Interview Method, will be introduced. Along with this, the chapter will provide an account of how I contacted the far-right activists, chose the interviewees, carried out interviews, and analysed them.

Each of the subsequent chapters analyses in depth the life story of one activist to observe how key concepts function in their mind. Chapter 4 will explore how nationalism and racism can relate to each other. Analysis of Naito's story will show how nation can play the role of a 'half empty, half full' category onto which people can project their own negative emotions, while national-level conflicts can in turn rebound to provoke negative emotions. Naito's feelings of shame for being powerless to save his mother led to his acquiring the view that Japan is under attack and that it, and he too (who identifies with Japan) must fight against its enemies. The changing international circumstances and the decline of Japan's economic power meant that the supposed enemy changed from the US to South Korea and China and their people, whom he regarded as stealing Japan's economic prosperity. His identification with Japan in turn affected and legitimised his provocative and often violent acts, which he imagined as combats on the battlefield in the war between Japan and South Korea.

Chapter 5 will discuss one of the recurrent themes of this thesis, namely the pressure from gender and family norms, through the case of Aoki. Her story tells us about the subtle ways in which being a woman can influence one's participation in the far-right movements. The pressure from gender norms, in conjunction with the rising neoliberalist norm of self-responsibility, reinforced her sense of shame about being a single mother. Aoki eventually clung to the discourse of building a 'strong Japan', which could fend off the disputes over its wartime atrocities. Aoki's case illustrates how the causes of pain can be obscured by complex interactions between personal experiences and the social structure, and shows that the only way she finds to deal with this painful feeling is to unconsciously project it onto those whom she regards as others.

Chapter 6, on the other hand, is about masculinity and history. Through analysing the life story of a former long-serving salaryman, the chapter reveals the painful feelings of a white-collar man under hegemonic masculinity. Sato, who harbours a sense of shame about having

been a ‘timid’ boy, had a strong attachment to masculinity although he knew he could not live up to it. Sato’s ambivalence about the masculine norm caused him to invest in the discourse of being a strong father, who would not hesitate to be a provocative activist who defended his children from foreigners, whom he saw as not complying with the salaryman way of life. Japan’s economic decline since the early 1990s destabilised the hegemony of ‘salaryman masculinity’, and Sato’s reaction can be seen as typical of that of former salarymen who do not know how to respond when their attachment to the norm of masculinity is threatened. This led Sato to identify himself with former soldiers of Japan, whose ‘springtime’ was denied after the war. Sato’s case vividly depicts how some contemporary Japanese relate to the reputation of Imperial Japan, leading them to glorify it.

Chapter 7 covers the topic of fear of crime committed by foreigners, especially by the *zainichi*. Kuroda’s shame about her isolation, for which her mother blamed her, interacted with the moral panic about crime in Japan since the late 1990s, when parents were held responsible for their children’s security. Consequently, Kuroda’s sense of insecurity was raised to an uncontainable level. She attributed all the gory crimes in this period to the *zainichi*, whom she regarded as ‘enemies within’, pretending to be Japanese. Her attributions thus revealed her desire to bring back the imaginary boundary between ‘a crimeless daily world’, associated with ‘legitimate’ citizens of Japanese society, and ‘an abnormal world of crime’, which she presumed to be inhabited by ‘illegitimate’ people, including the *zainichi*. Since safety was part of Japan’s self-image, Kuroda’s participation in the far-right movements can be regarded as a nationalist act motivated by the desire to bring back something stolen by outsiders, as is also the case with other activists analysed in this thesis.

Chapter 8 deals with authoritarianism. Through analysing the life story of Takeda, it explores the applicability of a psychoanalytic concept, *amae*, to explain people’s investment in nationalist discourse. Unlike the case of Naito (Chapter 4) and Aoki (Chapter 5), Takeda’s identification with Japan does not involve him connecting his own fate with that of Japan. Rather, his attachment to the Emperor, who to him embodies Japan, comes from his desire to be loved back by the Emperor. His hatred against South Korea and foreigners can be regarded as stemming from his anger against the threat to this imagined dyad between him and the Emperor.

In the conclusion, themes common to all the cases will be discussed. The study concludes that the five subjects whose life stories are analysed in detail here have been suffering from undefined painful feelings, the cause of which they cannot articulate or even identify due to a complex underlying entanglement of personal and social factors. Because the

social factors triggering their painful feelings were obscured by overwhelming memories of more personal experiences, they saw these painful feelings as evidence of shameful personal shortcomings. However, they projected these shortcomings onto groups whom they regarded as insidious enemies, including people with foreign origins, neighbouring countries who seemed to be conspiring against them, leftists and critical historians, along with anyone whom they suspected of trying to persecute them.

The thesis concludes by arguing that it is necessary to allow for the possibility of a subject being invested in multiple narratives that contradict each other. Such a perspective will enable a researcher to have a nuanced understanding of the painful experiences that can drive subjects to embrace far-right movements. Moreover, this perspective will help to prevent binary categorisations of people as either racist or non-racist, and will facilitate understanding of the acquisition of racist and/or anti-racist attitudes as a process that is non-linear and that takes place over a long period of time.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

Japanese Literature on the Rise of the Far-Right Movements

Although much ink has been spilt on discussing the far-right movements and *neto-uyo* (online right-wingers) in Japan, not many researchers have explored the thinking of actual far-right activists through conversations with them.[2] In his book, *Netto to Aikoku* (the Internet and Patriotism), based on his interviews and fieldwork with Zaitoku-kai and affiliated groups, journalist Yasuda Koichi (2012) argues that 'those who seem devastated' (*shindosouna hitobito*) join far-right movements. Using an approach similar to strain theory, Yasuda presumes that these people have suffered from harsh living conditions stemming from the decreasing availability of full-time jobs and the loneliness that has resulted from the decline of social networks in Japan. Such a presumption was heavily criticised by subsequent studies. Higuchi (2014, pp.15-17) notes that the Zaitoku-kai members who have appeared in the media and/or who participated in Higuchi's seminal study were not necessarily young part-time workers and varied widely in their backgrounds. They included business owners, public officers, housewives, and students. Similarly, based on an online survey, Nagayoshi (2019, pp.22-26) concluded that factors like low socio-economic status, low education and lack of romantic partners do not predict (or only weakly predict) one's likeliness to be an online disseminator of conservative/xenophobic views.

Higuchi's (2014) *Nihongata Haigaishugi* (Japan-style Xenophobic Exclusionism) criticises Yasuda's view and argues that the rise of the anti-*zainichi* far-right movements is attributable to the heightened tension that has existed since the 1990s between Japan and the countries that the *zainichi* are affiliated with, South and North Korea. Through conducting life story interviews with 34 activists from Zaitoku-kai and other related groups, Higuchi concludes that it was those who already had conservative ideologies and/or even xenophobic attitudes that accepted the idea of *zainichi tokken* (privileges of the *zainichi*) and joined the far-right groups. He argues that there was a surge of anti-South/North Korea articles in the conservative magazines due to various international issues between Japan and South/North Korea since the 1990s, including controversy over wartime atrocities, North Korea's missile experiments, and the revelation of North Korea's abduction of Japanese citizens. Anti-*zainichi* discourses, which

[2] A few exceptions include Oguma and Ueno (2002), whose paper features an ethnographic study on a Tsukurukai-affliated group, and Yamaguchi, Saito, and Ogiue's (2012) work on an anti-feminism movement.

appeared on the Internet, are a variant of such anti-South/North Korea discourse, according to Higuchi.

Higuchi's view was insightful in its sensitivity to the diversity of far-right activists' socio-economic backgrounds in the specific context of Japan. At the same time, his account does not explain why the ideologies of the far-right movements and the types of activities they were engaged in resonated with some people but not others. Even though the majority of his research participants might have already had conservative ideologies and/or xenophobic attitudes, in the end they are only part of the whole population who share such standpoints, which is why the JFP, their successor, is struggling to win a seat even at a local council. In order to explain this, it is necessary to explore how the activists made sense of these ideologies and activities in relation to their own lives, and also to examine the emotions behind such meaning-making, that strengthen the attachment of some people to the far right.

Recently, attempts to acknowledge the subjectivities of research subjects have become more common, especially among feminist scholars. Yamaguchi (2018) and Suzuki Ayaka (2019a) both reveal how female far-right members, aware of their advantage as women in discussing this theme, choose to promote discourses hostile to 'comfort women'. (For a detailed discussion on women's subjectivity and the far right, see Chapter 5.) Smith (2018) reports other rightist groups' criticism against ACM groups' xenophobic tendencies, pointing out the diversity within groups which uphold nationalistic ideologies. With regard to emotion, Asahina (2019) investigates which emotions can function to initiate and sustain people's engagements in the far-right movements. While these studies provide valuable knowledge on how subjectivity and emotion play a role in the movements, again, they do not necessarily explore what meanings some of the population attach to far-right discourses and activities. This is where Anglo-American criminological literature can inform the study of the Japanese far-right movements.

Anglo-American Criminological Literature on Hate Crime

Anglo-American criminological literature has contributed to understanding the minds of far-right activists. Criminologists (or those who work closely with them) have pointed out how far-right groups attract those who have had various negative experiences, such as the perception of threat to whiteness in their daily lives (Hughey, 2010; Pilkington, 2018; Treadwell and Garland, 2011), underachievement (Blazak, 2001; Treadwell and Garland, 2011), and traumatic childhood events (Gadd and Dixon, 2011). Also, far-right groups use rhetoric that

attracts such individuals, who have a sense of victimization (Oaten, 2014). This section will introduce the development of criminological theories on hate crime so that the advantage and distinctive contribution of the psychosocial method adopted in this thesis becomes clear. Certainly, there are differences between hate crime offenders and far-right activists. Unlike extreme forms of far-right violence, such as terrorist attacks, hate crime does not require planning, which suggest hate crime can be committed impulsively (Deloughery et al., 2012). As for the motivation of participants in far-right groups, it is important to consider how discourses produced by far-right groups impact the way their members think and feel (Asahina, 2018; Blee, 2001). At the same time, there are similarities between the motivations of hate crime offenders and far-right groups. Some hate crime offenders are motivated by a sense of mission, just as far-right terrorists are (McDevitt et al., 2002). Retaliation for a perceived attack or defence of communities can be the motivation for hate crime offenders (Deloughery et al., 2012; McDevitt et al., 2002) as well as far-right activists (Mills, et al., 2017). Among both hate crime offenders and far-right activists there are some who engage with hate activities due to the excitement involved or because they want to bond with other activists, rather than because of hatred for the minority or any political ideology (Chakraborti and Garland, 2015; McDevitt et al., 2002; Pilkington, 2018). A review of criminological inquiry on hate crime will therefore provide an idea of how far-right activists' minds can be analysed.

What is distinctive about hate crime compared with other types of crime? For some, the rationale for a severer punishment of hate crime is based on its repercussions for the wider population in the community beyond the victimised individual (Iganski, 2001). Hate crime can send a message to those minorities (whether they are in the same group as the individual or not) that they are essentially unwelcome. Perry (2001, p.3) argues that hate crime is 'an instrument that defends the gendered and racialized social ordering'. Borrowing ideas from West and Zimmerman (1987) and Messerschmidt (1993), Perry (2001, p.2) contends that the offenders are 'doing difference' or reproducing the imagined boundary between themselves and those they regard as others.

Such an understanding of hate crime captures its long-term effects and its relation to the order of wider society, but at the same time, it is questionable whether this understanding reflects what happens in an actual contact between an offender and a victim. Iganski (2008) argues that we should look at the specific situations of the hate incidents: perpetrators are not necessarily individuals determined to attack the minorities but rather they opportunistically commit hate crimes in everyday contexts, such as school, the workplace, or the streets. The routine circumstances of hate crime draw attention to factors that explain how they happen,

over and above categories like race. For instance, Chakraborti and Garland (2012) draw attention to the vulnerability of victims, which makes some of the minority population particularly likely targets over others: factors such as low socio-economic status, isolation, poor health, lack of citizenship, can all increase one's vulnerability, and these factors are intertwined with each other as well as with race. Some kinds of low socio-economic status, for example being a sex worker, potentially place individuals outside the remit of support groups as they are seen as illegitimate members of society. Moreover, when the subjectively perceived severity of the victimisation is taken into account, the interaction between race and other factors is more complicated than it seems. For instance, Meyer's (2010) study on the victimisation of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people shows that even though those with low socio-economic status experience hate violence more frequently, those from the middle-class perceive their victimisation as more severe. This suggests the importance of contextualising hate incidents in the context of individuals' life experience to understand their significance to those involved.

With regard to perpetrators, 'hate crime' discourse has been criticised for its implicit assumption that strangers from backgrounds with low socio-economic status assault middle-class minorities due to prejudice (Mayer, 2014). Researchers have suggested the need to go beyond the 'stranger danger' assumption, pointing out that the perpetrators are not necessarily motivated by prejudice and do not necessarily come from different backgrounds to the victims. McDevitt et al. (2002) categorised hate crime offenders into four types: thrill offenders; defensive offenders; mission offenders; retaliatory offenders. Although these motivations can still coexist with prejudice against minorities, this study hints that the motivations of perpetrators very significantly. Sibbit (1997, pp.77-80), on the other hand, proposes a typology of offenders according to their life-stage: pensioners; the people next door; the problem family; 15- to 18-year-olds; 11- to 14-year-olds; 4- to 10-year-olds. Sibbit shows how at each stage of life various factors (anxiety about becoming old, insecurity about physical and mental illness, peer-pressure, influence from family members etc.) can influence people to commit acts of racist harassment. Sibbit points out that these racists are no 'stranger' to the minorities in question: they are living in the same community and sometimes make friends with members of the minority groups, but according to the circumstances, their racist attitude occasionally emerges at a behavioural level. Furthermore, hate crime offenders tend to be 'versatile', committing a wider range of crimes when under the influence of drugs and alcohol (Messner et al., 2004; Jolliffe and Farrington, 2020), again suggesting that hate crime offenders are not necessarily motivated by a desire to reproduce the order of racialised society.

Stress on the routine nature of hate crime has gone so far as to stop differentiating such offenders from other types of offenders. Walters (2011) turns to Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) self-control theory. Self-control theory assumes that lack of socialisation through proper parenting, school education, or having a family might cause and develop one's incapacity to resist temptations. As a result, people become more likely to act impulsively, commit crimes and abuse substances. Walters thinks that such an explanation is advantageous because it is compatible with the fact that perpetrators often have no or low-skilled jobs (Ray and Smith, 2002) and have committed not only hate crimes but multiple types of crimes, as discussed above. Moreover, self-control theory seems to explain why some perpetrators seem not to be motivated by bias, as McDevitt et al. (2002) reveal.

Self-control theory has some shortcomings. First of all, the theory might explain hate crimes that happen spontaneously, but not those committed by what McDevitt et al. (2002) called 'mission offenders'. This is a serious drawback because the subjects of this study, the far-right activists, maintain their antipathy against the minorities for a relatively long period. Second, it is also noteworthy that Japanese far-right activists are not likely to lack socialisation and self-control: as the abovementioned studies by Higuchi (2014) and Nagayoshi (2019) indicate, they are not necessarily socio-economically deprived people, who lack socialisation from school and work; being a far-right activist requires much endurance due to the stigma attached to their activities, conflicts between and within groups, the time-consuming nature and costs of these activities and so on. Indeed, many of Higuchi's (2014) participants, as well as the subjects of the current research, suddenly joined in the far-right movements after reaching middle age and were far from committing any kind of crimes. Third, although there are many people who had troubles in their family or at school, only a limited number of them choose to commit crimes, much less hate crimes. Self-control theory does not explain why some people appear to have less self-control than others. Fourth, in terms of the conceptual discussion, this theory does not say much about the subjective views of the perpetrator, especially about categories such as race and gender. This makes it difficult to speculate on the relationship between the racism existing in society and the attitudes of individual offenders. In order to scrutinise the role of categories such as race and gender in perpetrators' minds, it is necessary to examine how they construct meaning around assaulting and harassing minorities.

Psychosocial criminology, first devised by Hollway and Jefferson (2000) and subsequently developed by Gadd and Jefferson (2007), provides a way to scrutinise the meaning-making of the offenders. Central to this approach is psychoanalyst Melanie Klein's idea of the split self—between conscious and unconscious thinking—and projection of the bad

part of it, which reflects one's anxiety, shame, or anger toward what they regard as 'others'. Through the Free Association Narrative Interview Method, where interviewers let the interviewees express any events in their lives as they emerge in their minds during the interview, psychosocial criminologists figure out a wide range of factors behind a hate crime (for a detailed account of the methodology, see Chapter 3). Confirming previous research, Gadd (2009; 2010), Gadd and Dixon (2011) and Treadwell and Garland (2011) all notice that the grievances of the hate crime offenders and the far-right activists are not directly derived from a desire to recreate the social order of a racialised society or Britain's glory in the colonial era: rather they come from everyday experiences, such as a failed romantic relationship, mental and physical illness, family problems including domestic abuse, the estrangement of one's children, or lack of work/low-skilled jobs. The emotional distress of these experiences all come back to mind when more trivial life stressors arise, some of which are easily attributed to contact with ethnic minorities in societies that condone seemingly banal forms of nationalism and xenophobia.

These psychosocial studies try to uncover the meanings of these events vis-à-vis the whole course of people's lives, rather than treating them as singular events. By doing so, the studies reveal why a seemingly trivial encounter with the minorities causes a strong sense of pain in some people, initiating the projection of such painful feelings onto them. Gadd and Dixon (2011) point out how the emptiness of the concept of 'race' enables offenders to rely on it in their projection of a vast range of painful feelings onto racial others (see Chapter 4). Thus, even though the offenders do not consciously try to reproduce the racial order of society through violence, the convenience of the emptiness of this category and society's lack of acknowledgement of the minorities' subjectivities invite such offences, subordinating the minorities and perpetuating the order. It does not necessarily make the hate crime offenders happy; the recreation of the racial order strengthens their paranoic belief that they are surrounded by potential enemies.

Psychosocial analysis of the offenders' minds is not unproblematic. The reliance on psychoanalysis is criticised as pathologizing the subject of the research (Parker, 2005). Certainly, the more detailed and individualised a perpetrator's life story is, the more unclear it might become how their life is connected to wider structures. Especially when the story features unusual experiences like extreme forms of abuse, such episodes might make them look different from the vast majority of the members of society, blinding us to the problem with the social structures which increases their painful feelings. In order to avoid this, it will be necessary to conduct a 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973) of the context at various levels

(historical, geographical, and so on) and to discuss the relevant set of norms, points of view or *habitus* shared among the groups the person belongs to (whether they are about socio-economic status, age, or something else). By doing so, it becomes possible to scrutinise the general problem with the types of social structure that produce offenders, which is transferable knowledge, while also answering the 'why some and not others' question. Indeed, such a method is helpful in providing a critical view of the problem and in identifying an unseen linkage between a social problem and the problem of hate. The thick description will enable us to imagine the subject living somewhere in 'our' society as if they were someone we know, with issues for which we are somewhat responsible.

The psychosocial way of researching has also been used to study a political group where criminal offending is less common. Through her ethnography involving life story interviews with Tea Party supporters, Hochschild's (2016) *Strangers in Their Own Land* identifies what she calls a 'deep story' of individuals involved. Thus, she figures out how the normative pressure of the American Dream, with which they have grown up, and the US's economic downfall cause a sense of underachievement. The anger stemming from this is directed towards the minorities, whom they perceive as being illegitimately prioritised through affirmative actions. But a study of this kind, which explores the unconscious of its subjects, is still rare. Although some of the researchers explore how the members use their agency to decide whether to join, remain, or leave the groups and what ideological stances to take and so on, rather than being passively manipulated by mobilising techniques of the groups (Pilkington, 2017; Blee, 2002; Latif et al., 2020), they do not necessarily scrutinise how their lives previous to or outside of the far-right movements are related to their activities within the movements. The current study will fill this research gap.

Japan in Anglo-American Criminological Literature

As has been pointed out in the previous section, a 'thick description' of the context is indispensable. In this regard, Anglo-American criminological literature has observed Japanese phenomena from a specific point of view. Should such a gaze be adopted in the current study, or modified?

When Japan becomes a focus in the Anglo-American criminological literature, the most popular topic is its social control, especially the relationship between its cultural traits and low

crime rate compared with other developed countries.[3] These supposed cultural traits include: group-oriented culture, which prioritises harmony in social groups, such as family, company and neighbourhood; the highly interdependent nature of society; Confucius culture of shame; suppression of those who try to stand out (Bayley, 1976; Clifford, 1976; Fenwick, 1983; Leonardsen, 2004). The nexus between the general traits of society and the behaviours of individuals is explained by Japanese norms regarding intersubjective relations, such as *giri* (obligations of conscience), *ninjo* (sympathy), *amae* (dependency), *uchi* (inside), *soto* (outside), and *makoto* (sincerity). The researchers argue that the police incorporate these norms in their social control techniques and that they are internalized by the Japanese themselves (Bayley, 1976; Clifford, 1976; Komiya, 1999).

These analyses neglect to establish causal relations between such aspects of the 'culture' and the low crime rate. First of all, they do not distinguish between the existence of a certain concept in a culture and acceptance of it. For example, *amae* is referred to as evidence that Japanese society is characterised by a high interdependence. This is too simplistic an idea. If one thinks about the term being used in a sentence '*amae-runa*' (don't depend on others, don't spoil yourself), the existence of the term might mean that there is a chance that people consciously reflect on the state of mind that the term illustrates, but this does not necessarily mean that such a state of mind is accepted uncritically. This leads us to question the notion that such a state of mind is unique to the Japanese (see Chapter 8 for a detailed discussion about this concept). Their ideas about 'Japanese culture' are often derived from *Nihonjinron* literature, such as *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* by Ruth Benedict and Japan as *Number One* by Ezra Vogel. *Nihonjinron* (translated literally as 'theory of Japanese people') refers to a genre of literature that addresses 'Japaneseness', which can be characterised by 'a vast reservoir...or presuppositions and presumptions, propositions and assertions about who the Japanese are and what Japanese culture is' (Befu, 2001, pp.1-2). Although some *Nihonjinron* literature is insightful, many examples of it have been criticised for their tendency to claim Japanese culture's uniqueness without a proper comparison with other cultures (or comparison with what is vaguely referred to as the 'Western' culture) (Befu, 2001). Researchers have pointed out the essentialist idea behind *Nihonjinron* literature, which ignores and marginalises the diversity within Japan and strengthens nationalism (Befu, 2001; Yoshino, 1997).

[3] Other topics include the death penalty (Johnson and Nagata, 2014) and the high arrest rate among elders (Sugie, 2017).

Second, the explanations in Anglo-American criminological literature of the causal relationship between the low crime rate and the collectivist culture are over-dependent on inferences based on knowledge of general cultural traits of Japan rather than on specific observations. One of the most famous criminological theories based on such an inference is Braithwaite's (1989) 'reintegrative shaming'. Braithwaite contended that in a highly interdependent society like Japan, where community members collectively take responsibility for their fellows' faults, whatever can cause a sense of shame to the community (including crime) is strongly avoided. Citing Bayley's (1976) ethnography with Japanese police officers, Braithwaite argues that Japanese society reintegrates offenders after their ritual of apology, which indicates their agreement to comply with the social norms, and the apology is made to the police officers, who symbolise the moral authority in Japanese communities. The question is whether such an integration really happens, and to what extent it contributes to the low crime rate. It is true that Bayley observed the ritual of officers making offenders write a letter of apology, but he does not present evidence of whether this ritual of apology is known to the wider community or how it is perceived. The closely-knit society can simply exclude those who don't comply with the norm, rather than integrating them. For ex-offenders, their criminal records can be an obstacle to their job-hunting and networking, and can isolate them from the rest of society (Fukui, 2018). The cases assembled in Suzuki (2011) and Abe (2017), which include not only high-profile incidents but also minor ones, show a series of difficulties that families of offenders and suspects have experienced, which in some cases lead to family members committing suicide; being asked to leave their houses by neighbours; threatening letters; complaints to their workplaces by anonymous people; resignation from jobs; broken engagements; vandalism and arson attack on their houses; sharing of photos, addresses and phone numbers on the Internet. While it is true that some private individuals are willing to contribute to the rehabilitation of offenders as voluntary probation officers, it would be wrong to assume that the whole of society has agreed to be lenient on the offenders and their families (see Chapter 7).

Third, studies of Japan's specific contexts have shown that it is erroneous to suppose that Japan is safe at any time in any place. It is true that the International Crime Victimization Survey indicates that the rate of those who were victimised by crimes in Japan was one of the lowest in the world in 2003/4, along with Hungary and Portugal (Houmu Sougou Kenkyu-jo, 2008). While 21.09 % of the respondents experienced crimes in England and Wales in the year ending March 2019 (Office for National Statistics, 2019), only 7.0 % of their Japanese counterparts had such an experience in 2018 (Houmu Sougou Kenkyu-jo, 2020). At the same

time, the police officers can use discretion called '*maesabaki*' (advanced judgement) in deciding whether to record a crime (M. Kawai, 2005), and the police's reluctance to deal with domestic abuse and stalking in particular was remarkable (Aldous and Leishman, 2000). Only 20 % of the victims of sexual abuse report their victimisation to the police (Houmu Sougou Kenkyu-jo, 2020, p.92). A comparative study of high school students in Osaka and Seattle by Bui et al. (2014) finds that those in Osaka have more experience of hurting others than their counterparts in Seattle. Fujiomoto and Park (1994) draw attention to the fact that Japan's low crime rate dates only from the 1960s. Explanations of low crime rate based on Japan's culture are too deterministic and insensitive to the diversity and transitoriness of Japan's situation. In order to define the scope of such explanations, they should have incorporated accounts of the socio-economic, geographic, or historical contexts which enable the cultural trait in question to function. Explanations based on culture are particularly problematic in relation to the surge of moral panic about crime and penal populism after the 1990s (see Chapter 7).

In short, explanations of the Japanese situation focused on Japanese cultural traits are simplifying the situation in Japan, ignoring its diversity. Goold (2004) points to the Orientalism behind the idealization of Japan. This is not to deny that there is a difference between the situation in Japan and other countries or that there is a particular (if not unique) set of norms pertaining to the circumstances surrounding crime in Japan. The works of Foote (1992) and Johnson (2002), for example, successfully use rigorous interviews, exploration of academic literature produced in Japan and contextualization of data in its Japanese history and socio-economic context to illustrate the rehabilitation-oriented attitude of the Japanese prosecutors. It is essential to specify the elements which enable the observed characteristics of Japanese society to exist, and this also increases the transferability of the observation to other contexts.

Recent research studies have used more nuanced approaches when they analyse the situation in Japan, being sensitive to socio-economic, historical, and even international contexts. Baradel (2019) argued that the recent legislation to regulate *yakuza* can be called 'shaming paternalism', where the criminal justice system is more concerned with surveillance and stigmatisation of ex-*yakuza* members than with reintegrating them into society. He situated this tendency in the context of the rise of neo-liberalism and the state's attempt to secure a sense of homogeneity in response to its rapid fragmentation. While Baradel focuses on Japan's recent history, Brewster (2020) illustrates the importance of a nuanced 'geo-historical' understanding of space in his description of how the integration of drug offenders happens in *yoseba*, a type of street where those with low socio-economic status can find opportunities for manual labour and cheap accommodation. While he suggests that the sense of taboo about drug misuse, the

moralisation of the issue, and the outing of offenders might reflect Japanese norms, such as *uchi/soto*, *shido*, and *amae*, he also reminds the reader of the roles of multiple players in the formation of drug-related policies, from the US to NGOs. He illustrates how the policies of central governments were adjusted according to local contexts and how local governments and NGOs coordinated this process.

Studies informed by psychology have provided new perspectives on crime in Japan. Bui et al. (2014; 2016; 2018), Kobayashi et al. (2019), and Kobayashi and Farrington (2020) investigate the link between various risk factors and experiences of deviance of Japanese youth, sometimes in comparison with their counterparts in the US. Such studies help us to grasp more accurately how the behaviours and environments of respondents in Japan and the US are similar to or different from each other, or in what context the in-group pressure works on the Japanese respondents. Bui and Farrington (2019) examine the existing psychological literature to assess the feasibility of cultural explanations of Japan's crime control. It will still be necessary to explore how the general behavioural tendencies of the Japanese translate to Japan's low crime rate. Still, such an effort to demystify culture is important in order to explain the Japanese situation without falling into the trap of essentialist explanation.

Criminological study of Japan will benefit from the capacity of psychosocial enquiry to obtain transferable knowledge through a thick description of particular cases. Instead of drawing any conclusion on the relationship between Japan's cultural traits and the overall trend of crimes, psychosocial enquiry can explore the interaction between people's minds and their environments, which shapes their deviant behaviour. According to this approach, subjects do not blindly accept the 'culture' of Japan, as the process of meaning-making arising from interactions between individuals and their environment strongly influences their attitude to culture and norms. They are involved in a struggle to reconcile who they think they are with what the culture or norms in Japan require. Thus, psychosocial study can provide a detailed and nuanced observation of the relationship between human minds, culture and norms, and geographical and socio-economic contexts. This is also true of the issue of racism, which is of course part of the norm of society.

Conclusion

In what follows, I will show how a psychosocial analysis can bring new insights to the understanding of the thinking of Japanese far-right activists. By exploring the meaning-making of these activists, this thesis will show how it is possible to understand their everyday

experiences, read through the various lenses of Japanese nationalism. It will demonstrate how their investments in far-right ideologies and their participation in the street agitations and rallies against immigrants and the *zainichi* present themselves as imagined solutions to personal crises. My argument is that only by adopting this approach can we fully understand why the far-right movements attract such diverse sections of the population. This, as I will argue in the conclusion to the thesis, is a critical first step in creating an environment where instigating a dialogue with the far-right and reducing the prevalence of hate crime become possible. A thorough examination of the lives and the backgrounds which bring the subjects to the far-right movements will produce insights that are transferable to other contexts. By being attentive to contexts in which far-right activists live and by following how the meaning-making of these subjects evolves over time, this study will avoid attributing the phenomenon of racism to mystical notions of 'Japanese culture'. Indeed, none of the key concepts in the subsequent chapters are unique to Japan in a strict sense.

The next chapter will detail the methodology. It will explain how I contacted and selected the research participants, and how I conducted interviews and analysed them, putting into practice the psychosocial method introduced in this chapter. I will also reflect on what it was like to explore far-right activists' lives and acknowledge their painful feelings.

Chapter 3 Methodology

As explained in the previous chapter, the psychosocial approach seemed promising in that it allows the researcher to re-examine the interaction between social and personal factors through the stories of individuals. Looking back at the initial drafts of the research proposal that informed this thesis, I was already interested in both social and personal factors before I registered for a PhD, but I was not sure how I could consider them in a more integrated fashion. The psychosocial approach provided me with a solution in this respect.

In the remainder of this chapter, I will explain how I designed and conducted the research using the psychosocial approach. Central to the chapter will be accounts of interactions between the subjects and the researcher during the fieldwork from July 2018 to March 2019 and after. Detailed accounts of each step will be given: access to the field, sampling, interviewing, and analysis. Subsequently, I will reflect on this method and explore the intersubjective nature of the research.

Entering the Field

Access

When I started my fieldwork, what I had to learn first was where and when the groups' activities took place. I checked a website called 'Kodo Hoshu Zenkokuban Karenda' (Action Conservative Movement All-Japan Calendar, http://www.koudouhosyu.info/calender.html). This is a website where groups affiliated with the ACM can advertise their upcoming events. Simultaneously, hoping I could reach groups that did not use the calendar, I set up a Twitter account for the research and followed prominent activists who appeared in books written by Sakurai and others who were suggested by the 'Who to Follow' function of Twitter. Their tweets provided a lot of information because Twitter is their main tool of communication with the public and their members, and many of these activists post on Twitter when they start rallies and street agitations.[4]

The ideal timing for recruitment was when counter-activists did not appear, and the far-right members let their guard down. Such occasions could occur when the theme of the

[4] At the time of the interview, due to counter-activities, the idea of *mukokuchi-gaisen* (street activities without any advance notice) had become more and more common. Some groups such as Gokoku Shishi no Kai conducted their activities in that way. The candidates of the JFP tended to conceal when and where they would conduct street activities.

activities was less controversial in terms of liberalist norms. For example, Chosen Soren o Sarachi ni Suru-kai (The Association for Clearing Chosen Soren, hereafter Sarachi) conducted an agitation speech every month in front of the Chosen Soren building (General Association of Korean Residents, which plays the role of de facto embassy of North Korea), with the aim of criticising the North Korean government for abducting Japanese citizens. These events rarely attracted counter-activists, perhaps because of North Korea's totalitarian political system and the culpability of its conduct. Another case was when virtually no audience was expected (such as gatherings in front of the Liberal Democratic Party's building on Friday nights). Due to the lack of confrontation, the atmosphere of these activities tended to be less tense and more suited to talking. This made it easier to recruit activists to the research. Sometimes it was possible to exploit a pre-existing relationship with participants and join in drinking parties, which were always held after group activities. For example, I established a connection with Zaitoku-kai members at Sarachi events that enabled me to join in socials after their notoriously confrontational activities. Joining these socials allowed me to find out about activists' backgrounds, and ask them directly to participate in the research, which was beneficial for the purposive sampling. I recruited interviewees from several different groups, but did not let the participants know this unless asked explicitly, as I was aware that there were many internal conflicts within the ACM.

Presentation of my Stance

During the fieldwork, a problem that arose was how to interact ethically with potential participants in these settings, despite holding completely different political views to theirs. Being too candid about my own views risked discouraging them from participating in the research. When it comes to researching controversial groups, researchers have adopted different approaches to building rapports and disclosing their own standpoints (especially vis-à-vis hateful comments). Approaches vary from declaring one's stance openly (Blee, 1993; Higuchi, 2014; Pilkington, 2019; Smyth and Mitchell, 2008) to withholding criticism (Suzuki, 2019b), or even hinting at the possibility of joining the subject group (Simi and Futrell, 2015). Walder and Dobratz (2019) chose a position between these three stances. They said that they would not participate in the white power movement and that they did not support its ideas or conduct. However, during interviews, they did not criticise discriminatory ideas or words but instead simply nodded in response to what was said, engaging in 'respectful listening'.

I took a stance close to Walder and Dobratz by stressing my position as a researcher who was interested in how people join these movements rather than which 'side' (right or left)

was right, and staying silent when they openly discussed their racist comments or political views. There were two reasons I took this approach. First, when it came to conducting the psychosocial analysis, declaring my own interest ran the risk of orientating participants' stories around that topic. In other words, their awareness of my interests might have interfered with their free association. Second, it was not easy to locate myself within their dichotomous worldview. Some of their standpoints were in fact supportable, or at least understandable. For example, rescuing the victims of abduction from North Korea was a supportable agenda. Their strong attachment to the imperial family was comprehensible, although I am not as enthusiastic about royalty as some of my participants were. I am also against the maltreatment of minorities and Taiwan by the Chinese government. The problem was that many of these agendas, if not all, seemed to be cherry-picked in order to show disdain for particular countries and their nationals.

Saying 'I am anti-racist' would have produced some awkward moments, not because they were racist, but because they did not think they were. A common pattern of reaction to my introduction as a researcher was 'Please take a look at our activities, you'll see we are not *reishisuto* (racists) and never do *heito* (hate)'. Certainly, they did not engage in random attacks on minorities. When I went to an *izakaya* (a pub) with them where they had their after-activity socials I was initially afraid that they might cause trouble, as many workers at cheap *izakayas* were immigrants. Despite my concern, even a group famous for hate speech and violent clashes did not show any sign that they would harass the staff at cheap *izakayas* [pubs], whom they could have identified as immigrants from their accents, names or appearances. Whenever these staff had trouble understanding Japanese or using the machines to take orders, they would kindly and sympathetically say 'Okay okay, take your time, no need to hurry'. Although they did not attack them physically or verbally, it seemed they were trying to draw a clear line between the Japanese and foreigners by showing excessive sympathy with their poor command of Japanese, but to them, they were not racists because they did not harass those foreigners. It seemed that the activists defined racism in terms of 'irrational' hatred of other groups of people, for example, just because of the colour of their skin. They saw themselves as political activists rather than racists as they believed that they had a 'sensible' reason to hate the group, such as the *zainichi*'s 'abuse' of 'privileges'. If I had exposed their racist tendencies by pointing out their excessive obsession with issues regarding what they perceived as 'foreign', in their eyes it would seem that I had deliberately twisted the concept of 'racism' to label them as 'racists'.

In the end, there were barely any situations in which the activists questioned my standpoint, although they asked a lot about other topics, such as my romantic relationship, life in the UK, and so on. One reason for this might be the culture of the far-right groups to avoid difference coming to the fore. It was noticeable that most participants did not engage in serious political discussions. During social events, when they talked about politics, they tended to focus on topics where the distinction between good and bad was hard to contest, such as South Korea, China, and immigrants. One interviewee (Yamaguchi) confessed that:

> I expected that people in the [Active] Conservative Movement would say whatever they meant straightforwardly, but many people never say what they have in mind. They only talk about *kenkan* [hating Korea] and they say what others are sure to agree to, but many people do not raise different opinions.

My experiences supported her view, though as will be seen later, this does not mean that they fully trusted each other or me. Rather, this avoidance of controversial topics might have been a product of their long history of internal conflicts between and within groups, which I observed often during my fieldwork.

Presentation of my Background

One thing that was obvious from my preparatory research on the Twitter feeds of far-right activists (including the participants) was that they harboured a strong sense of distrust in academia, as they associated it with '*sayoku*' (left-wingers). During my fieldwork in Japan there was a heated discussion among conservatives/the far right around whether the government should award *kakenhi* [a fund for research sponsored by a public body] for research into shameful topics about Japan's past, such as 'comfort women'. This is part of their 'history war' and similar attacks have happened in many occasions, including those against academics who criticised the article by Ramseyer in 2020 (Kang, 2021). (See Chapter 1 for the details of the article.)

That I was studying at the University of Manchester helped quell such concerns. Unlike universities in Japan, the activists did not seem to associate 'Manchester' with any particular political stance or elitism. When I introduced myself at a gathering, they mostly related the city to nothing other than Manchester United Football Club. Only two participants mentioned its musical history (e.g. the bands New Order and Buzzcocks). Moreover, there was a belief that those from outside could understand the situation in Japan better. Some of the interviewees

mentioned the ‘catastrophic’ situation of the immigration crisis in Europe, which they learnt about from YouTube videos, expecting my full endorsement. Many of them believe that the Japanese are brainwashed and left ignorant of the cruel reality of international politics, through ‘*sayoku*’, pacifist education which has its roots in a conspiracy of the Occupation forces (see Nogawa, 2016). Such a presupposition might have led them to believe that I could understand what they meant precisely because I was not from a Japanese educational institution.

The other issue was whether to tell the far-right groups that I had worked for the National Police Agency. The risk was that no one would dare to talk to me for fear that what they said might be handed to the police. In the end, I decided to disclose it. Although I could not find any mention of my position as a former officer at the National Police Agency when I googled my name, I was afraid that they might uncover it nonetheless, considering the ability of *neto-uyo* (online right-wingers) to search for the past histories of their targets.[5] There was also a chance that *koan* police officers (officers in the intelligence department) might find out about my background and talk about it during their interaction with the far-right members. In fact, I was stopped and asked about my identity by a *koan* officer when I was observing a street agitation. Later, when I went for a drink with my former colleagues, a high-ranking *koan* officer from the Metropolitan Police Department came and said that he had read about me in a report from his subordinates.

The disclosure of my former workplace did not affect the recruitment process initially. Generally, responses were not hostile, and I received only very general comments, such as ‘How dare you quit that job? *Mottainai* (what a waste of a chance)!’. These responses might be partly due to the activists’ dichotomous worldview, which consisted of only the *aikoku* (patriotic) and the *han-nichi* (anti-Japan), and also the fact that the police are strongly associated with conservatism might have led the activists to immediately categorize me as such. One well-known far-right ideologue, Bando Tadanobu, formerly worked for the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department and has published many books on *zainichi* crime and foreigners. Further, *koan* police officers were generally known to maintain a good relationship with far-right activists. *Koan* officers were, in a sense, essential for the far-right movement because they were their one-stop contact point with the police.[6]

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[5]This occurred to me when I saw the screenshots of some more radical comments made by leftist politicians, such as Renho, before they became politicians.

[6] *Koan* officers were allocated to each far-right group (or branch), and if these far-right groups had issues to discuss (usually plans for upcoming street activities), the activists would contact them beforehand so that the police departments could deploy their officers to accompany them appropriately on the day of their street activities. These officers are indispensable to keep clashes with counter-activists under control. Apart from the times when far-right activists became agitated during these activities, *koan* officers seemed to be very friendly with them.

As Yasuda (2012) reported, Zaitoku-kai and other groups in the ACM consist of many people who participate in their activities spontaneously without any official joining process, which initially made me think that they welcomed anyone without questioning their background. However, as I came to know them, I discovered that participants did not always feel accepted and welcomed, and indeed there was what could be called a culture of distrust among the activists. Some of the participants said that they had never told their comrades about their past in detail. This was understandable considering that there was a strong fear among the activists of being excluded due to their past, even by the comrades with whom they spent virtually every weekend. At one social, I witnessed a female activist saying to her comrades 'I used to be married to a *yakuza*. *Hiita* (Am I putting you off)?' Her group was known for its confrontational style and their members were characterised by their outlaw attitude. Despite this, in her interview with me, she was reticent to confess this fact about her situation almost 30 years ago. Another interviewee in his 50s, whom other members of his JFP branch relied upon, was very afraid to admit that he used to be a member of a Korean religious cult group until his thirties. Of course, it is understandable that these past histories might not be easy to talk about, especially when they were related to Korea.[7] Still, the internalised pressure to be a 'clean' citizen with no past to hide seemed to be very high. This tendency appeared to correspond to their desire to deny the shameful parts of the Japanese history. Their lack of tolerance, which was directed toward the *zainichi* and foreigners, might have been the cause of their paranoia about infiltration by spies, which I noticed from time to time during the fieldwork.

Possibly due to the culture of distrust among the activists, at one point I suddenly ended up being suspected of being a spy and stopped telling new participants that I had worked for the police. After some interviews, a respondent started to ignore me for no clear reason, and another regular participant in a far-right group also started to distance himself from me. Coincidently, the girlfriend of the latter asked me jokingly, but out of nowhere, 'Is it true that you are a spy, Yoshida-san?' when she was drunk. I was once accepted by their inner Twitter DM group but was removed (the leader of the group just explained, 'Some of them were against it'). At this point, I decided to stop mentioning my career at the National Police Agency.

Some of the activists boasted of things like 'This *koan* officer praised me for breaking down the tents of the left activists', or 'The officers at the police station treated me like a star, saying "I watched the video of you!"' Some of these comments may have been merely lip service intended by *koan* to maintain good relationships with the objects of their surveillance, while others might have reflected their true intentions.

[7] *Yakuza* and the *zainichi* tend to be associated in Japan (see Chapter 8).

Having said this, disclosing my record of working for the National Police Agency had made it easy for me to mingle with activists initially. In hindsight, it was a good decision to keep the fieldwork relatively short (nine months) and to conduct interviews intensively before rumours about the controversial past spread and interrupted my access to the participants.

Sampling

Use of Case Studies

The current study does not claim to have secured a sample of far-right activists that is representative of the general population (which is difficult to define and draw boundaries around) in any statistical sense. Rather, it aims to present a new perspective—using conceptual inferences—about why some people join in with far-right activities in Japan and to capture diverse types of interaction between personal events, social factors, defence mechanisms, and participation in such activities. The analysis deploys a case study method as this enables a researcher to closely observe the phenomenon in question and to draw some theoretical implications from the relations between the factors that constitute it (Mitchell, 2000). Borrowing ideas from psychoanalysis, the method values the concept of *Gestalt*, meaning the 'wholeness' of the life stories recounted, and it incorporates into the analysis various events happening across interviewees' lives (Hollway and Jefferson, 2013, p.34). Rather than attempting to draw insights that would be generalizable across the sample or analyzing a case deemed to be typical of the sample, this study will choose 'extreme' cases where the relevant factors and mechanisms (such as salaryman masculinity and defence mechanisms) work most actively (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p.229). Idiosyncratic cases are welcomed because the insights garnered from these in-depth individual analyses will contribute to the cognitive structure with which researchers observe far-right movements and related phenomena (Donmoyer, 2000).

Sampling Strategy

Purposive sampling was conducted to cover a wide variety of accounts of participation in far-right activities. Efforts were made to recruit participants from diverse activist groups. Each group has its own orientations and agendas. I discovered that activists tended to hop from one group to another rather freely for many reasons: the relationship with other participants; the types of activities of the group; inclusion/exclusion of Korean members; and the group's attitude toward street agitations or electoral campaigns. Consequently, even if someone had participated in Zaitoku-kai's activity in the past, it was possible that they were now part of a

different group. Thus, I contacted various groups in order to recruit their members. I also decided to recruit people who had joined the JFP after 2016 and who had never participated in Zaitoku-kai's activities. As was stated in the Introduction, there are signs of some JFP members distancing themselves from Zaitoku-kai style activities. Still, many people joined the JFP having watched videos from the Zaitoku-kai era, which suggested that they had much in common with participants from the Zaitoku-kai era in terms of their mindsets and racism.

Gender was one of the criteria for selection, as existing studies have shown that the far-right movement in Japan is strongly male-dominated (Tsuji, 2017), which suggests that male and female participants might have different backgrounds. Masculinity has been identified as an important factor for far-right movements in other contexts (Kimmel and Ferber, 2000; Treadwell and Garland, 2011; Miller-Idriss, 2017). However, this does not mean that female participants played only minor roles. In fact, female participants have shown awareness of the significance of their gendered role in the movements, such as the moral high ground they can claim when they argue against the existence of 'comfort women' (Yamaguchi, 2018). Thus, being attentive to gender diversity was likely to produce a wide variety of accounts. (See Chapters 5 and 6 for a more detailed discussion on gender and the far right.)

Regarding age as a potential factor, it is known that the supporters and sympathisers of right-wing movements in Japan are of all ages (Higuchi, 2014; Tsuji, 2017). It was also likely that people of varying ages would tell different stories, as they may have undergone different (albeit overlapping) social experiences. Age also seemed to affect perception of *the zainichi*, as their social status rose considerably over time (Kim, 2011).

Participants' place of activity could also be an important factor. Higuchi (2014) identified that Zaitoku-kai's affiliates in the Kansai area (an area in Central to South-west Japan) have a distinct culture from that of the Tokyo area, being oriented toward a more violent style of activities. Furthermore, geographical difference could also mean diversity of interests. It was assumed, for example, that in the Northern prefecture of Hokkaido, activists might be more concerned with indigenous people (Ainu) or diplomatic relations with Russia rather than with issues concerning the *zainichi* and South Korea.

Finally, participants' status within the activist group was a factor of interest. One of the problems with Higuchi's (2014) work is that 21 out of the 25 participants, who were introduced to him by Zaitoku-kai, held managerial roles in its headquarters or branches. Thus, the current study attempted to include casual participants, who did not hold any particular status (and therefore had no sense of obligation or expectation of reward or recognition) but still joined in the movements. Also, the establishment of the JFP in 2016 led to the creation of a distinctive

group of people, namely ‘candidates’ for elections. These candidates had not necessarily joined in street activities. Considering that they were primarily interested in electoral campaigns, their stories of participation in the movement were likely to be different from those who preferred rallies and street agitations.

The overview of the 25 participants according to their attributes is as follows (the names of participants are all pseudonyms):

Table 3.1: Overview of the Research Participants According to their Backgrounds

Gender/Sex	Female	7	Role	Leader	3
	Male	18		Other Management Role	12
Age	20s	3		Candidates	4[8]
	30s	5		Other	8
	40s	5	Main Affiliation	The JFP	12
	50s	8			
	60s	2		Zaitoku-kai/Shinshakai-undo (New Social Movement)	7
	70s	1			
	Unknown	1		Gaikokujin Hanzai Tuiho Undo (Movement for Expulsion of Foreign Criminals) / Han Gurobarizumu Hoshu Rengo (Alliance of Anti Globalism Conservatives) / Gokoku Shishi no Kai (Association for Patriots Guarding the Nation)	3
Main Area of Activity	Kanto	18			
	Kansai	2			
	Chubu	2			
	Hokkaido/Tohoku	2		Other/Not Affiliated	3
	Chugoku	1			

As Table 3.1 above shows, this study included substantial numbers of female activists, although there were more male participants, which reflects the demography of the movements. In terms of age, the study gathered interviews from participants across a wide range of age cohorts. Those in their 50s were slightly overrepresented because they tended to be in management roles and for this reason played the role of a gate keeper. In terms of geographical dispersion of participants, the majority came from areas around Tokyo (including the Kanto area) while seven participants were from different areas of Japan.

The roles of the participants were also diverse. The list indicates that those in management roles were more numerous than leaders, candidates or others (mostly lay members). However, this does not mean that the current study disproportionately reflects the experiences of those in high ranks. It is noteworthy that the nature of ‘management’ roles varied significantly from executive members of a relatively large group like the JFP to sub-leaders of

[8] Two of them could be also classified as a leader and a manager.

smaller groups, whose roles were not very different from lay members in terms of their overall importance. Regarding affiliation, due to the scale of the JFP, almost half of the participants were from there. However, this study also recruited members from other groups, as well as some who were not affiliated with any particular group.

Table 3.2: List of the Research Participants

Name	Sex	Age	Occupation	Name	Sex	Age	Occupation
Kida	F	30s	Waitress	**Kasuga**	M	40s	Employee at an engineering company
Gonda	F	30s	Employee at an IT company	**Tegoshi**	M	40s	Public sector employee
Aoki (Chapter 5)	F	40s	Employee at a temporary staffing agency	**Imaike**	M	40s	Employee at a web design company
Yamase	F	50s	Unemployed	**Doke**	M	40s	Agency worker
Yamaguchi	F	50s	Agency worker	**Naito (Chapter 4)**	M	50s	Agency worker
Matsushita	F	50s	Unemployed	**Honda**	M	50s	Agency worker
Kuroda (Chapter 7)	F	50s	Security guard	**Esaki**	M	50s	Employee at a building management company
Stets	M	20s	Employee at an IT company	**Iida**	M	50s	Employee at an engineering company
Takeda (Chapter 8)	M	20s	Contract worker at a call centre	**Sasaki**	M	60s	Employee at a building management company
Umino	M	20s	Student	**Sato (Chapter 6)**	M	60s	Part-time inspector of electric parts
Sawada	M	30s	Employee at a restaurant chain	**Kanda**	M	70s	Unemployed (formerly a business owner)
Onaga	M	30s	Employee at a food company	**Koda**	M	N/A	Employee at a publishing company
Kurihara	M	30s	Employee at an IT company				

Table 3.2 lists the pseudonyms, gender, age and occupations of the participants. Consistent with previous studies by Higuchi (2014) and Nagayoshi (2018), participants' occupations also spanned the class spectrum, with some in precarious jobs, others in professions and one a

former business owner. The selection of the five cases examined in subsequent chapters reflects this diversity.

Interviews

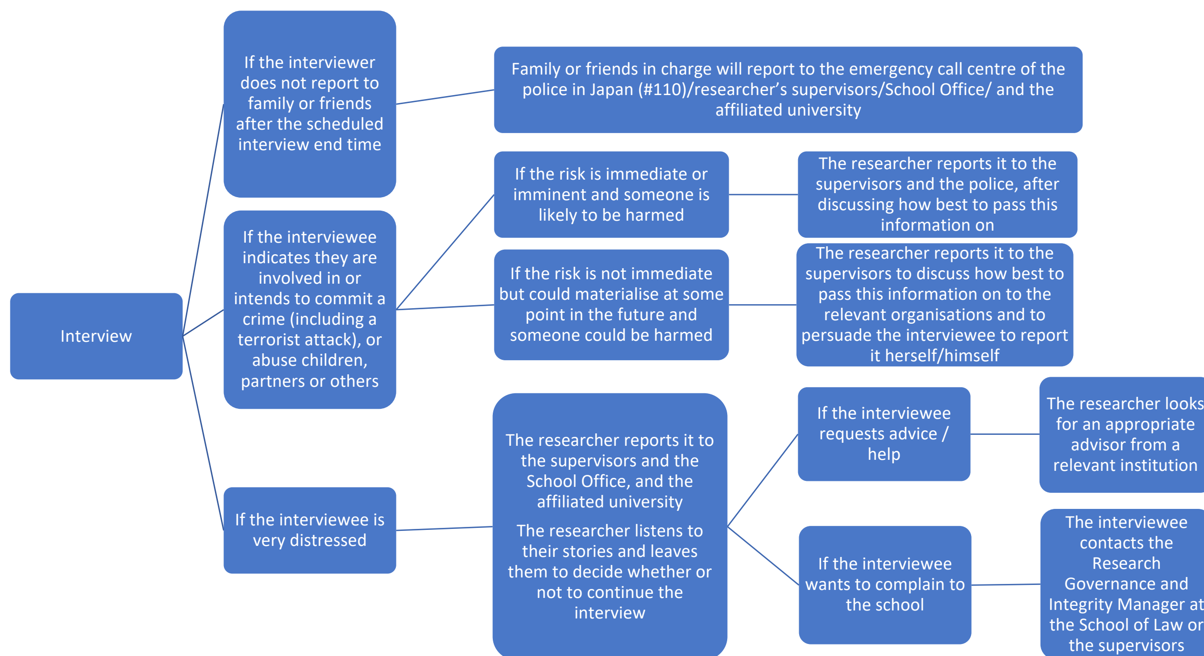
General Procedure

From the outset of the fieldwork, I asked activists to participate in interviews. At first, only a few were willing to do so, while many others were not. Perhaps due to my agreeable attitude and the prolonged time I spent with the activists, eventually more people started to agree to be interviewed. The number of interviewees per month from July to September was two or three, while in October this picked up to five. Later, when I established a rapport with key gatekeepers, I recruited participants through snowball sampling.

Before embarking on the fieldwork, I obtained ethical approval from the University of Manchester School of Law, having submitted the information sheet (Appendix A and B) and the script for obtaining verbal consent (Appendix C and D). Aside from one case where the activist spontaneously agreed to an interview, I gave participants the information sheet at least one day beforehand so that they could carefully decide whether or not to participate in the research. In case they had not read the information sheet carefully, before commencing the first interview with each interviewee, I explained the important points, particularly the purpose of the study, anonymisation and the possible forms of publication based on the data obtained. Verbal consent was recorded instead of signatures on the consent forms in order to ensure a high level of anonymisation. Both in the information sheet and the script of the verbal consent form, it was made clear that participants could withdraw from the study at any point. Although no one explicitly declare their intention to withdraw from the research, three did not proceed to the second interview on the grounds that they were too busy. Also, a few of them asked me to stop the recording where they talked about things they did not want to be recorded.

Another important consideration is how to ensure the safety and well-being of both the participants and the interviewer. As agreed in the ethical approval, before going to conduct interviews or fieldwork I always informed a friend or family member where I was going and what time I would be back, so that they could contact the police if I did not return by the expected time. I also informed the interviewees that I would alert relevant public bodies in the event that someone (themselves, other activists, their families or a third party) was at risk of being harmed or of harming themselves. Fortunately, such an event did not arise. For the detailed protocol agreed, see Figure 3.1 below, which I prepared for the ethical review prior to the fieldwork.

Figure 3.1 Protocol for Emergency Cases



To help interviewees to feel comfortable, I allowed them to choose the location of the interview. I conducted most of the interviews at *famiresus*. A *famiresu* (an abbreviation of *famiri resutoran* [family restaurant]) is a sort of popular chain restaurant that serves relatively cheap but decent dishes and various types of free-refill beverages, and which exist all over Japan and are open 24 hours a day or until late at night. *Famiresus* usually provide spaces between tables, often with partitions, and are a little (but not excessively) noisy, lessening the risk of being overheard. These places were thus convenient in that other customers could not overhear what participants were saying during interviews.[9] Because of these advantages, a wide range of people (including activists) use these restaurants, making them free from association with any particular socio-economic status. Although the scheduled duration of each interview was 1.5-2.0 hours, the longest ones lasted for approximately 5 hours. As stated in the information sheet (Appendix A and B), participants were asked to attend two separate interviews. As stated above, three did not proceed to the second interviews, while six agreed to join in the third interviews. With the rest of 16 participants, interviews took place twice. The total length of the recordings of the interviews amounted to 168 hours from 56 interviews.

[9] One interviewee preferred to meet in a cafe, but given that he tended to make hate speeches in a loud voice, I worried about the possibility of those in the groups he was targeting overhearing these comments. The risk of collateral damage at the site of interview should be considered and mitigated.

Free Association Narrative Interview Method

As pointed out in the last chapter, the assumption of a defended subject is central to the psychosocial approach. Instead of knowing their own demands and acting rationally to fulfill these, the subject invests themselves in a certain discourse that functions as a defence mechanism against unacknowledged anxiety (Hollway and Jefferson, 2013; Gadd and Jefferson, 2007). Aside from anxiety, shame was also a key concept which guided analysis of how defence mechanisms influenced the participants' attraction to the far-right teachings and activities. According to Scheff (2001, para. 9), shame is 'a class name for a large family of emotions and feelings that arise through seeing the self negatively, if even only slightly negatively, through the eyes of others, or even for only anticipating such a reaction'. Unacknowledged shame can cause an enduring shame-anger-shame sequence (Scheff, 2000). The life story of Sato (Chapter 6) provides a vivid example of the function of 'shame'. Researchers have employed the concept to give psychosocial explanations of the German public's antipathy toward Jews coordinated by Hitler (Scheff, 2000), of participation in the English Defence League by young males (Treadwell and Garland, 2011), and of racially motivated crimes (Ray et al., 2004; Gadd and Jefferson, 2007, Chapter 8). Along with anxiety and fear, the thesis will be attentive to shame.

Noting the difficulty for interviewees to face up to and articulate their negative emotions, Hollway and Jefferson recommend using the Free Association Narrative Interview Method (FANIM), which enables interviewers to uncover unacknowledged negative emotions by letting the interviewee freely associate any event in their life relevant to the topic (Hollway and Jefferson, 2013, pp.31-34; Gadd and Jefferson, 2007, pp.61-62). The key assumptions and features of FANIM are as follows:

- the importance of asking questions that invite storytelling;
- the avoidance of 'why' questions that might encourage over-rationalization;
- careful adherence to the utilization of the interviewee's words and meaning framework in the re-posing of questions;
- minimalist facilitation (Gadd and Corr, 2015, p.72).

Hollway and Jefferson (2013) argue that the advantage of FANIM lies in its ability to preserve a *Gestalt*, or the wholeness of the meaning-frame of the interviewees. Free association will enable an interviewer to access the source of someone's negative emotions emerging from the whole story that they tell, which they would consciously try to avoid articulating in a more

traditional style of interviews where the interviewer asks 'why' questions. Analysis and presentation of the interview data are conducted through pen portraits, which 'enable a complex view of the subject to be grasped and one that seeks to hold onto apparently contradictory data, whether that be two conflicting accounts of the same event or attitudes that do not square logically with each other' (Gadd and Corr, 2015, p.69).

The interviews started with a very general question, 'Could you tell me your life story?' I did not explicitly limit the topic to their participation in the far-right movements, to prevent participants from feeling the necessity to narrow their responses. Nevertheless, because the purpose of the study was made clear in the script of verbal consent, the stories were loosely oriented toward their participation in these movements.

After finishing the first set of interviews, these were roughly transcribed and analysed. The second interviews were closer to semi-structured interviews, asking participants to tell their stories on specific themes (where these were missing from the first interviews), such as their experiences with any *zainichi*/foreigners/*sayoku* (left-wingers) with whom they lived, worked, or studied when they first became aware of the issue of the way Japan's pre-war history is told, and when the HSEA was introduced in 2016. Additionally, I asked them about stages of their lives that were missing from their initial interviews and which I felt were necessary to make sense of their stories after analysing the data from the first interview.

Differences between the accounts in the first and second interviews revealed participants' hidden shame, as Gadd and Corr (2015) observed. Matsushita, a 58-year-old activist, confessed that she suffered from a nightmare after the first interview because she had intentionally hidden a part of her life story, which she felt ashamed to tell. Changes in her storytelling in the second interview gave me clues as to what she felt uncomfortable about revealing, namely, her experience of abusing drugs earlier in her life, which caused nightmares as a kind of flashback when she was stressed. Yamaguchi, a 51-year-old activist, told me in her second interview that she had something to tell me about her parents, especially her mother, and subsequently revealed the undesirable aspects of her mother's behaviour, although in the first interview she had described her as 'caring'. These changes of tone and detail subsequently became the focus of my analysis as I looked for clues of defensiveness in my interviewees' narratives.

One problem that arose, which might be particular to using FANIM with far-right activists, was that their storytelling easily drifted into propaganda, which they must have been accustomed to. Even though I asked them to tell their life stories, some of them interpreted this as meaning 'Why do you participate in these movements?' and started outlining justifications

for their political stances, which they seemed to have borrowed from websites or books. A 72-year-old activist, Kanda, spent nearly 50 minutes expressing his views on various far-right themes, after talking about his life for 10 minutes (he was leaning into the recorder as if the interview was some sort of radio broadcast). An interview turning into an occasion for a far-right activist to conduct a political agitation has been observed elsewhere (see Gadd, 2010). In such instances I had to ask interviewees to come back to their life story after their agitation speech had come to an end. At first, I was tempted to interrupt the interviewee immediately but decided otherwise. The specific way they saw their 'enemies', whether these were the *zainichi*, foreigners, or foreign countries, or the way they wanted Japan or the Japanese to be, could be signifiers of their hidden desires or shame projected onto these objects.

Analysis

Interviews were transcribed with personal information anonymised and stored in the protected storage provided by the University of Manchester. To begin with, the transcribed and translated drafts were analysed in search of hints of negative emotions that triggered defence mechanisms such as anxiety, anger, and shame. As Hollway and Jefferson (2013) suggested, the meaning and gravity of events in the story, or in one's system of symbols, should be explored vis-à-vis the whole context, or *Gestalt*. For example, Sato (Chapter 6) indicated no shame about the fact that he was now a part-time worker, having resigned from a high-ranking role in a large public sector department. This is because his adult life was characterised by his struggle with the norm of 'salaryman masculinity', for which he said he had to work like a 'slave' and embarking on the part-time job signified his release from the norm. I made timeline charts of participants' lives, which included the year, their age, the events that had taken place, and extracts from their comments on these events. This helped me to spot the key events which participants spent time accounting for, as well as those which were missing from their stories (Gadd, 2012). Also, being attentive to key dates enabled me to connect each stage of their lives to the concurrent events in the wider context.

The order of the story, the repetition of the same theme/motif, repeated use of the same terms, as well as people's behaviours and the way they talked about the events (silence, excitement or sobbing for example) were all important factors in understanding what event caused negative feelings and what meanings they attached to them. The meanings attached to the events were sometimes inferred based on how participants clung to particular aspects of the far-right movements, such as their arguments or styles of activity. For instance, to Aoki (Chapter 5), it was unacceptable that people 'dig out what happened in the past' to criticise

Japan for starting the war in which it was defeated in 1945, causing countless numbers of deaths. According to her, 'it might be true [that Japan should not have started the war], but people at that time had reasons'. This narrative drew my attention as most far-right activists that I interviewed tried to justify the war rather than making an issue of talking about it, while implicitly accepting that it was wrong. As will be explained in Chapter 5, this point made sense in light of one of the themes of Aoki's life, namely ambivalence toward her mother due to her childhood experience which still troubled her.

In rare cases, the relationship between participants' far-right activities and their sense of shame seemed to be explicitly acknowledged in the interviews, but even in such cases, this may have been only partial acknowledgment. One 35-year-old activist, Kurihara, began his life story with accounts of episodes of misfortune in his childhood caused by difficulties in his father's business when the bubble economy burst in the early 1990s. He went on to tell of how he had failed at school because he could not understand why he had to go, to finally finding joy in studying on a university night course. Kurihara's ambitions for an academic career were quashed by economic hardship, which prevented him from devoting time to study. Kurihara stated that such experiences led him to pursue the revival of Japanese education (as he imagined it) before Westernisation and the Occupation by the US in the post-war period. In his case, he seemed to acknowledge the shame of being a failed student and the connection between this experience of shame and his interest in education. The unacknowledged part of his account was how he was attracted to the idea of reviving 'authentic' Japanese education, which he thought had been destroyed by the Occupation forces, as the way to solve the problems with the educational system in Japan. This was odd considering that there were many other possible ways to reform it, including the introduction of free higher education, which seemed to be more relevant to his own experience. His attachment to the idea of 'authentic' education being lost due to the defeat in WWII seemed to correspond to the recurrent theme of his story, namely that things 'could have been different'. For example, his family had been wealthy before his father's business deteriorated due to the bursting of the bubble economy, which had affected his education in a negative way.

It was also useful to note similarities between participants' shame and their story of how enemies (the *zainichi*, foreigners, Chinese/South Korean governments etc.) were attacking 'us' (Japan, the Imperial family, etc.) in their political fantasies. For instance, the most emotional point of the interview with Tegoshi, a 41-year-old activist, was when he started to shed tears remembering when he had seen a picture of South Korean football supporters waving a flag that said 'Congratulations for the Earthquake in Japan'. His resentment was

understandable, but it seemed to be an overreaction considering none of his family or friends had fallen victim to the disaster. He also seemed to be particularly enraged when he talked about the Tokyo air raid and the use of atomic bombs by the US in 1945. 'It cannot have been necessary to kill in such a way'. His resentment seemed to be particularly directed towards those who rubbed salt in the wounds of Japan when it was losing. Such a situation could be found in his story about his father, who committed suicide when Tegoshi was 20 years old. He explained that his father was suffering from schizophrenia and became unable to work, but his mother openly spoke ill of him. Although (or precisely because) Tegoshi felt that these remarks were 'hitting home' as 'half of my genes were from my father', Tegoshi himself became violent against his father. He 'honestly did not feel sad when he died', but now looking back at him (especially when Tegoshi himself was a father of two children), he regretted what he had done. The shame projected upon the South Korean football fans or the US seemed to reflect something of how he felt about himself and what he had done to his father.

In line with the discussion of the need for a thick description in the last chapter, it is important to be attentive to the 'local context' that affects subjects' positioning in order to avoid treating them as outliers of society. As Scheff (1997, p.48) explains: 'Verbatim excerpts from discourse, one might argue, are microcosms, they contain within them, brief as they may be, intimations of the participants' origins in and relations to the institutions of the host society'. In a similar vein, Positioning Theory assumes that:

> By attending to features of the local context, in particular normative constraints and opportunities for action within an unfolding story-line, it becomes clear that access to and availability of certain practices both conversational and practical are determined not by individual levels of competence alone, but by having rights and duties in relation to items in the *local* corpus of saying and doings. (Harré et al., 2009, p.6, italics original)

Hollway (1989) pays much attention to the historicity of the discourses regarding sexual desire and gender that the participants have internalised, namely the rise of feminist discourse about women's self-determination and liberation from institutions such as marriage.

This is not to say that the interviewees passively internalised the positions determined by the community. But it is equally not true that their positioning will be determined solely by previous life experiences, like childhood trauma. One's positioning is shaped by the interaction of both these factors at each stage of one's life. For instance, in Sato's case (Chapter 6), his

childhood trauma of being a 'timid' boy evolved into his investment in 'salaryman masculinity' when he became a salaryman. By paying attention to social backgrounds that may have affected the positions that each interviewee took at a given stage of their lives, it becomes possible to figure out the problems with the social structure that were instrumental in producing them.

Of course, how interviewees positioned themselves not only reflected their backgrounds and the problems they faced, but also the dynamics of the interview encounter itself. In Sato's case, the fact that I used to be a first class (*kyaria*) official at a public sector may have influenced him to orient his story toward his struggles as a third-class official in an organisation where such classification decides one's future prospects and power. At first, I accepted his flattery about my being a former *kyaria* as a kind of conversational manner, but as this continued through his telling the story about how his non-*kyaria* bosses projected onto him their dissatisfaction about being subordinated to *kyaria* officials, I started to suspect that there was more to his repeated reference to my former career. I rather felt as if he had wanted to tell his suffering to those who he thought were unable to see it. The climax of this account was when he confessed (he added 'to be honest', before he started the episode) in the second interview that the immediate reason why he left the job was because of harassment by a *kyaria* boss. It is noteworthy that he mentioned his tendency to oppress his family members just after this episode and said that: 'I was unable to say anything during my work...looking back, such dissatisfaction surfaced [as his abusive attitude] toward family, maybe'. It seemed as if he had wanted me, as a representative of *kyaria* officers, to acknowledge that the classification system they (and I) benefit from had been responsible for undermining his life. I have to admit that I felt somewhat awkward, and toward the end of the interview the sense of rapport that I had in the first interview had slightly faded. I myself was defensive about being treated as an inhuman *kyaria* official who never cared what happens on the ground, which I experienced many times through interacting with police officers who also had negative views of *kyaria* officials. I am not certain whether Sato expected my reaction or what reaction he wanted, but the fact that he prefaced his account by saying 'to be honest' indicates that he seemed to know that some negative feelings could arise on my part and was not sure whether he should mention the fact.

Instead of compromising FANIM by arguing back, I initially wrote his chapter as a kind of letter to the police officers who would confess to me how tired they were of their life at a police station, where they had to deal with moody bosses and rebellious subordinates, go for a drink with colleagues sacrificing their family lives, and meet a strict quota every month. This was, in hindsight, clearly a product of my own defensiveness, which prompted me to demonstrate that I could acknowledge their sufferings as salarymen. Thus, the elicited narrative

and the construction of the case are the product of the interaction between two defended subjects, as has been the case with previous research studies (Gadd, 2004; Bondi, 2013; Proudfoot, 2015). This does not mean that the case studies in the subsequent chapters should be dismissed as biased. Rather, they must be read as interactions with the person who participants thought I was, and they record how the emotional reactions arising from the encounter with such a person were captured in the moment.

Some participants' negative feelings seemed multi-layered, with their current predicaments exacerbating painful feelings that were only partially dealt with during earlier stages of their lives. In the case of Yamaguchi, although her immediate source of shame was the loss of her job in the middle of the economic crisis in 2008, understanding the gravity of this experience required investigation into what it meant for her to be a temporary worker. To her, low socio-economic status as a temporary agency worker resonated with her trauma of not being able to speak up and ask for assistance from her family during her childhood. Further, such weakness prevented her from pursuing her own ambition, which partly resulted in her becoming a temporary worker. Her unacknowledged anger against her parents, especially regarding her socio-economic status, had been reshaped and contained within a discourse of self-responsibility, but became irrepressible when the economic turmoil of 2008 placed temporary agency workers like her in a position of extreme insecurity. Yamaguchi's anger toward her parents and fear of its exposure were displaced onto the anger toward the *zainichi*/foreigners and fear of the loss of Japan (and the Imperial family) as it currently is.

Selection of Case Studies for This Thesis

This thesis will present detailed accounts of five activists. As stated above, the current study does not attempt to identify common traits among the general population. Subjects may interact with social structures or construct meanings from situations and discourses in ways that are different from other subjects who apparently share similar backgrounds. The research will identify five routes taken by these subjects, which led them to invest in far-right teachings and activities, but it is left to future research to investigate how common these five routes are.

As was the case with the sampling method, in selecting the five case studies, one of the most important criteria was whether their life stories featured understudied factors and would therefore provide new perspectives to understand far-right movements. It was by following this principle that the five themes (identification with the fate of the nation; the pressure of gender norms on women; white-collar masculinity; fear of crime, and the role of the Emperor) were

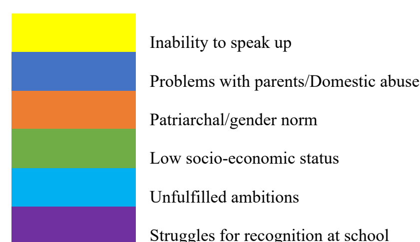
identified. (See each chapter for the rationales for choosing these themes). This does not mean that the psychosocial method is inapplicable to the rest of the 20 cases, nor does it suggest that these cases would not produce any relevant insights. As discussed below, it was possible to analyse the stories of the majority of the 20 cases using the psychosocial method, and these stories will provide interesting perspectives in future research regarding the attraction of the Japanese far-right movements.

What are the principal characteristics of the remaining 20 cases? Table 3.3 below summarizes the factors which potentially underpinned their motivations to join the far-right movements. Although it should be noted that the meanings attached to each factor can vary considerably from one participant to another, there are certainly similarities between their stories. The most commonly discussed experiences include: inability to speak up because of timid character; problems with parents, such as domestic abuse; pressure from patriarchal and/or gender norms which, for example, cause the shame of feeling that one is not a good mother or an excellent 'salaryman'; low socio-economic status; unfulfilled ambition, such as failure to be a musician; and struggle for recognition at school, such as not being a pupil with excellent academic achievement.

It would be mistaken to think that the 20 cases were irrelevant to the current study. Rather, many of these stories informed the analysis of the case studies. For example, it was Kanda who opened my eyes to the pressure exerted by the norm of 'salaryman masculinity' (a central theme for the case of Sato in Chapter 5). Initially, Kanda's narrative stated how his nationalism emerged simply because he got older. Although he said that it was possible that his attraction to far-right teaching arose because he could not be a successful white-collar person working for a major company, he believed this was not the case. What did not make sense to me was the reason why he thought that the fact he did not work for a major company was shameful. After all, he was a business owner who had survived the volatility of the capitalist world by using his own ideas and skills, and I expected him to be proud of this achievement. This was how I started looking into the normative pressure of 'salaryman masculinity' in Japanese society. The issues raised by Kanda's narrative helped me understand how other relatively elderly participants saw their lives. Sasaki, for instance, felt the shame of being an irresponsible salaryman, whom he felt was spoiled by the 'bubble' economy. In the end, the reason I chose Sato for the case study of 'salaryman masculinity' was the degree to which his narratives were related to his career as a former salaryman, making it easy to observe how this factor influenced him.

Table 3.3: Factors Suspected to Motivate Participants to Join Far-Right Movements

Name	Sex	Age	Occupation	Factors suspected to motivate participants to join far-right movements						Other factors
Kida	F	30s	Waitress							3.11
Gonda	F	30s	Employee at an IT company							
Aoki (Chapter 5)	F	40s	Employee at a temporary staffing agency							3.11
Yamase	F	50s	Unemployed							
Yamaguchi	F	50s	Agency worker							Economic recession in 2008
Matsushita	F	50s	Unemployed							Sexual abuse
Kuroda (Chapter 7)	F	50s	Security guard							
Stets	M	20s	Employee at an IT company							Unknown
Takeda (Chapter 8)	M	20s	Contract worker at a call centre							
Umino	M	20s	Student							
Sawada	M	30s	Employee at a restaurant chain							Unknown
Onaga	M	30s	Employee at a food company							
Kurihara	M	30s	Employee at an IT company							Bullying
Kasuga	M	40s	Employee at an engineering company							Unknown
Tegoshi	M	40s	Public sector employee							Mental illness
Imaike	M	40s	Employee at a web design company							Unknown
Doke	M	40s	Agency worker							Unknown
Naito (Chapter 4)	M	50s	Agency worker							Bullying, lack of guardians
Honda	M	50s	Agency worker							Bad experiences with zainichi/Koreans, oppression from his parent's religious group
Esaki	M	50s	Employee at a building management company							Participation in a religious cult, nostalgia for the past
Iida	M	50s	Employee at an engineering company							Unknown
Sasaki	M	60s	Employee at a building management company							
Sato (chapter 6)	M	60s	Part-time (inspector of electric parts)							
Kanda	M	70s	Unemployed(formerly a business owner)							Bad experiences with zainichi/Koreans
Koda	M	N/A	Employee at a publishing company							Unkown



In a similar vein, several different case studies helped to identify themes that are central to subsequent chapters. Regarding the meaning of complying with the patriarchal family norm

(dealt with in Chapter 6, the case of Aoki), the theme first emerged when I interviewed Kida. In the interview, she completely skipped over her marriage and jumped straight from the moment she got married in her early 20s to the point where she discovered the far right in her early 30s after getting divorced. I was very curious as to why she seemingly avoided that topic, while she talked openly about her delinquent behaviour in the past, such as substance abuse and extortion. The struggle to come to terms with the fact of being unmarried or divorced or failing to be a perfect mother also appeared in other activists' accounts (such as Yamaguchi and Matsushita). These focused my attention on Aoki's story, which features the pressure from internalised gender norms. Similarly, conflating one's own fate or course of life (or those of close relatives or friends) with Japan's trajectory (the theme of the case of Naito, discussed in Chapter 4) was visible in other activists' accounts, such as Kurihara and Tegoshi.

Some of the cases were not related to the five themes, but they nonetheless provided clues to understanding the stories of the five activists. For example, to investigate the story of Takeda, the stories of Umino and Onaga were helpful. In Umino's case, it was likely that the stress of witnessing his parents fight made him attracted to the aggressive street activities he watched on YouTube as a child. On the other hand, it was possible to read Onaga's case from the perspective of his shame of feeling alienated. He felt he could not blend in with other pupils from a middle-class background, who were keen on studying for entrance exams for private junior high schools. He positioned himself as some sort of trickster who would ask teachers tough questions about politics and knowledge he gained outside of textbooks. Through gaining knowledge about the 'privileges' of *burakumin* (descendants of outcast groups in Japan) from non-mainstream countercultural magazines, he was drawn to this strange idea of correcting the issue of discrimination by accusing some *burakumin* of exploiting privileges and illegitimately causing trouble to other *burakumins*, rather than fighting against the discrimination against *burakumin per se*. Thus, he became interested in joining Zaitoku-kai, which dealt with the *burakumin* issue in its heyday (Yasuda, 2012). Umino's and Onaga's cases did not contribute to the central theme of Takeda's story, namely the Emperor, but they drew attention to important factors which explain Takeda's case, such as identification with an aggressive father (Umino) and the use of far-right discourse to resist against teachers (Onaga).

Second, the other cases included some instances where it was difficult to pinpoint what theoretical contribution they would make, although it was possible to psychosocially explain their attraction to the movements. Esaki and Honda fall in this category. Esaki's story featured the shame of witnessing domestic violence in his childhood and he subsequently joined a right-wing religious cult, giving up his time and money. Honda's story was characterised by

oppression from another religious group to which his mother belonged, and the desire to escape the countryside. It would have been interesting to present their stories, but it was not very clear how these discussions would provide new perspectives on the understanding of the far right.

Last but not least, there were activists whose narratives did not disclose how their attraction to far-right teachings or activities were related to their personal lives. FANIM provides much room for interviewees to form their narratives, and this advantage sometimes enabled the interviewees to tell the stories they wanted to tell rather than those which appeared as a consequence of free association. The storylines tend to follow this form: the interviewee did not have much to complain about in their life (sometimes it was even considered perfect) and they enjoyed it to some extent; one day they encountered the far right (or something related to the idea) offline or online, become convinced, and started looking for more information online or by joining a relevant group. The narratives of seven activists, namely Doke, Kasuga, Koda, Iida, Imaike, Sawada and Stets, showed such storylines.

It is not possible to know exactly why the storylines of these seven ended up in this way, but Honda gave me some ideas through which to understand this phenomenon. Although Honda did disclose the downside of his life, he repeatedly tried to assert that his life was happy, denying what he thought to be the view of Yasuda Koichi, namely that 'the online right-wingers are all depressed by nature and they didn't have friends at junior high or high schools'. This understanding of Yasuda's (2012) report was shallow (see Chapter 2), but Honda's fear that his political activities could be reduced to this pathetic image was understandable. The widespread images of *neto-uyo* (online right-wingers)—often indiscriminately used to refer to far-right activists who are active offlines—show them as poor, unhygienic, geeky, and depressed, without a partner (Higuchi, 2019). Criticism of such images or dislike of Yasuda could be heard from other participants, such as Koda and Aoki. Considering that five out of the seven activists (all aside from Sawada and Stets) were active when Yasuda's book consolidated the image of far-right activists as losers, it is possible that they had acquired the habit of denying negative aspects altogether.

Although the current study focuses on the five selected case studies, the rest of the cases will produce useful insights. While this thesis focuses on subjects' lives and analyses their stories in depth, exploration of the role of shared events on subjects' participation in the far-right movements can also be an interesting theme. Examples of such events are major crises such as the economic recession in 2008 and the Great Tohoku Earthquake in 2011. It was at the time of the recession that Yamaguchi found the far-right websites, while Kida and Yamase found them when the Great Tohoku Earthquake struck. They described how they felt a sheer

‘fear’ to discover how ‘enemies’ invaded Japan. Analysis of the interaction between such public events and the participants’ personal lives will cast a new light on the mechanisms behind the rise of hate discourse at times of crisis. Another approach to exploring the attraction of the Japanese far-right movements is to investigate how aspects of their activities satisfy participants. There are a wide variety of activities which sustain the involvement of their members by arousing positive responses. These can include the excitement of participating in violent activities; the recognition that comes from being involved in electoral campaigns; the sense of reverence inspired by seeing a group of supporters with national flags; the pride in being active on the streets of the capital and the sense of feeling free to shout in the street, or simply the cosiness of socialising with comrades at an affordable *izakaya*. While research by Yasuda (2012) and Yamaguchi (2013) gives some hints about such attractions, the life stories collected for this research will make it possible to establish a strong connection between these attractions and the activists’ personal lives.

In short, the narratives of most of the interviewees lent themselves to psychosocial explanations. The 20 case studies which are not included in this thesis informed the selection and analyses of the five case studies that were chosen. The unique features of the 20 case studies will potentially provide useful insights for further analysis of the attraction of the far-right movements.

Conclusion

The fieldwork certainly challenged some of the stereotypical assumptions held by me—and many others who write about the far right—about the far-right activists. It was wrong to assume that they were uncritical and passive men who merely regurgitated information from the internet. This stereotype is misguided on four counts. Firstly, they were diverse in their acceptance of far-right teaching: all activists were different in terms of which aspects of the far-right agenda they were interested in, and which forms of activity they supported or opposed. Secondly, many of the far-right activists had a realistic view of how they were perceived and had clear opinions about how they wanted to present themselves. This sometimes manifested itself in resistance to the method of this thesis—the interview technique of probing avoidances and defensiveness. This may be a particular problem in the context of interviews with political activists. How to explain better to participants that the negative emotions that may be the driving force behind political activities are not in themselves reprehensible—a point that is often lost on researchers (Leser and Spissinger, 2020)—is a challenge for future research. Thirdly, their life stories, and more importantly the sources of their painful feelings, were

diverse. Although it is true that many activists had problems with their relationship with their parents in their childhood, the way they interacted with other personal and social factors as they grew older varied widely. Fourth, as I mentioned above, I discovered that many female activists played important roles in the movements, although they were less numerous than their male counterparts. Finally, some of them were confronting the norms that bound them, as can be seen in the life stories of Sato (Chapter 5) and Kuroda (Chapter 6), rather than merely being underdogs who did nothing to ease the painful feelings arising from their particular life circumstances; they were trying to overcome obstacles, sometimes by making bold decisions that affected circumstances in their private lives, even though these 'changes' included participation in the far-right movements.

The process of fieldwork and interview analysis has led me to discover many things about myself. For example, as I conducted interviews or analysed transcripts, I found myself being moved by the abovementioned efforts of some interviewees to change the trajectory of their lives. It must be due to my own experience of shifting the course of my life by quitting the National Police Agency and starting a PhD degree. Both the memory of my burning desire to make my life more creative and the uncertainty about the decision, which surfaced repeatedly whenever my research did not go well or I heard about the difficulty of getting jobs, might have made me all the more understanding about their painful feelings and their decision to change their lives. Again, my reaction seemed to come from my own defence mechanism.

Indeed, such findings triggered further reactions of this kind. In my case, the defensiveness was caused by factors such as an uncomfortable sense of being able to understand the personal conflicts that had led the subjects to the far right, while also feeling uncomfortable with their political position, and the suspicion that I could be sympathetic just because I am not a *zainichi* or a foreigner who suffers from their activities. These conflicts were most pronounced in the question of how to draw a pen portrait of each subject and I sometimes found it difficult to illustrate the subjects of the case studies in a balanced way.

I tried to overcome this problem in two ways. Firstly, by returning to the principle of *Gestalt*, carefully describing the flow of experiences and emotions that started the subjects' investment in the far right, taking care to retain the complexity of the subject's life as much as possible. This helped me to resist simplification. Another way of overcoming the problem was to get a third opinion. For example, my views on the subjects were often at odds with those of supervisors and other reviewers. This helped me to see my own emotional projections and to make my descriptions and analyses of them more balanced and nuanced. Sometimes this was made possible by the passage of time since I first wrote the pen portrait.

As will be further detailed in the conclusion of this thesis, the current study argues for the acknowledgement of the painful feelings, not only of the targeted minorities, but also of the far-right activists. From the experience recounted above, I can safely support Stephan Frosh's argument (2019) that acknowledging the painful feelings of those whose political standpoints are unacceptable is not an easy task and is impossible to achieve without determination and courage to confront uncomfortable feelings. One needs to overcome the temptation to reach simple conclusions, and face complexity. This is not easy, but as I have found, it also enhances one's self-understanding, making it more possible to find common ground with those whose political views we cannot endorse, which is the first step to engaging with them.

Each of the chapters that follow deal with a single case that has a particular theme. The first case is that of Naito. He is one of the people who both troubled me the most and also impressed me the most for his intolerant antipathy against minorities, relatable experiences in his childhood, and openness with regard to the interview process. In fact, Naito's pen portrait was the first one I wrote, but his chapter was only completed in the final stages of writing up. His case has important implications for the analysis of the interrelationship between nationalism and racism and, as with all of the subsequent chapters, reveals more about the process of data analysis that is central to the psychosocial method.

Chapter 4 Half-empty or Half-full?: The Nexus Between Racism and Nationalism in the Minds of Some People on the Far Right

Introduction

Nationalism and racism go hand in hand in various contexts. There have been numerous modern examples where ethnocentrism has caused irredentist wars while simultaneously inviting ethnic cleansing. Nazi Germany's expansion and the Bosnian War are the two most prominent examples. A perceived decline or crisis of a nation can reinforce racism and even create racial others (Gilroy, 2004; Rzepnikowska, 2019).

As such, there are cases where interstate conflicts reinforce racism. For instance, the rise of Japan as a modern nation-state in the international sphere caused perception of 'yellow peril' in North America (Okihiro, 1994). In the 1980s too, as Japan and the four 'tigers' (South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, and Hong Kong) threatened the superiority of the US as an economic power, there was a resurgence of racial stereotyping of East Asians (Y. Kawai, 2005). More recently, with tensions between the US and China over the outflow of technology from the former to the latter, federal departments have promulgated a discourse which treats the Chinese government and Chinese nationals as a single entity collectively threatening US security (Lewis, 2021). Due to this problematisation of 'China-ness', anyone who is perceived to share factors associated with China (whether through nationality or merely skin colour) can become a target of racial abuse on university campuses or a victim of hate incidents during the pandemic (Lee, 2020). There have been many attempts to address the psychological or psychosocial mechanisms which cause nationalism and racism to occur simultaneously. In his classic study *Fear of Freedom*, Erich Fromm (1942) argued that the modern liberation of human beings from feudalism conflicted with their instinctive desire to belong, causing a sense of isolation. Three types of reactions or defence mechanisms against this sense of isolation drew the Germans to Nazism: authoritarianism, destructiveness, and automaton conformity. The desire to subordinate others, or worse still to destroy them, is also among the traits of the authoritarian personality proposed by Adorno et al. (1950). Some of Fromm and Acorno's assumptions, especially the attraction of the nation-state at a time of rapid societal transition, are shared by contemporary thinkers. For Slavoj Žižek (1993), it was the interaction between nationalism's lack of substance and highly volatile capitalism that caused the rise of anti-Semitic nationalism in Eastern Europe after the Cold War. According to him, a nation (or any community) is based on the common belief that its members share a 'Thing'. Because in reality,

the Thing does not exist, the mythology of nationalism is not complete until others—be they immigrants, racial/ethnic minorities etc—are blamed for stealing the Thing, or the 'enjoyment' which must have been there. Žižek contends that the volatility of capitalism always creates dissatisfaction, reinforcing the sense that enjoyment is stolen and creating a further need for racism. Hirvonen (2017) applied this idea to contemporary Western Europe. The politics of fear and perpetual sense of crisis, fuelled by terrorism and the flow of immigrants, have rendered it necessary to cling to an ideal ego. The symbolic order of nation, which consists of particular languages, socio-cultural structures, and networks, plays this role. This simultaneously creates the Other (immigrants etc.) onto whom the fear of fragmentation of identity is projected. Again, the abovementioned lack of substance of the nation (borrowing Lacan's concept, Hirvonen called it *α,* which is supposedly shared by the members of the nation) activates the fantasy that the Others steal it, which reproduces the initial sense of persecution. Hirvonen (2017, p.258) asserts that 'the nationalist fantasy can be said to be "essentially" racist'.

It is noticeable that these psychoanalytically informed studies share some common ideas with studies of nationalism in other fields, especially the core assumption that nationalism is imagined to be robustly founded and for this reason, those with anxiety will turn to the discourse of nationalism. Hearn (2007) argues for the idea of 'embedded nationalism', where he contends that nationalism is not always part of one's discourse of identity, but is enacted when one is caught in anxiety, faced with an environmental change and the need to reconcile with it. Skey (2013) contends that since the nation-state has established legitimacy, claiming membership of it while simultaneously creating non- or semi-members gives one a sense of security, which is indispensable in the uncertainty of late modernity. The key idea here is the everydayness of nationalism, which helps us understand why people can suddenly embrace nationalistic far-right teachings without much indoctrination. In *Banal Nationalism*, Michael Billig (1995) argues that nation-states are reproduced in everyday experiences to the extent that people do not notice this process and nation-states do not require any justification. Brubaker et al. (2006) and Fox and Miller-Idriss (2008) point out that people engage with the reproduction of nationhood in some scenes of their daily lives. This notion that nationalism is not always mobilised, which can be found in the works by Hearn and Skey, is a more nuanced discussion about the function of nation and nationalism in real life than the abovementioned works informed by Lacanian psychoanalysis.

Although both the approaches informed by Lacanian psychoanalysis and by contemporary nationalism studies are insightful, they have their own limitations. First, it might

be true that racism is prevalent in a modern nation, but there is a significant diversity in the degree to which one embraces racism and acts upon it. Although Hirvonen (2017, p.258) deemed the nationalist fantasy to be '"essentially" racist', in reality, only a certain proportion of the population of a modern nation state holds sufficiently racist views to perpetrate hate crimes or join far-right groups. Why do some individuals become drawn to nationalism, and why and how are nationalism and discrimination against others connected in their minds? This leads to a second criticism. In the theories introduced above, the role of nation is rigidly characterised as a provider of authority and a sense of stability. However, since the nation can be associated with various ideas, when one mobilises the discursive resource of nation, this does not necessarily have to be about its authority. The above conceptualizations of the relationship between nationalism and racism might be better understood as referring to some of the patterns of relating ideas in the minds of particular people, not applying to everyone.

In order to reach a more flexible understanding of how the concept of 'nation' operates in people's minds, it is useful to refer to the understanding of the role of 'race' informed by Kleinian psychoanalysis. Race is a concept void of substance, but racism is deeply embedded in people's minds, causing repeated tragedies. Explaining this paradox, Rustin (1990; 2000) contended that due to this very emptiness of the concept, race enables those who suffer from a sense of persecution to project any uncontainable negative aspects of the self onto racial minorities. In other words, the category of race and racial others can signify various things depending on one's sense of persecution, which arises from one's life experiences. This explains why racists' episodes of direct contact with racial minorities sometimes appear ridiculously undramatic or are even absent from the stories of their lives. According to Gadd and Dixon (2011, p.220):

> The apparent capacity of ideas of race to alleviate crises of the self is part of the reason why people's prejudices may seem to come from nowhere, out of the most trivial and fleeting experiences....To those most dependent on the symbolism of "race", such trivia may be enough to prompt the wildest generalization and most fantastical prognoses.

If race is replaced with nation in Rustin's argument, the concept of empty category seems to provide a new perspective on the relationship between nationalism and discrimination: those with persecutory feelings need the category of nation to project such feelings onto others. This perspective can overcome the weaknesses of existing studies, namely the lack of explanation

as to why only some people are invested in the discourse of nationalism and the inflexible approach to interpreting nationalists' meaning-making around nation.

Can nation be treated as an empty category? One of the scenarios in which nation comes to the fore concerning racism is when minorities are defined by their nationalities. Certainly, nationality can be regarded as merely one of many categories on which discrimination occurs, just like race and ethnicity (Rattansi, 2007, pp.86-90). At the same time, as Hirvonen (2017) notes, nation is embedded in particular chains of signifiers, such as international relations and the history of a country. Therefore, nationality and/or nation-states can have unique symbolic meanings in people's minds, which are distinct from race or ethnicity. Various factors associated with nation, including war and history, can in turn affect the way the projection of bad 'objects' (and glorification of the self accompanying it) happens in the minds of those who embrace nation-centred thinking. In other words, just like race, the category of 'nation' can receive one's projection of various negative feelings, but at the same time various phenomena associated with the 'nation' *per se* can influence the discourse with which these negative feelings are articulated. Thus, nation is a half-empty, half-full category.

In order to empirically prove this point, this chapter will analyse the life story of one Japanese far-right activist and will investigate why he was invested in the discourse of nation-state and nationality, and how this affected the way his racism was shaped and expressed. As has been briefly mentioned in Chapter 1, Japanese far-right movements, in a sense, provide a highly suitable case. First of all, the *zainichi* are targeted on the grounds that they maintain their South/North Korean nationalities.[10] Even though their lifestyles and physical features are almost identical to those of Japanese, and they were once Japanese nationals under Imperial Japan, far-right activists in Japan insist that the Japanese Government should abolish their permanent residency status and treat them the same as other foreigners (Ito, 2014). Furthermore, observing these activists' activities one immediately notices that the same far-right groups deal both with diplomatic issues (abduction of Japanese citizens by North Korea, territorial conflicts with China and South Korea, and so on) and with issues regarding people associated with them (the *zainichi* and foreigners' reception of social aid, and so on) (Higuchi, 2014). Indeed, whether the issue is the *zainichi*, South/North Koreans or the Chinese, it seems that states and those individuals who hold these nationalities are inseparable in their minds. Higuchi (2014) explains that Japanese xenophobia against the *zainichi* is the result of the international conflict

[10] Since North Korea is not recognized as a country by Japanese Government, in a strict sense those associated with North Korea in Japan do not have North Korean nationality. However, the term 'nationality' is employed here to avoid confusion.

between Japan and South/North Korea, which has become salient since the 1990s. Thus, it is meaningful to explore why and how activists invest themselves in this discourse centred around the Japanese nation-state, projecting their shame onto minorities defined as outside the nation.

Drawing on Rustin's (1990; 2000) idea that race is an empty category, this chapter analyses the life story of an activist, Naito, and argues that 'nation' is a half empty/half full category. Just as is the case with race, the hollowness of 'nation' makes it easy to project one's anxiety and shame onto the 'national' others. At the same time, its association with nation-states legitimates the activities of far-right activists like Naito by contextualising these activities in real international conflicts, providing them with legitimacy and masculine 'plotlines' as soldiers, and blinding them to their racism. Moreover, due to the deep investment in the discourse of nation, the hatred against other 'nationals' can be amplified by the nation's identity crisis, which feels like one's own painful feeling.

In the following section, this chapter will give an overview of racism in Japan and analyse its connection to nationalism. In the second half, a case study of Naito's life story will be conducted, followed by discussion and concluding remarks. Overall, it will be argued that it is crucial to acknowledge the painful feelings of those who suffer from their inability to comply with the norm of a nation in order to understand their attachment to it and their resentment towards those whom they regard as harming it.

'Racism' in Japan

In the Japanese context, the category of race, which is primarily concerned with physical features of people, does not have as much relevance as the category associated with culture and lineage: *minzoku*. Tessa Morris-Suzuki (1998, p.32) pointed out the similarity between *minzoku* and the German term '*Volk*', noting that the term implies the unity of the Japanese who belong to the same culture due to their shared lineage. Imperial Japan adopted the term so that they could claim the superiority of the Japanese over the peoples of other geographical areas in Asia, such as the Chinese or Koreans, given that the category of race would not legitimate it (Y. Kawai, 2015). *Minzoku* is no less void of substance than race. Although *yamato minzoku* has been used to refer to the *minzoku* of the Japanese, the definition of *minzoku* (in terms of language or culture) and even its origin remains a mystery (Okamoto, 2011). The emptiness of its meaning has been exploited according to the need to justify national policies. In order to legitimate its extensive territory, Imperial Japan even claimed that the

Japanese were *kongou-minzoku* (mixed *minzoku*), who had their roots in several *minzoku* all over East and South East Asia (Oguma, 1995, p.362).

In post-war Japan, it has become rare for Japanese to refer to themselves as *minzoku* (Okamoto, 2011). They are more likely to use *Nihonjin*, a direct translation of which is 'Japanese people/nationals'. This does not mean that the shadow of the concept, *minzoku,* has disappeared; on the contrary, the notion of the existence of a culturally and genetically homogenous group has now merged with the concept of citizenship. *Minzoku* is still used in some contexts, such as when one refers to Japan as a *tan'itsu minzoku kokka* (a one-*minzoku* country). The use of the term became commonplace in the 1960s (Oguma, 1995), when those who identified themselves as *chu-ryu* (middle class) became the majority (despite the actual diversity among them), and the mass media, especially television, created the imagined uniformity of the nation (Lie, 2001). The myth consists of two aspects:

1. Only the ethnic group of Japanese (*yamato minzoku*), who have a single language and a single culture reside in Japan
2. Only the ethnic group of Japanese (*yamato minzoku*), whose lineage has never been mixed with that of other ethnic groups, has been living in Japan since ancient times. (Oguma, 1995, p.7)

This myth was reproduced through the heightened popularity of the *Nihonjinron* (theories on the Japanese) genre of publications in post-war Japan, which dealt with what is thought to be the cultural uniqueness of Japan (Befu, 2001). Even after the presence of immigrants has come to be widely acknowledged, popular television shows have hired non-Japanese commentators to comment on the uniqueness/bizarreness of Japanese culture from 'foreign' perspectives, reproducing the assumption that one cannot escape the national culture one was born into (Iwabuchi, 2005; Hambleton, 2011). Although *Nihonjinron* publications have not necessarily praised Japan and its culture (Aoki, 1999), Yoshino (1997) points out that the widely shared myth of Japan's homogeneity and uniqueness has come to form what he calls 'cultural nationalism'. Such nationalism replaced a more explicit form of nationalism where acts like singing the national anthem or saluting the national flag have sometimes been sources of controversy due to the trauma of the totalitarian era (Yoshino, 1997). Academics have criticised the myth's potential for dismissing the presence of diverse groups of people within the Japanese archipelago, including the *zainichi* (Weiner, 2009). Despite the criticism, the myth has remained and has been

reproduced. A series of high-ranking politicians (the latest significant example being the then vice-Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance Aso Taro [Asahi Shimbun, 2020]) have repeatedly referred to or constructed Japan as a one-*minzoku* nation. This implies that this belief is strongly embedded in the minds of at least part of the population. Sugimoto (1999) articulated this view of the nation and its people as a very simple formula, N=E=C (Nation=Ethnicity=Culture).

The problem with such a notion is not only that the minorities in the domestic sphere are ignored but also that the idea of N=E=C is extended to people beyond Japan. Foreigners on a television program are sometimes introduced with the national flags of their countries of origin and expected to represent them stereotypically, ignoring the diversity within these countries (Iwabuchi, 2005; Hambleton, 2011). The illustration of people based on the idea of N=E=C can be found in other popular media such as cartoons, which are widely consumed in Japan (see Miyake, 2013, for example). Although recently there have been some signs of a transition toward acknowledging the individuality of foreigners in Japan's television (Gabrielson, 2014), there seems to be a strong assumption that one's personality or behaviour can be deducted from one's nationality. To borrow McVeigh's (2006, p.142) expression, 'all people have natural "national" boundaries'.

Considering this, it is no wonder that some people believe that the concept of a national or *minzoku* character, has a bearing on international politics. JFP's leader Sakurai Makoto's foreword to his book summarises this confusion. According to him, 'South Korean nationals are "anti-Japan *minzoku*" who have received elite anti-Japan education since childhood, and they wrongfully assume that they absolutely have the moral high ground' (Sakurai, 2009, p.5). Based on this notion, he asks 'What will you do, if South Koreans say "Japan colonized South Korea!" or a *zainichi* person states "We, the *zainichi*, are the victims who were forcibly taken to Japan" and demand that you should apologise?' (Sakurai, 2009, p.3). In Sakurai's mind, the 'anti-Japan' national policy of South Korea is immediately incorporated into the cultural heritage of the Korean *minzoku*. Thus, he assumes that the *zainichi* share the same tendency as South Koreans even though most of them have grown up in Japan and received a Japanese education. This short quote shows how the 'N=E=C' equation supports Sakurai's fantasy that nationals are ideological vanguards of the nation-state. For this reason, he insists that the Japanese should be prepared for a confrontation with South Koreans and the *zainichi*. Smith (2018, p.254) points out that:

> The ACM...act as public activists not from the position of the *shimin* as they claim, but from the position of citizen (*kokumin*) of the postwar state engaging the mythical postwar 'mainstream' of economic and cultural security...the baseline assumption of rights and legality with which they frame their activist program is a judicially-based, national level of understanding...The state addressed by the ACM is the circumscribed, postwar mono-ethnic state conjured by the discourse of Japanese uniqueness....

In sum, nation-oriented discourse is prevalent in Japan and has been incorporated in the far-right discourse. Whether this is about character, behaviour, or ideology, the discourse around nation of origin strongly influences how one is understood and represented. Here, the distinction between a nation and its people almost collapses. What is distinctive about the far-right activists is that they ascribe to and try to reproduce this discourse. Why do some become invested in this discourse so strongly? How can this discourse play a role in the far-right activists' articulation of negative feelings? The rest of the chapter will explore these questions through the case study of Naito.

Case Study: Naito

Introducing Naito

Naito was a 57-year-old agency worker. He was known for his harsh hate speech (in fact he was one of the few activists who openly used hateful words during his activities) and for other kinds of troubles he had caused on the street. At the time of the first and second interviews, he had his own group and mostly acted together with Zaitoku-kai members who were not part of the JFP. He had been arrested several times. The charges included throwing a bottle at a Chinese grocery shop which he suspected to be a base for Chinese government espionage; trespassing on the building of the Liberal Democratic Party's headquarters; and destroying anti-nuclear power activists' tents in the middle of the central government buildings.

Naito was one of few activists who did not shy away from describing his activities in terms of 'discrimination, hate'. However, 'hate' is not an expression of racism for him, but a legitimate means with which to fight enemies. According to him, 'it does not matter whether [a *zainichi* person] is good or bad as an individual'. He stated that human beings were ultimately 'social animals', and what counted was what they felt as their 'sense of belonging' (*kizoku ishiki*). In this sense, the *zainichi* who kept their South/North Korean nationalities could not be part of Japanese society. 'The *zainichi* are enemies of the Japanese, that's my

plotline [*settei*]'. According to him, counter-activists are all *zainichi* and the world of politics, business, and mass media are full of the *zainichi*.

At the same time, his narrative was strongly centred on his concern with Japan. He continued to lament that Japan was going wrong. 'Economic prosperity is now central to everything.' At the same time, somewhat contradictorily, he complained about the downfall of the economy in Japan. 'The Japanese cannot be rich however much they work. In the past, blue-collar workers could build a house.' When I asked him to give me a concrete instance where he felt society was going wrong, he said:

> Why are the Chinese kicking around in Ginza (a downtown area in Tokyo)? Why do the *zainichi* have land in downtown areas all over Japan?...The news tells me that Chinese and Koreans make irrational requests, they blackmail us, and the mass media companies report it as if it's funny, I don't know, but the daily news, I want to hear [the news] like, that there was an increase in the budget for the national defence.

Why did he lament the materialistic culture of Japan while he also resented that blue-collar workers like him could not be rich and the Chinese and the *zainichi* had stolen the fortunes of the Japanese? Why did he refer to national defence as the antidote to the wealth of the Chinese and Koreans? This contradiction will be explored in detail.

As an interviewee, Naito was one of the most cooperative and he actively wanted to be interviewed. This is understandable considering that one of his main foci was to 'leave a mark'. This existed side-by-side with his low self-esteem with which he referred to himself as '*kuzu-yarou, kasu-yarou*' (a piece of crap). Thus, his heroes included Galileo Galilei, Vincent van Gogh, and Gregor Johann Mendel, none of whom enjoyed much fame during their lives. He occasionally mentioned the idea of being killed (rather than killing his enemies), suggesting his belief that it was only death that would make his life meaningful. Reflecting this low self-esteem, he looked more and more annoyed during the interview to see that I was interested in his life story, rather than his 'political' thoughts. When I last saw him in October 2019, he was excited about the rising tension between Japan and South Korea. 'What I can do now is to go to the frontline of the Japan-Korea War. It surely will happen....That's the only way I live. Otherwise, I have nothing'.

His story revealed that his childhood experience of mental and physical sufferings and low socio-economic status had led to his extremely low self-esteem, seeing himself as a weak and worthless individual. This shame caused him to shift his interest from his personal life to

the issue of Japan and international politics. Unlike in his real-life, in his 'political' delusions, often characterised by collusions of hard powers, he could fight back against enemies. Through joining ACM's street activities, he found a way to contextualise his real life in his 'political' delusion of the survival-of-the-fittest competition between nation-states, imagining himself as a martyr in the wars. Thus, he could render his 'crap' life meaningful. In his case, his disdain for the *zainichi* and the Chinese might have been a reflection of his shame at feeling alienated from Japanese society in its economic prosperity despite his identification with it. His hatred for the *zainichi* and the Chinese were absorbed in his 'political' delusions about international conflicts.

Early Life

Naito was born in a mountainous area in Northern Japan in 1961. After his father stopped coming back from the city where he had gone to work, his mother, his older brother, and Naito himself suffered from poverty. What was worse, just before he was enrolled in primary school at the age of six, his mother was forcibly hospitalised due to neurosis and he and his older brother were 'thrown' into an orphanage.

> [O]ne evening, I think it was a summer evening, a jeep, one looking like a military jeep, came...a male doctor, um, in a white robe, and uh a female nurse, two of them broke in, and held her down, pinioned her. This was shocking to a kindergartener, like six years old or so. They were like Gestapo....My mom, who was big, resisted hard, but being outnumbered, three people held her down. And she said, 'I will never go!' in her [dialect in his region]. [Y: Ah] 'I will never go, stop, stop, leave me, I will never go.' My brother and I just looked on blankly. [Y: Huh] We were stunned, caught in fear. We could not move because of fear.

His mother died one year later when he was in the first grade of primary school. It was severely shocking to him. 'It was the first time that I wanted to die.' He said. '[F]rom that point I felt like there was a hole in the world [*sekai ga suppori to nuketa youna kanji.*]

The conditions he faced in the orphanage were cruel. He described the situation as '[o]nly lynching and fighting.' Older children bullied the younger ones like Naito constantly, and brothers (including Naito and his brother) were forced to fight each other so that they did not unite and go against those in power. 'It's the modus operandi of the reign of terror, even though they were children, or rather especially because children are cruel....It's the nature of

human beings. Living in a group will bring them to be that way'. The situation continued until the institution was raided by police who conducted a wholesale arrest of those delinquent students who had been shoplifting and forming motorcycle gangs.

Growing up in extremely harsh surroundings, he learnt to escape reality by reading books and painting pictures. 'What came into my sight looked grey...I like reading books, and drawing, and *manga* (cartoons), in short, I like colouring things in my head, forming shapes and colouring'. He was a solitary person, reading van Gogh's biography and wondering what it would have been like to be the painter. The objects of delusion were sometimes wartime politicians and he enjoyed imagining how he would have survived as these politicians. 'What if I had been them, like if I had been Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, Roosevelt, or Churchill?' He explained about his obsession with 'politics' as follows:

> I was detached from the real world. My immediate environment was messed up, like by inequality or misapplied equality, and that [becoming detached] was natural to me. But when it comes to politics, I wanted Japan to be this way, regardless of my situation. I, kind of, longed for discussing themes like the nation-state or Japan. Like 'Japan should be this way' or 'Japan is this kind of country.'

According to him, anti-Americanism and the re-introduction of military power in Japan (or turning the country's Self-Defence Force into a full-fledged military power) were always among his political themes. His despair might have already made him lose interest in his own life and displace his attachment onto Japan in harsh international situations. Still, reflecting his environments, his political delusions were filled with images of war.

Joining Issui-kai

After leaving the orphanage, he spent his youth being 'unstable' because of the lack of purpose in his life. He was occupied with delusions such as the reintroduction of the Japanese military. Although he sympathised with labour movements, he did not join them. He was not attracted to *uyoku* due to their pro-US attitude as well as their fierce appearance. He finally joined a representative *shin-uyoku* (New-Right) group, Issui-kai, at the age of 30, in 1991. *Shin-uyoku* refers to the right-wing movements which emerged as student movements in opposition to the leftist student movements in the 1960s. They were characterised by their anti-American attitude combined with the aspiration to restore the regular Japanese military (Hori, 2017).

> Well, the reason that I joined Issui-kai was, I mean I had been very cowardly and had been too frightened to dream of joining in a political group, much less an *uyoku* group. Issui-kai was, kind of, accessible. They were normal, not wearing *tokko fuku* or *sento fuku* (military uniform-styled clothes), in short, they were people who did their activities in suits.

In the end, he was disappointed by Issui-kai when he saw an executive member threatening a young student member who had disclosed his opinion. 'It was just like an *uyoku* group.' As he became less passionate, he was involved in a conflict with another member, 'nearly got killed' and left Issui-kai.

After leaving Issui-kai, he decided not to be involved in any political activity. 'I was like "Let's go back to being a normal person." Ordinary life, ordinary way of life. Without being known, as if I never existed'. But this kind of life frustrated him.

> If you are ordinary, you have to enjoy yourself, you have to be rich. This is natural and normal, but it's painful. What should I do when I am not enjoying myself and I am not rich?...When I was in my 30s, I was living dead, I found myself alive but dead. If I am expected to enjoy it, be rich, and be happy just as others do, but I don't know how and why I should make efforts for that. [Y: Did you feel that kind of pressure?] Yeah, all the time, in my 30s as well.

This comment shows the suffering of Naito who could not bring himself to want to be simply happy due to his lack of self-esteem. The delusion of politics helped him turn his gaze away from this emptiness. In the end, he could not stay away from his passion for politics due to his detachment from his own life.

Participating in the Far-right Movements

Being 'hungry for politics', Naito started to hang around at Yasukuni shrine in his mid-40s. He was invited to see Nishimura Shuhei's activity. Despite initial low expectations, he was 'shocked'. When he first saw Nishimura, he thought:

> Is it acceptable to say such things? This guy might get killed! Chinese and foreigners would not stay silent. *Uyoku* will get angry. We never know what left-wingers will do. What if *boryokudan* [another name for *yakuza or Japanese mafia*] make trouble? But

as I joined his activities, I was like, ‘it’s fine’. [Y: Okay.] Yes, we can. [Y: Yeah.] Yeah. It’s all right to get killed. How can I die without saying what I want to say? Let me say whatever I want.

He organised highly offensive demonstrations in Korean Town calling it ‘Chosen Seibatsu Dai Koshin’ [Great March for Conquest of Korea]. ‘I knew the underground society threatened us...Koreans, *yakuza*, left-wingers, whatever. I am 60 something. [inaudible] It’s my life, I don’t mind being killed’. Since then he had mostly undertaken only aggressive styles of activities like those mentioned above.

Although there has never been an incident where ACM activists were killed by what they regard as ‘enemies’, he viewed the situation differently.

They are ultra-leftists. Ultra-leftist violent groups, bunch of murderers. Like, Chukaku-ha [an ultra-leftist faction]. Those ultra-leftists have fought against right-wingers to pile up many deaths....After I carried out [the attacks against the tents of anti-nuclear activists] they say that I was just kidding or acting stupidly, but before doing that, I had made a resolution to be killed. It’s the case with everything, including trespassing into the LDP headquarters....Politics is about being killed. It’s true of anything, isn’t it? Like invention or discovery....That’s how Galileo was executed.

What is clear here is his strong belief that there is a trade-off between one’s life and one’s achievement. This seems to be linked to his hope to be remembered like Galileo. The Internet makes his hope a realistic one. In the course of participating in Nishimura’s activity and later orchestrating the activities on his own, he realised how powerful the Internet was, especially to mould his image.

I came to learn that information about me circulated on its own. I did not look on the Internet, but when someone happened to show it to me, I was like ‘How wonderful! Is this what’s going on? It’s like it’s not me’. The image is, someone else, someone who is not me has gotten his life, good or bad. This might be true me. A completely unknown person [like me] fitted in well. Fitted in, like coincidentally, people wanted such a person.

Shooting videos seemed to be one of the most important motivations for him. For example, he had continuously attacked the tent in front of the METI building but stopped because the volunteer cameramen did not want to accompany him for fear of being arrested. His self in the uploaded videos had its own life. 'Spaniards or Americans watch the video and come to see me. [To them] I am someone from a different world. They are moved and enjoy seeing me....It feels strange that they ask me to shake their hands and say "I have watched your video on the Internet" to a piece of crap like me'.

Analysis

Naito's life was characterised by his attempt to reconcile with the terror that he felt when he was a child. This harsh environment made him turn away from his real life. His detachment led to the political delusion in which he could fight with others in survival-of-the-fittest competitions between nations. This 'political' delusion was a metaphor for his real conditions, where he was surrounded by bullies, having been deprived of a proper guardian. By playing with this delusion, he might have sought to cope with his shame of being weak, unable to save himself and his mother. What forms the centre of this fantasy is Japan gaining independence from the US by establishing a fully-fledged military force with which to guard itself. It is not difficult to see the link between this imagining and Naito's sense of impotence since childhood, especially stemming from the traumatic experience of his mother's forced hospitalisation, where he was 'stunned, caught in fear'.

In terms of the style of activity, it is noticeable that Naito is obsessed with the idea of being killed, which might have been derived from his extremely low self-esteem. His childhood experience of being bullied settled in his mind to the extent that he could not identify himself with groups associated with a strong hierarchical structure and aggression, and for this reason, *uyoku*, or *shin-uyoku* were not his choices. Thus, he could not figure out how to link his real life, where he was a mere powerless 'piece of crap', to this imaginary world. It was Nishimura Shuhei and other ACM activists that gave him a self-image that he could invest himself in, a provocative civil activist; in his imagination, he was weak and without organisational support, but he could use his thoughts as his weapons as long as he accepted the risk of being killed for spreading 'what he wants to say'. His investment in the image of a martyr provided a way to turn his 'crap' life into something meaningful in the imagined context of Japan's war against its enemies. Now he conducted provocative acts toward what he regarded as enemies of Japan, namely the Chinese grocery shop (that he suspected to be a base

for Chinese espionage), LDP,[11] leftist activists, and Koreans. Through these acts, he wanted to prove to himself that he could stand up against these 'threats' that existed in his political delusions, something he had been unable to do against his enemies in his childhood. Thanks to the Internet, his 'activist self' took on a life of its own by being recognised by people all over the world, regardless of what he was in his daily life. This lack of connection was compatible with his escape from his real life to the 'political'. The fact that what he did and said was recorded and uploaded opened up the possibility of leaving a mark like his heroes, such as van Gogh, despite his 'crap' life.

His obsession with thinking about and discussing Japan and hatred toward its enemies might have deepened as he became alienated from mainstream Japanese society. His agony is quite understandable considering that he spent his youth witnessing the consumerist culture under the 'bubble' economy of Japan, while he did not even 'know how and why I should make efforts' to 'enjoy myself' or be 'rich', possibly due to his low self-esteem. His remark that 'economic prosperity is now central to everything' suggested his ambivalence toward Japanese society. Still, such agony was directed to the Chinese who were 'kicking around' in downtown Tokyo or the *zainichi* who according to him 'have land in downtown areas all over Japan', as if they had stolen opportunities from blue-collar workers like himself.

This projection of shame was incorporated into his long-standing fantasy around contentious international politics. To him, all *zainichi* people were enemies simply because they kept Korean nationality, although in reality there are diverse reasons why these individuals keep their nationalities, that go beyond a simple sense of belonging (Fukuoka, 1993). As his slip of the tongue 'it's my plotline [*settei*]' shows, somewhere in his heart, he might have already realised how simplistic his 'othering' was. Still, he stuck to the idea. To borrow Rustin's concept (2000, p.192), he idealised himself as 'the author of denigratory and sadistic attacks'. According to Rustin (2000, p.192):

> The 'lie' in this system of personality organization becomes positively valued, as carrying for the self an important aspect of its defences against weakness, loss, or negative judgement. The idea that negative attitudes to the truth, as well as more

[11] Naito did not mention why he targeted LDP. Still, it was understandable considering he belonged to *shin-uyoku* (New Right) movements. It is possible that as a New Right activist, with his anti-American position, he was opposed to pro-American conservatives like LDP, which maintained the subordinate position of Japan vis-à-vis the US in post-war Japan. (See Hori, 2017 for New Right activists' political standpoints).

> familiarly towards persons and objects, can become part of pathological organizations of the personality may explain something about the extraordinary tenacity of racist beliefs in certain conditions. This qualifies only to a degree the view earlier expressed that the primary hold of racism comes from the domain of sentiment rather than reason. This is because whilst this view acknowledges that kinds of 'reasoning' may be clung to as important defences of identity and motives to action, the 'reasoning' in question is itself a representative of hatred of the truth and the reciprocal exchanges and relationships on which truthful apprehension of reality must be based.

Naito had every reason to stick to the 'lie' or, in his words, 'plotline'. The fact that he could be the 'author' of the 'plotline' might itself have given him the sense of omnipotence and control which he was deprived of in his tragic childhood (it is noticeable that one of his ways to escape the harsh reality in his childhood was 'colouring' the world which looked 'grey'). Naito's imposition of his worldviews on others, especially *zainichi* people, might be due to the lack of what Winnicott called a 'good-enough mother'. According to Winnicott, a guardian who cares about a baby enough while satisfying the guardian's own need is necessary for the baby to accept the subjectivities of others. Having lacked such a guardian and being constantly fearful, Naito might have developed his tendency to see others as mere threats, ignoring their subjectivities. His obsession with 'political' arguments involving a lot of seemingly plausible 'reasonings', which he arbitrarily picked from various scenes of history, is the manifestation of his 'hatred of the truth'—the truth that international relations involve more than mere contention, that nationality does not tell much about a person, and that his personal attachment to 'politics' stemmed from his childhood trauma.

Conclusion

This case study demonstrates the half-empty/half-full nature of nation as a category through which discrimination occurs. Naito projected his anxiety and shame onto non-nationals without having many direct experiences with them. Simultaneously, his hateful worldview was incorporated into the chain of signifiers related to nation, being expressed through words such as 'the national defence' and 'Japan-Korea war'. Acts of street confrontation might have been imagined as participation in such an international conflict.

Naito's case shows that nation does not necessarily signify something stable which promises a sense of security in one's psyche. It was rather the imagined survival-of-the-fittest competition between nations, together with an image of Japan as weak and deprived, that

attracted Naito to his political delusions. For those who live in the overwhelming presence of nation-states, international coflict feels more real and familiar than White supremacists' idea of 'race war' or a more widely accepted 'Clash of Civilizations' (Huntington, 1996). Such war is not only easily imaginable but also legitimising. Thus, as was the case with Naito, those who harbour such views consider 'hatred' of the enemy to evidence their patriotism. This explains why the messages of countermeasures against racism and hate do not resound with the mindsets of those activists. Within the plotline of 'war' between a weak Japan and major enemies, radical activities, even violence, come to be tolerated.

Changes in the international political environment affected where Naito directed his anger. The image in his fantasy changed from conflict between Japan and the US to conflict between Japan and neighbouring Asian countries. This might have reflected the changes in Japan's self-perception in international politics. Since the Meiji period, Japan constructed a dual identity: the Orient in relation to the West, and the West in relation to other Asian countries (Lim, 2015). In the post-WWII period, by constructing itself as the West's other, Japan successfully exempted itself from the responsibility of deploying its military power to maintain the world order as a pacific state, enjoying economic prosperity under the nuclear umbrella of the US (Hagström, 2015). Issui-kai and other New Right movements appeared in the 1970s, arguing for the abolition of the hegemony of the US and the Soviet Union, and the restoration of Japan's regular military (Hori, 2017). At that time, China and South Korea were still developing countries. The rise of South Korea and China as economic powers, and their accusations since the 1990s about Japan's wartime atrocities undermined Japan's identity as the 'West' in Asia and also as a pacific country, which caused ontological insecurity and hatred against these two antagonists (Suzuki, 2015; 2019; Hagström and Gustafsson, 2015). This threat to Japan's identity was unacceptable to someone like Naito: his investment in the discourse of Japan's persecution was only possible when he could see Japan as a weak pacifist country, not an evil one deprived of power due to its aggressive war. Thus, these countries came to be regarded as primary enemies in Naito's deluded political outlook.

Nation-oriented thinking, especially the assumption of national homogeneity, caused a sense of shame rather than pride, which further produced an obsession with nation and hatred for foreigners. One can imagine how lonely Naito felt under the widely prevalent discourse of *ichioku sou-churyu* ('a hundred million middle-class', or the idea that Japanese society was almost exclusively a middle-class one), and the appearance of *shin chukan kaiso* (the new middle class) (Murakami, 1977), which existed since the 1970s. Despite his longing for a sense of belonging, Naito felt alienated from the middle class who were imagined to be the majority

of the Japanese because he could not bring himself to think 'you have to enjoy yourself, you have to be rich'. Such an imagined uniformity of the Japanese middle class has been empirically discredited, especially since the rise of the discourse of *kakusa* (the socio-economic gap) from the mid-2000s (Kanbayashi, 2012).[12] In Naito's eyes, he was deprived of his object of cathexis (just like when his mother was taken away from him), and the image of foreigners walking around downtown Tokyo convinced him that these foreigners had something to do with his feelings of loss. The fall from grace of the Japanese was associated with the abovementioned ontological insecurity of the country, being woven into the discourse of war. This structure interacted with Naito's low self-esteem and produced the Spaghetti Western-like 'plotline' where he, as a stranger, saved the community and became a legend. This discourse turned the meaning attached to his life from that of a 'piece of crap' to that of a martyr. Thus, one's concept of nation does not only contain one's hatred, but even autonomously causes hatred and limits how one positions oneself vis-à-vis the nation and other nationals.

Naito's story points to a recurrent theme of this thesis, which is that understanding the reasons why people participate in the far-right movements requires acknowledgement of the sense of loss and isolation of those who struggle under the normative power of the ideal way of living. If Sato's life (see Chapter 6) was characterised by his suffering as an insider of the idealised middle-class 'salaryman' way of life, Naito's case can be characterised by alienation from this. In both cases, far-right activities gave the men alternative ways to fulfil masculine aspirations against which they were struggling to measure up. As Naito's narrative suggests, it is difficult to assert one's way of life when this means resisting the norm of how people should live their lives. Being ashamed of not standing up to the norm causes one to project the shame onto something else, such as the minority population. Naito's idealisation of himself as 'the author of denigratory and sadistic attacks' provides an insight into why some people believe in fake news and seemingly ridiculous conspiracy theories, seen also in the context of Brexit and President Trump's America. This problem cannot be solved by using factual counter-information to dispel misinformation because investment in the latter and resistance to the former, which is regarded as soul-destroying, are motivated by a desire for omnipotence. In this way, contemporary nationalisms often legitimise a 'perverse idealization of the "bad self"' as a patriotic act.

[12] Of course, this common notion regarding the prosperity of post-war Japan has itself been criticised from various perspectives, questioning whether the middle-class that emerged in the 1970s was as uniform as imagined (Tominaga, 1977; Hashimoto, 2015) and whether the wealth gap became wider recently or is in fact no different from what it was in the era of *ichioku sou-churyu* (Sudo, 2010; Kanbayashi, 2012).

Chapter 5 Self-Accusations of 'Selfishness': When a Single Mother Goes Far Right

Chapter 4 revealed the origin of Naito's anger toward the foreigners whom he regarded as enjoying illegitimate profits. Aoki, whose case study will be presented in this chapter, also expressed the same kind of anger. In her case, this anger was directed towards immigrants and foreigners whom she imagined to be enjoying the privilege of fulfilling their children's needs as parents. Aoki resented immigrants for claiming a privilege she assumed only those who comply with the Japanese norm of a nuclear family were entitled to, having missed out on it herself as a single parent. Through analysing the causes of this anger, this chapter will discuss one of the important themes in this thesis: gender and the far-right movement. Indeed, the pressure arising from the norms of femininity and masculinity will repeatedly be identified as one of the factors which interacts with personal experiences and a sense of shame to bring people to the far-right movements.

Agency of Female Activists of the Far-right Movements

The demography of far-right groups shows that their members are predominantly male, but this does not mean that women are not welcomed or that they always play only complementary roles, at least on the discourse level (see Dauber, 2017; Pilkington, 2017; Ylä-anttila and Luhtakallio, 2017, p.42). In the case of the JFP, for instance, although the number of female activists was smaller in the street activities observed during the fieldwork,[13] women occupied key roles. These included being one of three deputy presidents of the party; head of the secretariat; head of the disciplinary committee and director of the branches; and head of regional branches in six prefectures (Nippon Dai'ichi-tou, no-date). The roles of far-right women in various groups witnessed during the fieldwork included arranging and managing street activities; coordinating Sakurai's activities; mediating internal conflicts; leading protests, sometimes being involved in violent collisions with counter-activists and the police; and standing as candidates for election.

There has been an accumulation of studies on the agency of far-right women. Kathleen Blee's (1996; 2002) trailblazing work found that women in the far right are far from 'compliant' and rarely subservient (Linden and Klandermans, 2007). In the US, the female klans and skinheads selectively adopt the discourses and goals of the movements. Women make

[13] Tsuji's (2017) analysis of the demography of online right-wingers also notes that female participants are in the minority.

contributions to the movements by playing various roles, such as perpetrators of violence, thinkers, facilitators, promoters, activists, and exemplars of the gender norm shared among the movements (Campion, 2020). The far-right discourses on women's roles in these movements and wider society are heavily gendered, but they are reproduced and perpetuated partly by women themselves. Mattheis's (2018) study of a Swedish female alt-right leader's discourse illustrates how women join in the fight because they accept the value to men of women's reproductive and supportive roles. By claiming the apparent authenticity of these images, the discourse works to exploit the fear of contemporary women regarding marriage and family—anxiety about finding a husband, the inability to have a child, or disappointment resulting from an already failed marriage. Latif et al. (2020) illustrate how certain elements of archetypes of women prevalent in the White supremacist movements, such as mother, whore, and fighter, can be, if not fully, self-ascribed by female members (see also Félix's [2017] study for the case of Hungarian far-right groups). Of course, these studies record the women's experiences of stress and the troubles caused by gender inequality. Pilkington (2017) found that even in a group like the English Defence League, which publicly claims 'EDL angels stand beside their men...not behind them', female members had to experience sexualizing gazes from other members and to tolerate conservative gender norms which surfaced in their jokes and appeared in their iconography or official merchandise.

Scholarly works on female members of the Japanese far-right movements have documented the role of women's subjectivity in deciding their positioning, especially regarding the 'comfort women' controversy, which is one of the main issues for the far-right movements. As Yamaguchi (2018) noticed, these women use the fact that they are women to counter accusations on 'comfort women' issues. Suzuki (2019a) finds that female activists have an ambivalent attitude toward the 'comfort women' issue. Compared with male activists who do not hesitate to make offensive misogynistic comments about them, female members cannot do the same to the former 'comfort women'. They even show a sympathetic attitude towards them, while at the same time they regard them as prostitutes and assert that it is shameless for former 'comfort women' to speak about this issue. Suzuki argues that the ambivalent attitude of the female members reflects a contradiction between their opposition to the suppression of women in Japan and their desire to put themselves in a safe place by drawing a line between them and shameless 'prostitutes'. In this sense, as Suzuki notes, these female activists are attempting to raise their voice for a better society for themselves just as feminists do, even though the far-right activists try to do so without changing the given social structure. Then why do they not mobilise to change the social structure?

Gender and Participation in the Far-Right Movements

Several scholars discuss subjectivity and the agency of established female far-right activists in terms of 'belonging to a racist movement'. However, the factors involved in 'joining a racist movement' have not received much attention. Although Blee locates her study in the line of enquiry about the reasons why women join in the far-right movements, her study does not answer this question. One of the patterns of the life stories of female activists recounted in Blee's (1996; 2002) studies is that of 'conversion': some women told the story of an awakening which was triggered by a singular and often seemingly unrelated event (such as a car accident or surgery). Blee does not give much credit to this kind of narrative. According to her, it oversimplifies the complex process of participation, which was in reality likely to have been initiated by contacts with existing members, leading to the adoption of racist views, and the life story was re-constructed retrospectively. Another pattern of the women's narratives of becoming a member of a racist group is alleged passivity, where participation is described as 'involuntary, automatic, and unconscious' (Blee, 1996, p.697). To Blee, the inability of some women to explain why they joined such a group is the result of a sense of resignation after they have been disappointed by the male-dominant culture of the skinhead group and are at a loss for words.

The problem with Blee's study is that she only allows for 'rational', uncontradictory accounts. It might be true that what her interviewees described as a turning point in their life stories seems unrelated or minor, and what happened later might indeed have been a slow and incremental process of accepting the far-right culture rather than a dramatic moment of conversion. However, it would still be useful to explore what meanings the women themselves attached to such events in order to understand the deeper causes of their adoption of racist views. A passive attitude in a person's account of her trajectory towards the far-right movements does not necessarily mean that she is disappointed about a disparity between what she had hoped for and what she experienced when participating in the far-right activities. It might be rather that an unacknowledged shame or anxiety prevented her from articulating what she really wanted from the movements.

Blee's study started with her opposition to the view prevalent in preceding studies of the far right, where men were depicted as pursuing 'their obvious, identifiable interests and privileges' while women were said to 'join because they are confused, led astray by male intimates or incorrectly identify their interest with those of the extreme Right' (Blee, 1997, p.684). But this does not mean that only seemingly rational accounts should be taken seriously.

On the contrary, the current study takes seriously the function of emotions that might result in seemingly illogical trajectories, or in the inability to articulate the reasons behind choices, regardless of the gender of the participants. Following Hollway and Jefferson (2013) and Gadd and Dixon (2011), I argue that in order to make sense of contradictory behaviour like this, it is necessary to take the unconscious into account. By being attentive to the *Gestalt*, or the wholeness of the subject's life story, this study will reveal how Aoki—the participant whose story features in this chapter—unconsciously connected her preceding life experiences with the far-right agenda.

Asking why women join in far-right movements leads to another question: does being a woman influence this process? Some think so. Mulinari and Neergaard (2017, pp.17-21), who conducted research in Sweden, argue that many of their informants, who were unemployed or divorced, were stressed by the value attributed to self-reliance in neoliberal societies, and by the gender norm prevalent in Swedish society that women should be married and raise children while simultaneously contributing to society through work. They point out that there is a unique pressure on women, which causes them to be drawn to the far-right way of empowerment. Others are more cautious. Blee (2012, p.264) warns against this assumption, stating:

> By assuming a priori that gender matters in organized racism, it can be difficult to see the intriguing ways in which it does...How gender matters in organized racism requires not only that we see gender, but also that we see its limits, its cracks, and its fissures. To know when gender matters requires us to know when it does not.

Such a view is supported by Sigl's (2016) study on the life stories of right-wing women, which shows that their violent behaviours and attitudes cannot be attributed solely to factors related to their gender. Sigl's comparison of the biographies of two female activists illustrates how diverse women can be in their acceptance of and desistence from violence, warning against simplistically assuming that female members are less violent than their male counterparts.

Through psychosocial analysis of the life story of a female activist, Aoki, the current chapter will analyse whether, and how, gender matters in one's path to the far-right movements. This analysis will demonstrate that gender-related elements interacted with other factors to produce her participation. It will reveal that patriarchal norms interacted with Aoki's strong sense of shame and her defences against them. These defences involved deflecting blame onto foreigners. In conclusion, the chapter will argue that female activists' paths to far-right movements are not all about gender issues. It is necessary to contextualise relevant gender

issues in women's meaning-making to understand how they play a role in their paths and their choice of the far-right movements.

Challenges Single Mothers Face in Contemporary Japan

Before detailing the life story of Aoki, this section will briefly explain the difficulties that single mothers face in contemporary Japan, which is one of the key features of Aoki's life. The majority of single-parent households are those of single mothers (Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare [hereafter MHLW], 2020, p.3). The average net income of single-mother households is less than half of that of households with a child (MHLW, 2020, p.11), and half of single mothers depend on precarious jobs, while only 7.8 % of the fathers in single-parent households have the same occupational status (MHLW, 2017, pp.13-14). The gender gap among single-parent households is evident in their incomes: single-mother households earn less than two thirds of the incomes of their single-father counterparts (MHLW, 2017, pp.35-38). Comparing OECD countries, Osawa (2014; 2015) identifies that Japan's poverty rate (both in terms of overall and disposable income) has risen to a level comparable to other countries, with a reduction in average wages and an increase in the proportion of the population with a part-time job. However, there are limited social policies in place to alleviate poverty. Osawa identifies the cause of the failure of the redistributive function of Japanese social welfare policies in the assumption that in families with children, only one parent (presumably the husband) is the breadwinner and the other is dependent. As a consequence, in Japan, social policies do not reduce poverty among households with single parents. The burden of tax and social security expenditure in a single parent household is heavier than in a household of a couple with or without children. Osawa (2015) describes a situation where, she argues, 'the Japanese social policies are punishing employment and child rearing'.

The power of the normative image of a family with a husband as a breadwinner and a housewife causes many troubles to single mothers: the reluctance of landlords to issue contracts to single mothers and their tendency to charge high rents; the difficulty of finding a job experienced by mothers who did not work during their marriages; the social stigma, often internalized by the mothers themselves, attached to recipients of public support (Ezawa, 2016; Iwata, 2007). The prevalent idea of a strict labour division has rendered long working hours the norm, making it hard for women to find a full-time job, since they are tasked with housework (Dalton, 2017). Living with their parents is a choice for single mothers, and in fact this improves their living standard, if not entirely solving the poverty problem (Shirahase and

Raymo, 2014). Thus, the insufficient public support for single mothers produces a fertile ground for support for the 'traditional' style of living in a big family. Women themselves embrace the image of an 'ordinary' family consisting of a husband as a breadwinner and a housewife. As Ezawa's (2016) interviews show, many of the Japanese women born in the 1960s, like Aoki, grew to embrace the image of a family made up of a salaryman and a professional housewife, even though in the end they might become single mothers. Alexy's (2020) study captures the struggle of Japanese people (especially middle-aged women and men) who seek to strike the balance between intimacy and independence regarding marriage, and to get rid of an old post-war ideal where the economic independence of a wife was the norm and sustaining marriage was the priority. As Alexy figures out from the sometimes-contradictory words and deeds of the women she interviewed, it is easy to say but difficult to do.

The existence of this gendered problem does not mean that there has never been an attempt to promote women's status. On the contrary, the attempt to promote gender equality has been hijacked by neoliberalism, which has made hardship a matter of personal choice and responsibility. Reflecting on the introduction of the Equal Employment Opportunity Law in 1986, Ueno Chizuko (2017) concluded that, in conjunction with neoliberal policies to lift the safeguards for workers, the Law divided women into two classes: elites who can work like men and non-elites who remain as second-class employees with less prospect for promotion or who work as part-timers. Under the name of 'equal employment opportunity', the inequality between male and female workers was presented as a matter of choice. Thus, feminists' aspiration for women's liberation from patriarchy was mobilised to legitimate a flexible labour market, and what Nancy Fraser (2009, p.97) called 'the cunning of history' happened in Japan. Women have come to be treated as a pool for cheap labour in a country where the decline of the birth rate is a serious problem (Assman, 2014; Dalton, 2017).

The problems stemming from the gendered social structure cast a dense shadow over Aoki's life. How were they related to her participation in the far-right movements? If gender norms and government policies that intensified them contributed to Aoki's problem, why did foreigners, South Korea, and leftist Japanese become her primary enemies, rather than the social structure? In the remainder of the chapter these questions will be answered through analysing Aoki's life story.

Case Study: Aoki

Introducing Aoki

When interviewed, Aoki was a 49-year-old activist who had joined the JFP in 2017. She was living with her son, who was close to graduating from university. She was a frank person and talked openly about her life, the JFP activities and her fellow activists

The dichotomy of *futsu* (ordinary, usual) and *hen* (strange, weird) characterised her narrative. For example, she jokingly warned that 'Many of those joining the Conservative movement are crazy, so be careful'. She even said that 'Unless you are weird, you do not think about standing for an electoral campaign, don't you think so?' She told me that 'it is somehow not enjoyable' to drink with those street-based activists who had joined the movements before her (she called them *katsudouka* [activists]). 'Like we do not have common topics...I have never befriended that kind of people'. Her efforts to present herself as an ordinary person with common sense first seemed to be an attempt to leave an impression that the JFP was not merely a group of 'crazy' people. But as her ambivalence toward her childhood, which she suspected to be 'unusual', revealed itself, her self-representation seemed to take on a meaning that was not confined to an attempt to strategically manipulate the image of the group.

In terms of Aoki's political standpoints, one of her concerns was the reputation of Imperial Japan's war.

> [P]eople dig out what happened in the past and say 'they should not have started the war', well it might be true, but people at that time had reasons, and it feels unfair for those who did not live that time to say this and that. [Y: People at that time had their reasons.] Rather than reasons, we did not live at that time, so we cannot say anything. Because we cannot go back and restart.

In particular, she cannot stand it when those Japanese politicians who cooperated with the former 'comfort women' raise their voices. 'Why do these Japanese politicians take the lead to disgrace Japan?' According to Aoki, South Korea is one of those countries that Japan can never side with. 'We have such people around ourselves, don't we? Like those we can never establish a mutual understanding with. What should we do? We can only cut the relationship. This is how I have lived.' Another concern for her is foreigners living in Japan. She thought that it was necessary to 'raise our voices appropriately' [*kichin to iu*] against foreigners who sometimes do not necessarily 'follow the rules of the community' but who yet enjoy special treatment (*yugu*). The infiltration of foreign culture among the youth, which according to her undermines Japanese culture, was also a concern. When I asked her what Japan should be according to her,

she answered ‘strong’. She did ‘not want to fight or something. I just don’t like the idea of staying silent to wait for the troubles to pass...it’s like being able to say “no” to something unbearable’. To her, Sakurai was a person who can say the right thing (*seiron*).

Early Life

Since the age of three, Aoki was ‘made to’ learn music by her parents, especially her mother. The training was so intense that she scarcely had time to play with her friends and practised the piano until she went to bed. ‘I was suppressed by my parents, kind of, I wanted to meet their expectations, which is incredible now, but I was that kind of child.’ At times, when her stress peaked after hours of practice, a scuffle would arise between her and her mother. Nevertheless, she could not quit. ‘The time that I had spent [learning music] has become a stain on me. When I was still only at middle school, I always wondered what would be left for me if I quit music.’ Although she now thanks her parents for a ‘rare’ experience and loves her father, the early experience significantly affected the relationship with her mother.

> So with my mother, still, it’s like awkward, we are not on bad terms with each other, but the grudge from that time [laugh]. Because, to anyone, any stage of life happens once. Even if I wish I had done this at that time, I can never go back to that time, well I do not know whether I could have had a better life, but I really wonder what might have happened if I had done something different.

In contrast with Aoki’s mother, Aoki told her own son to ‘think for yourself’ about what he wanted to do, because ‘you know, I don’t want to be hated [by him] later’. At the same time, she liked her father, who was ‘kind and cherished the family’. Her parents were still very close to each other, which was her ‘ideal’.

Her childhood experiences led her to have a competitive outlook. ‘People say “Be unique rather than the number one”, right? It’s a lie [Y: is it?] It is meaningless unless you become the first.’ And yet, she was not a fan of those whose politics deviate from the mainstream. When she was a junior high school pupil, juvenile delinquency was a major problem in Japanese society. Her school was no exception (according to her, the windows were broken and police cars came to the school every year). But she was never sympathetic with the rebellious pupils. To her, these rebellious pupils were in the same category as leftists.

> Well, there is nothing you can do about the existence of the state. There is the state, and there we are, then what's the point of denying the state? I watched them [pupils] unsympathetically and wondered why they resisted teachers when pupils are supposed to learn from teachers.

Some of her thinking patterns in adulthood could be identified in the early stages of her life. Accepting others was already a major problem for her then. On the one hand, she learned to accept others who brought their expectations to bear on her from positions of authority, namely the expectations of her mother and the evaluation criteria in classical music. This is how she developed a rather authoritarian (and elitist) attitude since childhood. Still, the suppressed desire to have a joyful childhood seems to have resulted in an ongoing tension with her mother. Such ambivalence would become more prevalent due to the subsequent events in her life.

Marriage, Divorce, and Parenting

After joining a boarding school with a specialisation in music, Aoki's relationship with her mother improved, as her mother could not exert as much control over her. Aoki then went to a music conservatory and after that felt some release: 'I felt I was exempted from my responsibility...I played around, and I was cut loose.' After graduation, she worked for a few years and got married. She had a baby at the age of 25. 'Since I had not experienced much hardship in terms of living, I thought work was very tough.' At the same time, she insisted that work was not as hard as childrearing. 'Maybe it's because I am a Conservative, but it is not necessary to be ashamed of being a housewife'. Her tough experience as a mother convinced her that what she regarded as a traditional style of family with extended family members living together was a more suitable way of living.

> It is way easier to work because the first child was impossible to understand. I could not talk to him, he was crying 24 hours, no, impossible, I was young and immature [Y: Okay.] You would have childcare neurosis. [Y: Did you?] I did. Like, 'What am I doing? Why am I crying like this?'...In the past, there was a mother-in-law and grandmothers, who took care of a crying baby, but now, in a nuclear family, there is only the dyad of a baby and a mother, and even if the husband comes back, like when he came back and was tired, he would tell me to stop the baby crying to which I responded like 'What?' [laugh]

Thus, she concluded that living in ‘the past might have been the ideal’.

Aoki was divorced by the age of 30. ‘Two human beings living together was very difficult for me.’ Interestingly, although she mentioned factors that she could have regarded as rationales for her divorce, such as her ex-husband not contributing much to the childrearing, she seemed to attribute it to her inability to live with someone else, which she thought was derived from childhood experiences. At the end of the interview, she asked:

> I don’t know how Yoshida-san feels, but is my life unusual? It’s kind of unusual...I feel that’s the reason that things did not go well, but isn’t it correct? I grew up that way, so with my ex-husband, I thought ‘Why can’t you make a little more effort?...what my parents told me when I got divorced was, ‘You are strict with others’. They said ‘Because of the way we brought you up, you expect too much from others’.

Raising a child as a single mother was not an easy task for Aoki. The son was not physically strong, so ‘it was tough because I had to take him to the hospital all the year around’. He did not receive proper care from his schoolteacher. ‘He stopped going to school. Embarrassing. [Y: It is not something embarrassing.] You know, it was only me and my son. In the end, he did not have his father. I could not cover all of his issues.’ He was even targeted by bullies. A giant apartment block with hundreds of households was built, and the mothers from the apartment block stuck to each other, excluding Aoki. One time, a child from the block planned a birthday party and invited all of the classmates aside from Aoki’s son and another classmate.

> Even between mothers, there was, not bullying, but that kind of thing happened, like some mothers were not invited...I hated that kind of thing and I was not interested, and I was okay with not being invited and I did not want to make friends with them, but when it comes to my son, it’s another problem. I felt sorry for him.

As a single mother, she struggled to sustain their lives, even asking for help from her parents despite the tensions. Of course, she experienced economic hardship. ‘Just because you graduated from a music conservatory, you don’t get hired.’ They lived in a small council house where the mother and son could not have separate rooms. She experienced many jobs, ranging from babysitting to working at a garage belonging to a food company and being an agency worker, as she did not have a chance to be a full-time worker. She said that she ‘could not live

without the support of my parents, in the end', to make a living for her and her son. Aoki felt that this hardship, especially how it was experienced by her son, was her own fault.

> I have cherished my son very much but, you know, his dad is absent, so I am sorry about that. [Y: Ah.] I think so very much. [Y: Is that a problem if he is absent?] Well, it is not necessarily why [a problem happens], but it is best when a child grows up with both parents' care?...But the situation got like this because of my selfishness. It is not like his dad died early. I might have made him experience hardship which he did not have to.

The situation improved thereafter. Although Aoki did 'not have a good memory' of the time when her son was an elementary school pupil, she said 'Now I am very happy'. She was sure that 'there is hardly anything which is unsolvable by the power of time'. After elementary school, her son became physically stronger, and later she managed to send him to a postgraduate course. Aoki became a full-time worker at her company in 2011 or 2012. With this came recognition and a higher salary.

Although she seemed to be relieved that she had almost completed her job as a mother, at the time of her interview, she was slightly worried and confused about the prospect of a major transition in her life, namely the independence of her son.

> Since I left [the husband] with my son and got divorced, we spent our life alone together....My son is applying for a job....He said, if he could get an offer from his first choice, he would be independent and I fell sick in bed to hear that, being shocked....Am I too dependent on my son?

The goal of being a good mother defined her life for a long time, although this identity was also the source of her self-accusation and painful feelings. By asking a question like 'Your mom is like this [a gesture of hugging] to Yoshida-san...isn't she?', she seemed to seek for approval and acknowledgement of the pain of letting her son go.

Joining the JFP

It was at the time of Sakurai's electoral campaign for Tokyo mayor in 2016 that Aoki discovered him. In retrospect, she had already been interested in the issue of foreigners. At the

time of the case of Calderon Noriko in 2009,[14] she was not convinced by media reports that were sympathetic to her case.

> I remember that I told my parents 'It's true that Noriko-san deserves sympathy, but her father and mother smuggled themselves into Japan with someone else's passports and got arrested for shoplifting...I remember that I said to my parents 'What about those foreigners who comply with the rules?' Don't you agree? Everyone said 'I feel sorry', well yes they might be unfortunate but I thought it wrong that the media did not report who caused the problem.

She also resented the 'national exchange student system' which funds life stipends and tuition fees for some foreign students. While her son made his way to a postgraduate course by demonstrating his academic achievement and obtaining a scholarship, she was unsure whether this was the case with other single parents.

> I came to know about 'national exchange students' at the time of the 2016 election...I seriously want more money to be spent on those children with aspirations to study, even if they are from single-parent families, without fathers. It's a matter of luck. In my case, I got married and divorced selfishly so I think my son is a kind of a victim. A child cannot choose his parents, can he? Even if he wants to study, the family might not have money. I think it is wrong that exchange students and foreigners are privileged just because of what they are.

The introduction of Halloween in Japan a few years previously signified to Aoki that 'something fatal is going on'. She could not walk through Shibuya station because of the mess caused by those enjoying Halloween, who occupied the roads. 'It's something I've felt since I was a child, but I cannot deal with those who do not comply with the public rules.' The way they enjoyed Halloween was totally different from what she had experienced in a community in the US in her childhood. For her, the fun childhood memory of visiting neighbours in a costume is the consequence of her humbly complying with the foreign tradition which is

[14] Calderon Noriko is the daughter of Filipino parents who smuggled themselves into Japan and she was subsequently arrested for shoplifting. At the time of arrest she was still a teenager who had been brought up in Japan and could only speak Japanese. Her parents and their supporters sought for a way to stay in the country. Eventually, they lost the High Court case and were deported to the Philippines in 2009, while Noriko decided to stay in Japan (CNN, 2009).

opposite to what she saw in the chaotic street party in Shibuya. 'I would not do as I want if I went to a foreign country...[I would] observe local rules'. She also complained about the Japanese people. 'Somewhere in my mind, I feel it's wrong to make a fuss, imitating everything [from the US]'. The fun of experiencing a foreign culture exists precisely because there is a clear line between domestic and foreign cultures.

As for the issue of 'comfort women', she had already noticed that 'unpleasant news' was aired at the time of the first Abe administration (2006-7), though she did not remember what it was about. The Japan-Korea Agreement in 2015 on the issue was also a shocking event. Rather than the issue itself, what she could not stand was the prospect that Japan would never be forgiven. 'I thought, "How many times do they bring this up?"'

When she saw Sakurai's poster for the campaign, she found that Sakurai 'said something different from other candidates, even things that were taboo'. She started to watch his videos of soapbox speeches during the electoral campaign on YouTube. She was deeply impressed by Sakurai's speech where he said that it was unacceptable that great-grandfathers and grandfathers were disgraced over the issue of 'comfort women'. Another scene which she remembered from the electoral campaign was the speech of Sakurai's comrade Murata Haruki, in which he said that 'what is most unbearable are not foreigners but those Japanese who disgrace Japan.'

She eventually joined the JFP in 2017, despite opposition from her son. She became one of the leading figures in her branch, although she refrained from participating in the street demonstrations, partly due to her concern about potential disadvantage to her son.

Analysis

A glance at Aoki's life story reveals some gendered issues that caused her suffering as a single mother. The question is why insecurity or anger resulting from them was not mobilised to criticise gender inequalities in Japanese social structure and was instead directed to foreigners, South Korea, or leftist politicians. In order to understand Aoki's thinking, it is necessary to explore the meaning she attributed to personal life events, foreigners, and foreign countries. Central to her narrative was the relationship with other family members, especially her mother.

Aoki's ambivalence toward her past and her parents seemed to mirror her dislike of those who 'bring up' the past, when 'we cannot go back and restart'. This precisely reflected her desire to do so, which was shown in this comment: 'Even if I wish I had done this at that time, I can never go back to that time...I really wonder what might have happened if I had done

something different.' Aoki talked about this when she was explaining why the relationship with her mother was still 'awkward' at the time of the interview. The Japanese politicians who 'disgrace Japan' seemed to remind her of herself and her own ambivalence towards her mother.

Aoki's narrative reveals that the discourses of 'boundary', 'ordinariness', and 'selfishness', which arose from the family-related issues, were key to deciphering her story. The struggle to locate the appropriate boundary between her own domain and that of others was a recurring theme. Since her childhood, Aoki had accepted her mother's expectations and assessment in competitions. The suppression of her desires was already clear in her junior high school days, and her anger was projected onto the rebellious pupils, who in her eyes did not stay within their boundaries. Aoki's hatred was extended to those foreigners she thought did not comply with the rules of Japanese society, as well as those Japanese who joined in the Halloween 'mess'. Aoki thought that everyone should humbly accept the rule of law and their place in the order, without transgression, just as she had grudgingly complied with her mother's wishes.

Such a reaction resonates with authoritarianism, but can be also understood as envy as understood by Klein, where anxiety and anger about lacking a thing one values are projected onto others who seem to possess it. According to Klein (1997), envy is characterised by its destructive nature. Since envy is unbearable, one not only tries to destroy the others but also denies the value of the thing itself. The existence of envy is hinted at in the contradictions in Aoki's narrative, which reveal her suppressed desire for freedom in her childhood and her hatred of delinquent classmates who seemed to enjoy their freedom.

The roots of her investment in the discourse of ordinariness could be found in her childhood experience but it seemed to be strengthened by subsequent events. The divorce and the resulting economic and emotional hardship, and the suspicion that her 'unusual' childhood was the cause of them made her all the more invested in the discourse of ordinariness, which helped her to believe in the value of the 'traditional' form of family and the significance of the role of a housewife. For her, divorce was also shameful deviance from the norm, for she idealised the relationship between her parents. This is closely related to her discourse of 'selfishness'.

The origin of the discourse of 'selfishness' can be found in Aoki's sense of guilt toward her son. Although Aoki mentioned her dissatisfaction with her ex-husband's attitude toward childrearing, and the hardship she endured after the divorce, Aoki stressed that the divorce was her 'selfish' decision. Due to Aoki's anger toward her mother, who imposed her own values

on her daughter, she tried hard not to do the same to her son. The fact that her decision to divorce resulted in his experiencing hardship might have caused her to feel a strong sense of guilt, reminding her of her mother's 'selfishness'. Aoki's feelings of guilt, along with her investment in the discourse of 'ordinariness', gave her the idea that it was her fault for not bearing the life of a housewife and for choosing to be divorced. This suppressed her dissatisfaction about her childhood.

Subsequently, she appears to have experienced a grave identity crisis in the face of her son's independence. Her self-sacrificing efforts to raise her son appeared to have functioned as a punishment for having been 'selfish' in obtaining a divorce and reasserted her investment in 'ordinariness': by framing her devotion to the son in this way, she could sustain her positioning as a mother who was still invested in the discourse of a 'traditional' family. When her son no longer needed her, she became disorientated, and thereafter the far-right activity became a new extension of her identity as a single parent. Through selfless devotion to a 'strong Japan' that spoke up for the 'traditional' family and against the foreigners and the adverse influences of foreign cultures, she could sustain the positioning that she had got used to.

In Aoki's eyes, the parents of these immigrants and foreigners were illegitimately enjoying the status of guardians of their children with excessive assistance from the state, which she felt denied her own entitlement. When Calderon Noriko's parents illegally entered Japan, the Japanese media begged for mercy on their behalf, rather than making them take responsibility and letting the daughter bear the pain of living without parents, just as her son was living without his father. From Aoki's perspective, foreigners come to study in Japan through their own volition without having to endure the difficulties of living. They thus enjoy favourable treatment that hard(er) working Japanese students could have been benefitted from. Given her authoritarian attitudes and investment in the responsibilising discourse of 'selfishness', the position of immigrants and foreigners was outrageous to her, who was shouldering the responsibility for what she had done. Just like her rebellious junior high school classmates, they were enjoying what they should not and what she could not, stepping out from the positions where they should be. Thus, she thought that those immigrants and foreigners were not 'follow[ing] the rules of the community'. Rather than trying to construct an inclusive society, she unconsciously envied their perceived freedom from responsibility, and was resentful of the perceived *yugu* (special treatment) of foreigners. Ultimately, Aoki subscribed to a zero-sum worldview, that assumed that only the Japanese or the foreigners would thrive.

Thus, the structural problems retreat to the background, with Aoki's inner struggle with childhood experiences being the central issue. The normative power of an ideal family and the

self-responsibility discourse of neoliberalism possibly strengthened Aoki's sense of shame, interacting with her authoritarianism. As seen above, various social policies and corporate cultures still assume that an 'ordinary' household is one in which the husband is the sole breadwinner (Osawa, 2015; Dalton, 2017; Ueno, 2017), and such an image of an 'ordinary' family is internalised by those women born in the 1960s (Ezawa, 2016; Alexy, 2020). This widely shared image of an 'ordinary' family reinforced Aoki's idealisation of the relationship between their parents and made her regret deviating from it all the more. Also, the neoliberal norm of self-responsibility only supported her investment in the discourse of 'selfish'. In sum, the discourse of 'selfishness' made it difficult for Aoki to express complaints and excuses relating to her own self-perceived inadequacies, suppressing her dissatisfaction with her parents, ex-husband, and the gendered society which caused her hardship. The unacknowledged anger found its way to her investment in the discourse of hate against foreigners and her longing for a 'strong Japan'. The idea of 'strong Japan', which could 'say no to something unbearable', might have reflected her desire for a stronger self, who could protect herself from interventions from others, who would not have to depend on others, and who would not have to be troubled by ongoing ambivalence toward her mother which stemmed from her childhood experiences. Sakurai, who could say the 'right thing' breaking 'taboos', embodied such an ideal of 'strong Japan'.

Conclusion

As Blee (2012) suggested, it would be wrong to assume that all the factors involved in women's paths to far-right movements are related to gender. For Aoki, the suspicion that she was not brought up in a normal way appeared to be the cause of subsequent troubles, even though these troubles were related to the structure of the gendered society, a factor of which she seemed to have limited awareness. Such notions, combined with the norm of self-responsibility, the unconscious internalisation of patriarchal values, and Aoki's authoritarian personality, made it difficult for her to relate her suffering to the structural problems of a highly gendered society. This observation provides a clue that can help us to understand the paradox that the women who seem to be suffering most under the hegemonic masculine norms join in the far-right movements rather than seeking to change the social structure in ways that could improve their situation. For some women, structural problems fade into the background behind other issues which they feel they can control or depict otherwise. Feeling 'accused', some deflect blame onto foreigners who they feel show them up. Here, the shadow of neoliberalist norms of self-

responsibility gets in the way of their seeing similarities between the self and others clearly. Aoki's ideal of a Japan independent enough not to care how others think was in this sense a very neoliberalist ideal of a nation. This played out in her sense of herself as both a daughter and a mother. Aoki's story shows how Japanese single mothers can feel shame when they have difficulty fulfilling their duties as a parent, torn between the neoliberal norms of self-responsibility and the nuclear family norm. Some of those who experience this shame redirect it onto immigrants and foreigners, who are imagined to be unfairly assisted by a state that is not putting its 'own people' first. Just as the cases of Naito (Chapter 4) and Sato (Chapter 6) revealed, Aoki's story illustrates how the normative pressures to live up to ideals associated with being Japanese motivate those who feel unable to achieve these ideals to become interested in the miscellaneous 'solutions' proposed by far-right movements.

Chapter 6 Not Leather Boots but Dress Shoes: White-Collar Masculinity and the Far-Right Movement

The previous chapter discussed the power of gender and family norms in Japan, which drove Aoki to the far-right movement. This chapter, on the other hand, focuses on masculinity. Former salaryman, Sato, suffered from the disparity between who he was and the norms of hegemonic masculinity. The shame caused by this gap ended up bringing him to the JFP. The other theme of this chapter is history. Sato's sense of the masculine entitlement being denied him is shared by a former soldier of Imperial Japan, with whom Sato identified himself. The analysis of Sato's case will provide some ideas about how contemporary Japanese people relate themselves to the mourning of the lost empire, or what Gilroy (2004), writing about contemporary Britain, calls postcolonial/postimperial melancholia.

Introduction

Just as the meaning of being a woman has been explored by academics, masculinity has also gained the attention of scholars studying the far right. It has been observed that people perform masculinity through violent acts, choice of attire, and other behaviours, which are prevalent in far-right cultures (Nayak, 1999; Bitzan, 2017; Miller-Idriss, 2017). Construction of effeminate or excessively masculine 'others' is a key factor in many far-right activist narratives (Köttig et al. 2017; Green, 2019).

Considerable attention has been paid to working-class masculinity. Researchers have uncovered the connection between class systems, the masculine norms ascribed to class (especially the working-class), and racism (Nayak, 1999; Pearson, 2019). Investment in the 'racist' self can be a strategy for young working-class boys to comply with the requirement of masculinity at school (Frosh et al., 2000). Studies on the 'push' aspect have found that there might be a sense of deprivation of masculinity behind working-class youths' attachment to far-right/racist activities. Facing a crisis of their class and its masculine culture, working-class youths engage in racist violence and harassment in order to assert their working-class masculinity (Nayak, 1999). The youths perceive the deterioration of their own class while also experiencing loss of masculinity on a personal level through events like bullying, which potentially cause young people to be attracted to the masculinity of far-right movements (Kimmel, 2006; 2007; Treadwell and Garland, 2011).

However, the relationship between white-collar masculinity and far-right movements has not been sufficiently explored, and the current study aims to fill this research gap. Middle-class supporters have a significant presence in far-right movements such as the British National Party (Rhodes, 2011) and 'Patriotische Europäer gegen die Islamisierung des Abendlandes' [Patriotic Europeans against the Islamisation of the Occident, PEGIDA] (Vorländer, Herold, & Schäller, 2018) as well as among the supporters of Donald Trump (Walley, 2017) and of Brexit (Antonucci, et al., 2017). Considering the presence of the white-collar middle-class in these movements, studying their masculinity and its role can enhance our understanding of the nature of such movements.

As was mentioned in Chapters 2 and 3, contrary to initial speculation around the dissatisfaction of single men with precarious employment being the main driver of far-right movements (for example, Yasuda, 2012), the supporters of ACM are not necessarily of low socio-economic status, low education or lacking in romantic partners. In this context, Sato, a 61-year-old (at the time of the interviews in 2018) former long-serving worker in a public sector organisation, who was married and had three children, was not an exceptional type of activist. His case will provide us with a rich insight into the role of white-collar masculinity in men's investment in the discourses of far-right movements. Following the studies of Nayak (1999), Kimmel (2006; 2007), Treadwell and Garland (2011), and Gadd and Dixon (2011), the current chapter will address the following research question: can a sense of loss related to white-collar masculinity play a role in men's attraction to far-right movements?

First, the current chapter will provide a very brief account of the background of the case study: 'salaryman masculinity'. 'Salaryman masculinity' is a form of masculinity that once enjoyed the status of 'hegemonic masculinity' in Japanese society. 'Hegemonic masculinity' is a kind of masculinity which 'embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy' (Connell, 1995, p.77). It is the key normative concept affecting the life of the subject of this study, Sato. The section will be followed by a detailed examination of Sato's life story. In the discussion and conclusion, it will be argued that the sense of loss can stem from the very normative power of white masculinity that puts pressure on white-collar men. Although such a sense of loss can play a role in men's participation in a far-right movement, it tends to be overlooked because these middle-class men do not appear to suffer from any troubles due to their relatively stable socio-economic status. This study stresses the importance of acknowledging the subjectivity of individuals vis-à-vis the norms of masculinity and their suffering arising from it.

Salaryman Masculinity

According to Connell (1995), various forms of masculinity co-exist in a society. While there is a type of masculinity that enjoys hegemonic status, some forms of masculinity (typically, gayness) are put in subordinate positions while others might be described as 'complicit', in that they contribute to the maintenance of patriarchal culture (Connell, 1995, pp.78-80). With this hierarchical relationship between masculinities, as Messner (1997) noted, some men bear greater costs than others in order to live under the hegemony of a form of masculinity. This form of hegemonic masculinity can be different from one context to another (Beasley, 2008).

In post-war Japan, 'salaryman masculinity' has become hegemonic (Dasgupta, 2013, pp.8-9; Hidaka, 2010, p.2). A salaryman is typically imagined as a full-time, white-collar, heterosexual male worker. He is employed by a company that promises lifetime employment and a steadily rising salary. In return he is expected to demonstrate loyalty to the company. He is a husband, a father, and most importantly, the sole breadwinner, on whom his wife and children depend (Dasgupta, 2013, p.1; Hidaka, 2010, p.3).

Alongside this conventionally patriarchal arrangement, salaryman masculinity was characterised by a collectivist culture, which became part of Japanese identity. Loyalty to one's company and close relationships between colleagues were promoted through various events, formal or informal drink occasions, and even playing *mahjong* (a type of board game) together (Dasgupta, 2013, p.139; Atsumi, 1989, p.135), as indeed was the case with Sato. The collectivist culture cultivated by these conventions was regarded as the source of salarymen's dedication and as the secret of the strength of Japanese economic power (Vogel, 1979). Going out with colleagues (*tsukiai*) was obligatory and thus in practice was not always welcomed by salarymen (Atsumi, 1979). Moreover, it was known that excessive dedication to work and sacrifice of private life resulted in undesirable consequences, such as *karoshi* (death caused by overwork) and divorce, which such men failed to anticipate (see collection of essays in Inoue, et al., 1995). However, Japan's identity as a collectivist society was popularised through *Nihonjinron*. Despite the fact that, strictly speaking, only part of the population could be categorised as salarymen (see, for example, Roberson, 1998), salarymen, referred to as '*kigyo senshi*' (corporate soldiers), became a symbol of masculinity in a country where the use of real military power became taboo after the defeat in WWII (Taga, 2006, p.100).

Since the 1990s, a number of the preconditions of the hegemonic status of salaryman masculinity have been lost. Japan's economic prosperity, which had been closely associated with this hegemony, was depleted when the 'bubble economy' burst in 1991, causing

considerable economic turbulence. As companies became reluctant to hire full-time workers, the rate of part-time workers increased from 16.4% in 1985 to 34.3 % in 2010 (MHLW, 2013, p.184), and lifetime employment became less commonplace (Kingston, 2013, pp.82-83).

In addition, the importance of private life, especially time with family, was rediscovered. According to a survey by NHK in 1973, 36 % stated that they prioritised their work over free time, while in 2018, this had fallen to only 19 % (NHK, 2018, p.4). Young men became *furiita* (freeters, a term commonly used to refer to young people in part-time employment) not only because they had limited opportunities for gaining full-time employment, but also because they wanted to differentiate themselves from their fathers who had been absent from home (Kingston, 2004, p.272). Young employees started to prioritise time with their families and partners over socialising with their colleagues (Dasgupta, 2013). It is true that some of the features of salaryman masculinity, particularly the norm of the labour division between men and women, have endured, constraining opportunities for female promotion, and limiting the lifestyles of the young males (Taga, 2006, pp.102-109; Cook, 2016). However, along with the decline of Japan's economic power, the legitimacy of the core factors of salaryman masculinity has been seriously put into question.

Case Study: Sato

Introducing Sato

Sato Masayuki was well known among the supporters of the JFP for his important role in the party. Sato joined the party in April 2017. When we met, he was dressed in a suit and followed common business manners (such as exchanging of business cards, the use of formal language [*keigo*] and providing his *curriculum vitae*), giving me the initial impression that he was a long-serving salaryman. In fact, at the time of the interview, he was working as a part-time inspector of electronic products, but he had worked for a major public sector organisation for more than 30 years until 2017. Not only did he serve the organisation for a long time, but he received considerable promotion during that time. In Japan, public officers are sometimes categorised into first class (*kyaria*) officials, second-class and third-class, according to the type of recruitment exam and their prospects for promotion. He stated: 'I started the position lower than a third-class official and, at last, I got a position which was the highest that a third-class official could get'.

Despite his seemingly successful career, while telling his life story, Sato described himself repeatedly as a *dame-ningen* (a Japanese term that refers to a mixture of being a loser,

a waster, or a stupid person). In what follows, I suggest that the discrepancy between his admiration for masculinity and his perceived inability to live up to it played a critical role in motivating Sato's engagement with the JFP. He described his experience of wanting to change his self-image and his inability to raise his voice; of having an enduring grudge towards his perceived oppressors; and of longing to recuperate the love lost within his family, whom he had neglected and let down. These factors led him to feel ambivalent toward salaryman masculinity, a feeling that became stronger as he grew older. Sakurai's masculinity provided him with an alternative form of masculinity to replace salaryman masculinity, the legitimacy of which he came to question.

Early Life

When asked to talk about his childhood, Sato responded: 'I was a timid boy'. He told me that he was bullied by female classmates due to his inability to speak up and described what he was like as a child as follows. 'I was always unconfident and wondering why I have such a character...I could not ask, 'Sir, can I go to the washroom?' I wet my pants in the classroom many times.' One of the episodes central to his childhood concerned his father. Sato's father was 'a nagging person at home'. Sato recounted that his father 'used to write hundreds of New Year cards by hand', and said: 'when I shook the table even a bit, he shouted like 'Stop it!' Well, he was drinking alcohol at that time....He would get angry unless the dinner was prepared, and everyone was sitting at the table at five-past-five.'

Sato's low self-esteem and his ambivalence toward masculinity might have been closely related to the relationship between his father and mother. Sato's father 'went to university, which was rare in that period'. On the other hand, his mother's academic career ended at elementary school. When Sato's father shouted at his mother for trivial things that were not necessarily her fault, his mother blamed herself because she was 'not as clever as him'.

> I hated to hear [her say] 'It's unavoidable to get scolded, because I am an idiot,' but by hearing it over and over again every day, it's like it has become part of myself, and somewhere in my mind, I started to think I was a *dame-ningen*.

After graduating from high school, Sato left home to attend university, but this experience did not help him develop self-confidence. He was disappointed at not getting into a top institution ('there were other universities that I wanted to enter'), and by the unruly situation he found

there in the late 1970s. 'On the first day of every exam period, as soon as we arrived in the classrooms or the lecture hall, Chukaku-ha [a radical left-wing group at that time] students would appear setting off firecrackers, like "bang bang!"'

Gambling Addiction and 'Restoration of Lost Love'

After graduating from university, Sato worked for a supermarket for six months, and a credit card issuer for a year and a half. Then he entered a public sector organisation at a rank below third-class official and was tasked with manual labour, but later he took an exam to obtain a role that was more clerical. This may not have been a good decision for Sato and his family. Eventually, he was assigned to the construction division, where he worked like a 'slave'. 'The manager became so arrogant that he would put his legs on the desk and read cartoons.' Sato's boss liked playing *mahjong*, so 'when the boss said he wanted to play *mahjong*, we booked a hotel and played *mahjong* overnight'. As he was required to socialise with his boss during the week, he had to work even at the weekend to make up for the lost time. Sato was promoted, but the task he was assigned was stressful for a person like him. He became a deputy manager at a branch and was 'in charge of dealing with complaints'. He had to go to the office of a fierce right-wing group to apologise for his firm's shortcomings, which at the time he regarded as a scary experience. At the time of the interviews, he still believed that his former junior colleagues had not appreciated him. 'A good person, but unreliable' is how he believed his subordinates viewed him. 'I did not take my subordinates for drinks, and was not a strong leader in the workplace, who directed others to do this and that.'

Under such working conditions, Sato's relationship with his wife and children became distant. 'I do not have any memory of having gone somewhere with my own family.' He became abusive to his own family, in much the same way as his father punished his mother. 'I was a mean parent who used to scold their mother, but whom they [his children] could not consult about anything.'

When Sato was finally transferred to a less busy post, 'there was a hole in [his] heart', which he filled with *pachinko*, a type of gambling similar to slot machines. His addiction led him to spend 'all the money for the deposit' they had saved for a house and part of 'the education saving plans for my three children'. He 'wanted to die', but 'was too cowardly' to take his own life. After three years of addiction, Sato was saved by a book entitled *Breaking Away from* Pachinko *Addiction*, which he found after fighting with his wife a day before her birthday in 2000.

> The foreword was great.... 'To break away from *pachinko* addiction is to live a new life. It is the restoration of a lost love.' That made me cry... 'I have to live a new life. I must manage to do it. I have to make my family happy.' Looking back, it sounds like a stupid story. But I stopped [playing *pachinko*], the next day.

Following this period, Sato experienced his 'most stable' time. He was further promoted, and his salary rose accordingly (although he states he was 'very careful not to make any mistake and fall from the ladder', never declining requests from his boss). He bought his own house seven years after he stopped playing *pachinko*. Moreover, his relationship with his wife and children improved. 'How enjoyable the present time is. They talk about various things with me.'

Retirement and Participation in the JFP

Spending more time with his children made Sato reconsider the way he had lived. Looking back at his life as a salaryman, he stated:

> Well, without questioning it, we vaguely had an image that if we went to work on weekends and went out with colleagues [*tsukiai*], we would be at the top of a large-sized branch office, get a pension and a retirement allowance....Seriously, there could have been more fun time that I could have spent with my family.

In contrast, his son seemed to fully enjoy his life with those he truly wanted to spend time with.

> [T]hey cherish their own lives, and when I see [one of Sato's children] going to Osaka to see his joyful friends, whom he met online and who share the same hobby, I just think it's wonderful...I think I should have realised it earlier. If you want to live a true life, you have to actively engage yourself.

Alongside Sato's children, many young people in Japan seemed to have stopped believing in careerism and instead prioritised their own lifestyles. Sato was shocked to discover that the young manual labourers in his workplace no longer longed for the 'blue' uniform of office workers as he did when he was young. Instead, they designed their lives according to their own preferences.

Many episodes related to 'Koreans' appeared in relation to this period of Sato's life. During his childhood, the subordinate status of Koreans and other foreigners as 'others' had been clear in his community. Sato's memory of childhood and youth included some instances of discrimination against *zainichi* Koreans, foreigners and *burakumin.* He was told not to play with children from a family who lived diagonally across from his family. He asked the adults why but received no clear answer. A classmate with blue eyes, who perhaps had a non-Japanese parent, was bullied.

After purchasing his house, Sato notices that now 'Koreans' own houses in his neighbourhood. They are members of his 'community' but are also perceived as suspicious outsiders whose ethnicity is not fully clear. He suspects that two of his new neighbours have Korean origins, 'judging from the way they talk and their faces'. One, who lives next to him, is a good person, but the other is 'noisy', dishonest and dirty. This neighbour steals baskets from supermarket stores and lets his dog excrete everywhere. 'So, I refuse to accept such people...I just want them to observe the rules like the one living next to me does.' Nevertheless, despite his unwillingness to accept such behavior, he says nothing to the troublesome neighbour, thus causing the resentment to fester. 'Well, I thought many times of saying "How can you make such noises!" but...there is no point in having a dispute.'

It was not only in his neighbourhood that he perceived that 'Koreans' had crept in. At work he had to deal with troubles caused by 'South Korean companies' after the introduction of open bidding. According to him, these troubles included deception, fraud, or complaints made by residents about the behaviour of the employees of these companies. He stated that when he hired Japanese companies in the selective bidding system, he benefited from their 'sincere' service. To him, such a dedicated approach cannot be expected from these foreign companies. '[T]hey think that it's enough to earn money to pay the salaries of their men and get away with doing the job halfheartedly'. Consequently, Sato thought: 'it is best to do things within the system which is native to each country'.

Another important factor that contributed rather directly to his later participation in the JFP occurred in the mid-1990s, when he listened to his uncle's experience of the war. Previously, after reading *Chugoku no Nihon Gun* [The Japanese Army in China] by journalist Honda Katsuichi during his time at university, he had believed that 'the Japanese are the worst and the most evil'. The book focused on the atrocities on the Chinese front. Sato could not even bear to read it all as he was shocked by the images of 'piles of dead bodies and bones'.

His uncle, who had served on a renowned Japanese warship, told a different version of the story of the war. In his story, the senior officers on the warship cared in a fatherly manner

for the subordinates like the uncle. The story also featured a tale of pure love between female students and young crew members of the warship who helped each other so that the relationship developed during short breaks from their duties. These tales changed Sato's inhuman image of the Japanese Army. 'At one time [the public] hailed him [the uncle] if they knew that he was a soldier' but the uncle complained that 'as soon as the war was over, things changed drastically'. 'People believe that all we did at that time was evil, but those days were a springtime for us.' Rather than facing Japan's shameful past, Sato colluded in the denial. 'Little by little, I started to feel that the situations described by *The Japanese Army in China...*were not representative of what happened.'

These experiences appeared to inspire his interest in the alternative teachings of the far right. In 2012, Sato bought a computer. While watching YouTube videos, he came across a video of Sakurai's street agitation. Although he found it 'funny' that Sakurai was wearing a bow tie during his street-based activities, the more he listened to him, 'the more [he] was drawn to him'. He broke down in tears when he met Sakurai in person and shook his hand at one of his soapbox speeches in his 2016 campaign.

> He was very, very kind. Although there were many people in the audience and he was very busy, covered in sweat, when I asked him to shake hands with me, he was like 'Sure, no problem'. It was totally different from his fierce image [during his street-based activities].

To Sato, what distinguished Sakurai from others was the fact that he 'persevered with his own agenda' and had not been silenced or compromised, as he himself had been.

> I worked as a salaryman for 36 years. I could not say what I wanted to say. I shut up and obeyed [the bosses] and sometimes I projected my dissatisfaction onto my family. You know my personality; I have always listened [to what others say], putting a smile on my face. When I saw the actions of Mr. Sakurai, who will never compromise, I just envied him.

Sato decided to join the JFP following his retirement in 2017. His last boss was a first-class engineer official and 'strict' like his father but also derogatory towards office workers like Sato, whose presence he considered to be 'infesting' engineers.

> He said that every time, and I could not stand it....Yeah, I was very fed up, and I took a week off before retirement....[T]hey were surprised, saying 'You are abandoning your duty!' but I just said 'Let me do what I want after 34 years'.

Immediately after joining the JFP, Sato put himself up for an important role in the party. He unexpectedly found himself to be good at delivering speeches on the street, and according to what he somewhat proudly told me, his sisters and brothers were surprised to see such an aspect of him. Other JFP members started to treat him as one of the core figures. He believed this decision gave him the chance to become someone people would 'care' about and take notice of: no longer a timid '*dame-ningen*'.

One of his proposed policies was maintaining the 'quiet life'.

> [W]hen I see my sons, one working full-time, and the other part-time, I see that even a part-timer can enjoy themselves, without being caught in confrontation [*isakai*]. So we should aim to have a quiet life, a calm life, that's my idea.

'A quiet life' means 'being without the kind of troubles that happen when foreigners come in'. Sato believes they will cause trouble by claiming their rights. He wishes to embrace the 'quiet life' to enhance his children's lives, which they enjoy in their own ways.

Analysis

Sato's involvement in far-right movements cannot be explained in terms of his pre-existing political stance, which was not clear before 2012. Before that, when he felt that the power of the conservative Liberal Democratic Party should be balanced, he sometimes even voted for the Japan Communist Party (which far-right activists regard as one of the primary enemies).

His participation is better understood by considering his ambivalence towards masculinity. His sense of shame began at an early stage in his life. He and his mother were oppressed by his patriarchal father, and by identifying with his mother, who repeatedly called herself an 'idiot', he started to think of himself as a '*dame-ningen*'. He was so unconfident that he could not speak up about what he wanted, consequently wetting his pants and being bullied by female classmates. Caught in self-disgust and 'wondering why I have such a character', he might have developed both an aspiration to masculinity and a hatred for the pressures arising from it. The discrepancy between what he hoped to be and what he became widened after he

started to work for the public sector organisation and became invested in salaryman masculinity. While he longed to be a strong leader with a prestigious career, he was only promoted because of his obedient attitude toward his boss. The shame caused by this discrepancy was first projected onto his family, as had been the case with his father, but the part of himself which hated this masculinity made him regret it. As the norm of salaryman masculinity loosened its hold on him through his learning how to 'live a true life' and to communicate with his children, his hatred was directed towards what this norm represented. This resulted in his holding a strong grudge against his last manager and led to his retirement happening in a way that made him seem to be 'abandoning [his] duty', which bewildered his colleagues.

Still, it seemed that he maintained a contradictory feeling towards the norm of salaryman masculinity. His thorough compliance with business manners and his lengthy and detailed accounts, accompanied by his anger towards himself for failing to live up to the ideal of a salaryman (such as being 'a strong leader in the workplace') suggest that he still unconsciously aspired to salaryman masculinity, even while changing his focus to being a good father who is loyal to his family and true to himself, under the influence of the younger generation. This transition was not unique to Sato. However, it was not easy for him to abandon his attachment to the norm of masculinity. Relinquishing the pursuit of this might have had the effect of making him accuse himself of being '*dame-ningen*' again. The relinquishment was all the more painful as the transition exposed his desire for the disappearance of the norm which he had long believed to be valuable, and for which he had sacrificed his personal life.

It is noteworthy that Sato did not have an experience of shame immediately related to actual Koreans. Nor was he even sure about the true identity of 'Korean' neighbours and companies. However, the marginalisation of the *zainichi* and foreigners which Sato experienced in his childhood enabled ethnicity to work as an empty category onto which to project his own anxiety and shame. Sato's projection of shame onto the *zainichi* is hard to understand without taking into account both his investment in the image of a caring father (which stemmed from his regret for having been a mean parent) and his persisting shame of being unable to be an ideal salaryman. The former made him excessively sensitive to the threat to his children's 'quiet life'. Consequently, although Sato did not suffer much from his Korean neighbours, the troubles caused by a neighbour, who in his eyes might have looked as selfish as he had been to his family, led to the conclusion that 'I refuse to accept such people'. At the same time, his nativist attitude extended to the way the Japanese economic system should operate. This was primarily related to his son's unstable socio-economic status but might also have stemmed from his experience as a salaryman. Sato compared the way 'South Korean'

companies did their jobs 'halfheartedly' as opposed to the 'sincere' services of Japanese companies, which he had desperately wished to be a legitimate part of as an excellent salaryman, but had failed to do. To Sato, the success of 'South Korean' companies might have been outrageous in the light of the salaryman way of life, for which he had sacrificed happiness with his family. The subordinate status of foreigners in his childhood memory might have reinforced his view that their intrusion into the neighbourhood and the Japanese economic system was illegitimate and threatening.

An even more important factor might have been his strong sympathy with his uncle, who served as a crew member of a warship in Imperial Japan. The nostalgia of Sato's uncle echoed Sato's own in many ways. His uncle's 'springtime' with all the good memories of the time on the warship became controversial just after the fall of Imperial Japan, when everything associated with militarism became taboo. Just like Sato started to harbour a stronger sense of ambivalence towards salaryman masculinity due to the transition of Japanese society, this caused Sato's uncle to have an ambivalent feeling toward these memories.[15] Moreover, to Sato the experience of his uncle on the warship might have embodied Sato's ideal of a workplace, where he could have thrived as a salaryman: the part Sato remembered well from the story of his uncle was characterised by the care from senior officers and cooperation between colleagues. Such a workplace, in reality, was not available to Sato because of the 'arrogant' bosses and was finally rendered unavailable because the whole society became more individualistic, bringing advantages which Sato himself could not deny. Thus, they shared the experience of losing the opportunity of being recognised in a homosocial masculine community. In other words, both men had a sense of masculine entitlement that was being denied to them owing to changes in economic circumstances, social norms regarding family life, and how Japan's past was remembered.

Sakurai Makoto provided Sato with hints for how to acquire a new form of masculinity. Wearing a bow tie and looking 'funny', Sakurai did not resemble a typical salaryman in any sense (indeed, with a bowtie and braces Sakurai looked like a comedian in his early videos). Nevertheless, his attitude, according to which he 'will never compromise' in pursuing his agenda, and his taboo-breaking discourse (such as his denial of the rights of *zainichi* and of the need to apologise for war-time atrocities) chimed with Sato's aspiration to 'say what I wanted to say'. It is not only such masculine omnipotence that Sato obtained through far-right activities.

[15] It is noteworthy that he told Sato his story sometime in the mid-1990s, because this was the period when the dispute over the wartime atrocities intensified, which might have strengthened the uncle's ambivalence.

As he became used to making speeches in the street, his brothers and sisters started to recognise a new aspect of him, and his fellows respected him. Sakurai's dual faces—a 'fierce' street activist to his enemies and a 'kind' leader to his followers—gave Sato an idea of what he should hope to be, namely a father who could protect his sons from the threat of foreigners by raising his voice.

Conclusion

Sato's case demonstrated that a sense of loss related to white-collar masculinity can play a role in men's involvement in far-right movements, as has previously been observed with working-class masculinity. At the same time, it is noticeable that Sato's sense of suffering did not result from a perceived decline of his own or his fellows' socio-economic status, but rather arose, at least in part, because his socio-economic status was high enough to be influenced by the normative power of salaryman masculinity. The suffering surfaced due to the decline of this normative power and the rise of individualistic values, in which Sato saw some advantages. Due to their relatively stable socio-economic status, such suffering experienced by white-collar men might easily be overlooked, compared with that experienced by men from lower socio-economic classes and by women. Confirming the argument of Gadd and Dixon (2011), the case study suggested that in order to understand why even seemingly successful individuals are drawn to far-right movements, it is important to have a nuanced understanding of the subjectivity that emerges through the interaction between social and psychological factors. This study also pointed out that for a man like Sato, far-right movements do not necessarily help restore the kind of masculinity accepted in his social strata, as was observed in the study on working-class masculinity and far-right movements. To him, Sakurai embodied an alternative form of 'masculinity' to salaryman masculinity by expressing his own emotions to save his kind (in Sato's case, his children).

The case of Sato illustrates how investment in far-right teachings can stem from some negative feelings that do not necessarily have much to do with Imperial Japan or the targeted minority. The situation of Sato and of other men like him, who have a particularly strong attachment to the issue of masculinity, has some similarities with that of former soldiers who feel confused when faced with the fall of their version of hegemonic masculinity. They both wonder what to do with their emotional investment in the hegemonic masculinities on which they spent—or wasted—their precious time. For a man like Sato, the former soldiers' lament at the death of Imperial Japan overlaps with his own regret for the decline of his empire, namely

Japan as an economic giant with salaryman soldiers. This in turn led him to be attracted to a discourse that glorifies Imperial Japan and relativises its wrongdoings.

This analysis of how Sato related himself to the experience of former Imperial soldiers provides a hint to understand how contemporary people experience postimperial/postcolonial melancholia (Gilroy, 2004). Gilroy argues that Britons are suffering from the sense of loss of omnipotence after the fall of Empire, which is now even regarded as a shameful part of its history. The painful feelings arising from the ambivalence toward the Imperial era is directed toward racial minorities, who are reminiscent of the colonial subjects, resulting in the rise of racism. Higuchi (2021) argues that Japan's postimperial/postcolonial melancholia was triggered by the rise of the 'comfort women' disputes between Japan and South Korea in the 1990s. What remains unexplored is whether and how the contemporary Japanese (and Britons) experience the ambivalence toward the Empires decades after their disappearance. As Sato's case has shown, today some Japanese people identify themselves as former Imperial subjects, finding something comforting in locating their experiences in the imagined certainties of the Imperial era. For them, those on the left who query such simplifications are feared and hated even more than the 'foreigners' who exist as visible reminders of the less honorable sides of Japanese history.

Although not all former salarymen follow the same path, and nor do all of those with the same grudge about masculinity join in the far-right movements, it is equally true that it is not only Sato who experienced the changes of the masculine norm along with wider social changes. Reflecting the evolving environment since the early 1990s, Japanese people began to search for a new mode for Japan other than that of an economic giant, such as the pursuit of cultural supremacy under the banner of 'Cool Japan', or the pursuit of family-oriented life rather than materialistic success (Leheny, 2018). It is no surprise that some of those who experienced both pre- and post-90s Japan now feel the keenest need to be reconciled with this changed environment.

It is noticeable that in all of the cases of Naito, Aoki, and Sato, the 'taboo-breaking' attitude of far-right leaders plays as important a role as the ideology or racism shared among the movements. The subject of Chapter 7, Kuroda, was drawn to Sakurai in much the same way. For those who experience painful feelings which they find difficult to articulate for various reasons, what is important is not whether the *zainichi* and foreigners have caused actual harms, but whether there is a sense that talking about such harms (regardless of their existence) is taboo and that the far-right leaders demonstrate a way of life where they do not care about such taboos.

Chapter 7 Fear of *Zainichi* Criminality and the Long Shadow of Japan's Moral Panic about Crime in the Late 1990s

This chapter picks up on one of the most common far-right discourses: criminality among minorities. Through analysing and contexualising the life story of a JPF activist, Kuroda, the chapter will explore the origins of this kind of fear both in her personal life events and her social circumstances. Kuroda's narrative most vividly illustrates the characteristic of hate in the Japanese context, namely the invisibility of the targeted minority, which could be also found in Sato's narrative (Chapter 6). This invisibility enables Kuroda to project her fear onto the *zainichi* and to entertain the wildest delusions about their criminality. Although she was not explicitly and consciously a nationalist like Naito (Chapter 4) or Takeda (Chapter 8), her hatred was based on her desire to establish an imaginary boundary between the world of the Japanese and that of non-Japanese (or the illegitimate members of Japanese society)—'crimeless daily world' and 'abnormal world of crimes', respectively. In this sense, in line with other cases in this thesis, 'nation' played a significant role in her racism.

The Far-right Discourse on Fear of *Zainichi* Criminality

The association of the *zainichi* with crimes is common in the online sphere. For example, following a murder incident in Noborito, Kawasaki in 2019 where 20 children were injured and killed by a man, a false rumour spread that the perpetrator was a *zainichi* (Kanagawa Shimbun, 2019). After the Great Tohoku Earthquake of 2011 there was also a rumour online about *zainichi* crimes targeting the disaster victims (Ogiue, 2011). Among the set of the 'privileges of the *zainichi*', one myth shared among members and sympathizers of the far-right movements is related to crime: namely the use of *tsu-mei* (Japanese-style names). The *zainichi* began using *tsu-mei* in order to avoid the discrimination stemming from the use of their Korean-style names which indicate their origin (Mizuno and Mun, 2015). According to far-right propaganda, the *zainichi* have benefitted from the use of *tsu-mei;* it is claimed that this group can continue to get away with crimes because the 'leftist' mass media only report their *tsu-mei*, hiding their true identities (Gill, 2018, p.78). This argument does not reflect reality. The media have been inconsistent in their use of Korean-style names or *tsu-mei* when reporting crimes committed by the *zainichi* (Noma, 2015, p.120). In fact, the mass media, including *Asahi Shimbun*, a major newspaper which the far right typically dismiss as *sayoku* (leftist) or *han'nichi* (anti-Japan), has contributed to the association of the *zainichi* with criminality by sometimes reporting suspects' or convicted offenders' nationalities even when these reports

did not mention their (real or *tsu-mei*) names.[16] Of course, offenders' real names appear on important ID documents such as driver's licences and the resident registry, which enables the police to trace them.

It is common for far-right groups to refer to the criminality of their target groups as the rationale for their own activities. For instance, the threat of terrorist attacks is evoked as legitimisation by followers of the English Defense League (EDL) and the British National Party (BNP) (Wood and Finlay, 2008; Pilkington, 2016, p.141), and racial minorities in the US are depicted as thieves, rapist, drug dealers by American far-right activists (Blee, 2002, p.80; Mattheis, 2018, p.154).

Even though the association of the targeted minority with crime can be merely an expression of pre-existing xenophobic sentiment, it seems puzzling that this discourse regarding criminality has become prevalent in the Japanese context. As was discussed in Chapter 2, apart from the period between the late 1990s and the early 2000s when the moral panic regarding crime occurred, it was widely assumed that Japan's crime rate—as measured by the records of the police—was significantly lower than that of other developed countries (Leonardsen, 2004; 2010; Miyazawa, 2013, p.10). The population of resident Koreans, which include not only the *zainichi* with special permanent residency status, but also those with other types of residency statuses, is only 0.3 % of the Japanese population.[17] It is true that police statistics suggest that the proportion of criminals among the *zainichi* population is higher than that of other Japanese populations. Upon a request from a member of parliament, the National Police Agency disclosed to him the statistics on the number of crimes committed by resident foreigners including the *zainichi* from 2014 to 2016, which was later published by his associate (Bando, 2015). Calculations based on these statistics revealed that the proportion of criminals among the *zainichi* was almost three times higher than the general Japanese population.[18] Still,

[16] The author searched *Asahi Shimbun* newspaper articles on the Kikuzo system (the database for *Asahi Shimbun* articles from 1984 to today) which contain '*kankokuseki*' (South Korean Nationality) and '*taiho*' (arrest) in their titles or texts. The result indicated that after June 24 1987 the newspaper stopped reporting either their real or *tsu-mei* names, instead mentioning the arrestees as 'A.' Despite this practice, the articles still mentioned their nationalities along with their age and occupations. This indicates that *Asahi* did not hide their names out of concern about stigmatising them. Reports which mentioned the arrestees and suspects by their initials or alphabets could be found in articles where their nationalities were not mentioned, which indicates that they might have applied the anonymizing practice to the case of Japanese arrestees, suspects and convicts.

[17] The author calculated the figure based on the population of the resident Koreans provided by the Ministry of Justice (2019) and the figures for the Japanese population published by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (2019).

[18] The author made this calculation based on the Japanese population as at 1 Oct of the relevant years (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication, 2019) and the population of residents with North/South Korean citizenship at the point of the end of the relevant years (Ministry of Justice, 2015; 2016; 2018). It should be noted that the latter include Koreans who hold statuses other than permanent residency, such as being husbands or wives of Japanese citizens.

such statistical data had not been publicly known until someone closely associated with the member of parliament published it in 2015. Moreover, there is the possibility that the police's institutional racism affected the disproportionate representation of the *zainichi*. Research has recorded a lack of cooperation between Korean communities and the police despite the latter's well-known commitment to community policing (Ames, 1981; pp.95-99; Bayley. 1976, pp.96-97). They are also known for their xenophobic sentiment toward the *zainichi* and foreigners (Ames, 1981, pp.97-98; Herbert, 2011, pp.236-237). When it was obligatory for *zainichi* to carry their certificates of alien registration, they were harassed by police officers for not doing so (Lie, 2008, p.4). More recently in 2000, a leaflet published by Tokyo Metropolitan Police became the focus of controversy when it urged residents to call the police when they found Chinese people or saw someone speaking Chinese in their building (Shipper, 2005, pp.312-313). These types of evidence make it difficult to regard the abovementioned statistics on the *zainichi*'s crimes as reflecting the reality. It therefore takes some explaining as to how some people have become persuaded that the *zainichi* are a legitimate object of crime-related fears.

This chapter aims to contextualise fears of criminality in the life of one activist named Kuroda, who expressed antipathy toward the *zainichi*. It outlines the context regarding crime in Japanese society since the 1990s, before providing a pen portrait and analysis of Kuroda's life story. In the discussion and conclusion, the chapter identifies the key factors that led Kuroda to join the JFP: the increasing pressure on parents to manage the risk concerning their children since the moral panic around crime in the late 1990s; the pressure on the *zainichi* to hide their identity in Japanese society; and life experiences which made Kuroda particularly susceptible to the fear of invisible 'enemies within', conspiring to attack her or her family.

The Shadow of Moral Panic about Crime

As was argued in Chapter 2, in the post-war period, Japan was thought to be a country with an exceptionally low crime rate despite the rapid urbanisation and the growing population of its cities (Leornardsen, 2010; Braithwaite, 1989). However, from the second half of the 1990s to the early 2000s, it seemed that the situation changed. The number of reported crimes per 1,000 people skyrocketed from 14.2 in 1996 to 22.4 in 2002, and the crime solution rate fell from 42.2% in 1996 to 19.8% in 2001 (National Police Agency, 2018, p.1). Astonishing incidents were reported very frequently in the news, such as the religious group Aum-Shinrikyō's sarin attack in the Tokyo underground in 1995 and the murder of eight villagers by a housewife who poisoned the curry served at a village festival in 1998 (Hamai and Serizawa, 2006). One of the

most heightened fields of concern was youth crime and delinquency. The news of the murder of a 10-year-old girl and an 11-year-old boy by a 14-year-old school pupil (known in the media as *Shonen-A* [Boy A] because juvenile law prohibited his name being officially disclosed) was received with sheer shock, along with a number of other juvenile crimes. The Japanese public became anxious and began to lean towards dehumanising the perpetrators, as if the rise in crime with its appalling nature no longer allowed them to maintain a more or less sympathetic attitude toward perpetrators (Hamai and Serizawa, 2006). The situation triggered *genbatsuka* (introduction of severer punishment) (Miyazawa, 2008), such as: the amendment of the Juvenile Law in 2000 which allowed the juvenile courts to refer to prosecutors' crimes committed by those aged 14 years old or older (previously 16 years old or older); the extension of the maximum length of imprisonment from 15 to 20 years;[19] and in 2006 the courts starting to give the death penalty in cases of murder in which only a single victim was killed.

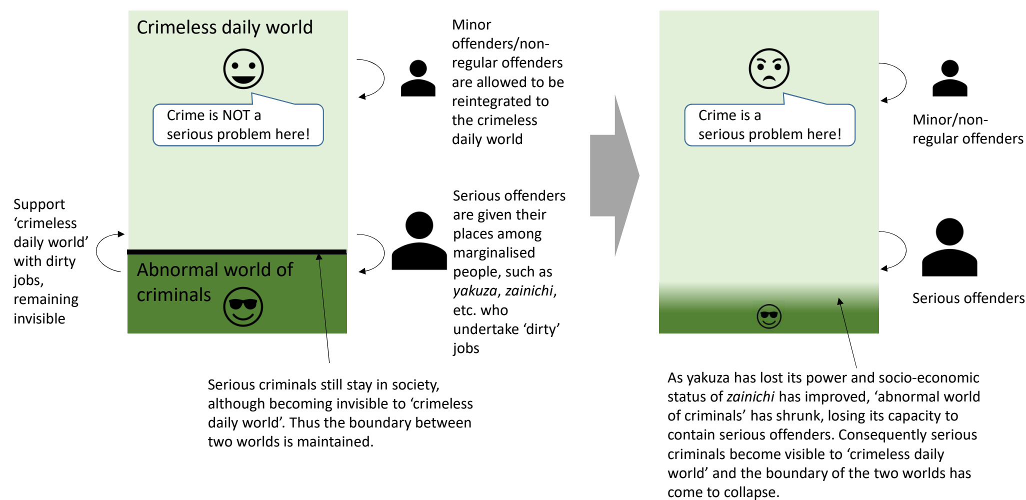
There is some evidence to indicate that these responses were an overreaction to crime threats to which Japanese society was exposed at this time. First of all, the rise in the number of recorded crimes can be attributed to new constraints on the discretion of police. Previously police officers used their discretion whether or not to accept reports of crimes from citizens (*maesabaki*), but after some police scandals in which citizens died following reports that they made to police having been ignored, it was made obligatory to accept all reports. Consequently, the number of recorded crimes skyrocketed, while the clearance rate fell (Hamai and Ellis, 2006, pp.163-164; M. Kawai, 2005, p.13). Also, as mugging by juveniles came to be counted as robbing, the number of robberies suddenly increased, giving the impression of a sudden spike in the number of serious juvenile crimes. The homicide rate (the number of victims per 100,000 people), which tends not to be affected by police practices regarding the filing of reports, had actually been declining since the 1950s, with the rate in the 1990s nearly being one third of the rate 40 years prior (Hiraiwa-Hasegawa, 2005, p.334). Young men had become less and less likely to commit homicide, contributing significantly to this decline (Hiraiwa-Hasegawa, 2005, p.336). Despite these trends, the number of media reports on murders in Japan increased sharply during the 1990s (Hase, 2006; see also Hamai and Serizawa, 2006, p.54), creating a panic which did not reflect reality.

[19] In cases where punishment is increased for reasons such as recidivism, or where it is reduced from capital punishment or infinite imprisonment, the maximum length can be 30 years (previously 20 years and 15 years respectively). Also, in the Japanese system, the length of maximum imprisonment might be specified for each type of offence.

Though some time has passed since this moral panic subsided, the 'myth of the fall of the security and order' (M. Kawai, 2004) still casts its shadow over life in Japanese society, normalizing the fear of crime. It is true that the crime rate has dropped continuously and drastically, from 22.4 cases per 1,000 noted by the police in 2002 to 6.5 in 2018, the lowest in the post-war period (National Police Agency, 2019b, p.2). The rate of those who agreed with the statement that 'public order in Japan has improved within the recent decade' has risen from 7.1 % in 2004 to 35.5 % in 2017 (Cabinet Office, 2017, p.7). According to these statistics, the Japanese public have noticed that the situation has improved in Japan as a whole. However, the result of a survey conducted by the Ministry of Justice implied that the public's perceptions of crime threats has remained high. According to the survey by Houmu Sogo Kenkyu-jo (the Research and Training Institute of the Ministry of Justice), the proportion of Japanese people feeling that it is 'rather dangerous' or 'very dangerous' to walk alone at night has changed little since the early 2000s (from 23.4% in 2000 and 33.7% in 2004 to 30% in 2008 and 32.7 % in 2012); and a substantial proportion of Japanese people believe it is 'very likely' or 'likely' that their houses will be broken into (from 39.1% in 2000 and 53.5% in 2004 to 47.3% in 2008 and 60.7% in 2012) (Ministry of Justice, 2012). As Hamai and Ellis (2006) maintained, these levels of fear of crime are disproportionally high compared with other countries, considering the low crime rate in Japan.

The cause of this gap between the public's perception of the threat at the national level and that at the personal level is likely related to a shift in the public's understanding of the nature of the threat vis-à-vis each individual. Mikio Kawai (2004, pp.163-189) argued that the imaginary boundary between the crimeless daily world and the abnormal world of crimes has fallen due to various social changes.

Figure 7.1: Kawai Mikio's (2004) Explanation of Heightened Insecurity among the Japanese Public



According to Kawai, the residents of 'the abnormal world of crime,' such as the *yakuza* (Japanese gangsters) and groups of people who are routinely discriminated against, such as the *zainichi* (in some cases these were overlapping), typically undertake 'dirty' jobs, such as those related to death, cleaning, construction, and gambling. This group of people also contributed to 'integration' of serious criminals into Japanese society. Kawai notes that there is a limit to the integrative capacity of Japanese society: unlike Braithwaite (1989), he argues that Japanese society only allows those non-regular offenders who committed less serious crimes to return to the crimeless daily world. Those who have committed crimes deemed too serious and regular offenders are not permitted to do so. While the worst kind of criminals were executed, others are given their places in 'dirty' industries in the abnormal world of crime. Thus, people felt as if 'crimes were something which had happened in a different world' (M. Kawai, 2004, p.157), while criminals were not entirely excluded from society but merely became invisible to ordinary people. Kawai argues that because Japanese society has become more intolerant of *yakuza* and the socio-economic status of discriminated groups of people has improved, the 'abnormal world of crime' has shrunk and lost its ability to contain serious criminals, forcing ordinary people to face the hidden world of crime and breaking down the imaginary boundary (see Figure 7.1 above). This hypothesis is attractive in its capacity to explain a long-term, irreversible trend, but there needs to be a more detailed explanation as to how ordinary citizens could perceive the fall of this boundary. Hamai and Ellis (2006, pp.170-171) explained the fall of the boundary in terms of people's increased contact with information related to crime and the rise in the visibility of victims in the media. This account is not enough to explain the gap

between the perceived threat towards the nation and that towards individuals as described above.

What contributed to the fall of this imaginary boundary was the shift in the shared storyline regarding how crimes take place, and the positioning of the lay public as the entities responsible for managing risks of crime directed toward themselves. Criminals and crimes came to be seen as common risks that can confront anyone at any time. The narrative of innocent ordinary citizens being randomly victimised by mindless perpetrators has evolved since the 1970s in media reports of left-wing terrorist incidents (Okamura, 2013). According to Hamai and Serizawa (2006), the 1990s saw the decline of sympathetic perspectives that defined criminals as the products of societal problems, even if their crimes seemed 'incomprehensible' or 'bizarre'. Serizawa contended that with the series of shocking crimes and the spread of a discourse that represented crimes as taking place when *futsu no ko* (ordinary juveniles) *kireru* (suddenly crack), critics started to treat all youth as a mere reservoir of potential criminals rather than sensitive whistleblowers on the contradictions of society (see also Akabene [2010] for the spread of the discourse of ordinary children's sudden radicalisation). Rather than socio-economic disadvantage, now '*kokoro no yami* [the dark corners the mind],' of children were identified as the causes of attacks. The Japanese media argued that adults should pay more attention to juveniles' minds, while admitting that it was extremely difficult to understand them fully (Akabane, 2013).

One of the groups most affected by the discursive positioning around crimes was parents. Parents became afraid of a universalized risk of their children becoming involved in crimes, both as perpetrators and victims, blurring the imaginary boundary between 'crimeless daily lives' and 'the abnormal world of crime'. As the notion spread that ordinary children could become criminals after developing problems with their minds, heightened pressure was put on teachers to self-monitor whether their methods of education and discipline came up to the standards set by experts of child psychology (Makino, 2006). Simultaneously, even seemingly subtle issues in family life (such as parents being bad at disciplining their children, or fathers who were not involved [or overly involved] in raising children) were regarded as 'risk' factors (Akabane, 2010). Hence, the notion that ordinary people could suddenly become criminals shifted the focus of security measures onto potential victims who had to become responsibilised. The discourse of the repetitive and universal nature of child victimization by 'ordinary' perpetrators since the 1990s set the stage for the spread of voluntary safeguarding measures for children by community members and parents after an indiscriminate massacre at an elementary school in 2001, and a series of kidnappings of female children in 2004 and 2005

(Sakurai, 2014; Hamai and Serizawa, 2006). Such responsibilisation of local communities and individuals was proposed by the Japanese government. The Japanese government issued a grand *Action Plan to Realise a Society Resilient to Crime* in 2003. The first principles of the plan were to 'Support the activities for nationals to secure their own safety,' clearly noting 'good security and order cannot be maintained only by the patrol of police officers and prosecution of crimes' (Hanzai Taisaku Kakuryo Kaigi, 2003, p.1). The gap between the perception of improvements in public order at the national level and heightened fears at the personal level was cemented as the prevention of crimes came to be regarded as a matter of risk management by individuals.

Although the criminality of the *zainichi* population was not a topic discussed widely during the panic, the fall of the imagined boundary between criminals and law-abiding people could potentially be evoked to justify xenophobia, because safety was closely related to Japan's national identity. The (perceived) surge in crime contradicted the perception of Japanese society as a place where security is so normalized that people were said to believe 'safety and water can be obtained without charge' (Ben-Dasan, 2018, p.19). And the past association of the *zainichi* with the 'abnormal world of crime' as described by Kawai could be seen as a byproduct of *tan'itsuminzoku shinwa* (the myth of homogeneity) and the view that other (non-Japanese) groups of people were illegitimate residents. As such, there was the potential to attribute the increased visibility of crimes to those who could be cast as outside Japanese society; a potential which the far right has exploited.

The *Zainichi* and Crime

The association of the *zainichi* with criminal activities has a long history. During the period of colonization, Korean rebels aiming to free the peninsula were labeled violent and unlawful '*futei Senjin* (malcontent Koreans)'. The widespread discourse of *futei Senjin* trying to harm the Japanese set the stage for the massacre of Koreans during the Great Kanto Earthquake in 1923 (Lee, 2013). In the pre-war period, communities of Koreans were seen by the authorities as hotbeds for crime (Mizuno and Mun, 2015). In the 1930s, the media tended to focus on criminality when discussing the *zainichi* (Yamanaka, 1993, pp.107-110). In the period immediately following the war, Japanese politicians and mass media openly condemned Koreans for causing crimes and other social problems (Mizuno and Mun, 2015), and such dissatisfaction, along with links between the *zainichi* and left-wing factions, was partly

connected to the willingness of the conservatives to repatriate Koreans to North Korea despite knowledge of the regime there (Morris-Suzuki, 2009, p.48).

In contemporary times, the association of the *zainichi* with criminality is heavily influenced by perceptions about their participation in *yakuza*-based organised crime, though the extent of their involvement is unclear. Testimonies from *yakuza* members (Miyazaki, 1996, p.26 cited in M. Kawai, 2004, p.305; Hill, 2003, p.81) and the authorities (Ames, 1981, p.112) have suggested that there is a disproportionally high presence of *zainichi* people in *yakuza* groups. However, as Hill (2003, p.81) pointed out, the generalizability of such evidence should be considered with caution. The *zainichi* population is not evenly distributed on the Japanese archipelago, and these testimonies (from Western Japan) can only reflect the situation of an area where there is a large *zainichi* population. There are no reliable figures about the *zainichi*'s involvement in *yakuza* organisations.

Another possible cause of the association might be the heightened fear of foreign criminals between the late 1990s and the early 2000s, which occurred against a backdrop of a rapid increase in the population of foreigners. Officials of the National Police Agency and politicians referred to crimes committed by foreigners as a new and urgent threat despite the fact that the increase in such crimes was slower than the pace with which the population of foreigners rose (Shipper, 2005). Although the *zainichi*, who are descendants of those who came to Japan during the colonisation period, have nothing to do with the increase in foreigners in the 1990s, such fear of foreign crimes revived the above-mentioned traditional association of East Asians (including Koreans) with crime, as the remarks of then Tokyo Governor Ishihara Shintaro illustrated. In his speech to Self-Defence Force officers about to start drills for the earthquake (Yamamoto, 2005, pp.35-36), Ishihara, stressing the danger and criminality of foreigners, used the term *sangokujin*, which refers to Chinese, Koreans and Formosans (indigenous people in Taiwan) with a discriminatory nuance. Thus, Ishihara recreated the discourse of the danger of *futei Senjin* that was seen prior to the Great Kanto Earthquake.

The lack of research on *zainichi* crime is regrettable because it leaves us unable to challenge the xenophobic imagination which directly connects the ethnicity of this group with criminality. There has been a tendency for academics to refrain from discussing the topic, recognizing its sensitivity in the post-war era (Ueda, 2005, p.9). Such an attitude is counterproductive in a climate where the relationship between the *zainichi* and crime has come to be expressed without nuanced scrutiny on how (if at all) their background may influence their involvement in crime. Such expressions do not emanate only from the far right, who believe in the existence of what they call the *zainichi*'s privileges. The connection between the

zainichi and *yakuza* is now openly referred to by high-ranking officials of authorities such as the Public Security Intelligence Agency (Rankin, 2012, p.8), and as mentioned above, a politician from the party in power requested data from the National Police Agency on *zainichi* crimes and allowed a writer close to him to publish it in 2015 (Bando, 2015). Unless this tendency is countered by rigorous research into the *zainichi* and crime, the absence of such research will only end up inflating xenophobic sentiment.

Case Study: Kuroda

When the likelihood of an encounter with such crimes is in fact very low, what personal and social factors might make one fear crimes by the *zainichi*? Below, a psychosocial analysis of Kuroda's life story will be conducted in order to answer this question. The analysis will uncover how Kuroda's experience of isolation and fear (specifically her contact with 'the man in sunglasses') illuminate Japanese society's orientation toward risk management, how that is premised on the *zainichi*'s invisibility, and how in her case the two interacted in ways that motivated her participation in the JFP.

Introducing Kuroda

Kuroda Sakiko is a woman in her 50s. She married her husband and had her daughter in her mid-30s, and was living with them at the time of the interview. When she arrived at the café where the interview took place, Kuroda appeared somewhat nervous, but, as we talked about trivial things (such as the indie music scene in Manchester), her sense of humour became apparent in her narrative. This perhaps edgy sense of humour was evident when she spoke cynically about counter-activists or the *zainichi*, as well as when she became self-deprecating regarding her 'geeky' taste in music. This 'edge' of Kuroda's, I have come to suspect, indicated her ongoing struggle with internal contradictions: her tone of voice was sometimes angry, especially when she spoke about her childhood and the things that she had been 'cut off' from.

What made Kuroda interested in far-right activities was her contact with online right-wing discourse, which claimed that it was the *zainichi* who committed most of the gory criminal incidents in Japan in the late 1990s and early 2000s, as well as more recent ones. Kuroda soon came to believe that the mass media and other institutions had been hijacked by the *zainichi* to conceal their 'wrongdoings'. By the time of the interview Kuroda's concern had broadened beyond the *zainichi*, South/North Koreans, and Chinese, to include foreigners in general. 'Plenty of them live in my neighbourhood and my apartment building', she said, and

‘to be honest, I have a daughter and never want them [children] to walk around that area.’ Why she felt this way only became evident by looking closely at the unconscious associations in her narrative.

Early Life

When I asked Kuroda to talk about the earlier stages of her life, she answered, ‘I was extremely, kind of, shy.’ According to her, ‘things already went wrong when I started to go to kindergarten...because I am not good at being self-assertive [*jiko shucho suru*] in front of others.’ Kuroda was always ‘left out’ of the circle of friends. This sense of loneliness haunted her for a long time, and in early adulthood became the source of an enduring insecurity. ‘In the past, I was very much afraid of being alone.’ Later in life, Kuroda started to face up to her fear, but she maintained ‘Essentially, I haven’t changed.’

This enduring sense of insecurity might have been enhanced by Kuroda’s contact with ‘the man in sunglasses.’ When she was five years old a middle-aged man wearing sunglasses approached Kuroda from behind, when she about to go down a slide in a playground. The man placed the strap of his camera in front of her neck. ‘I don’t know, maybe I was about to be kidnapped, but everyone was around. I only remember the sunglasses of the middle-aged guy and the strap of his camera.’ This incident left Kuroda with a perception of herself as a potential victim, and more crucially, enhanced her sense of helplessness, which had been cultivated by the hostile responses of her family. ‘Humour did not work in my family.’ Even with trivial things such as leaving her exam papers at school, Kuroda was ‘blamed past’ her ‘breaking point’ by her parents. Her mother attributed Kuroda’s social exclusion by her peers to her daughter’s character.

> For example, when I had arranged to play with my friends, three or four of them, I found myself left alone without knowing how. When I talked about it with my mother, she said, ‘Because it’s not fun to be with you.’ [Y: Oh] It has been traumatic for me...I have been living with the trauma of it.

Kuroda’s early life was characterised by the hostility of those surrounding her, but her mother’s criticism made her blame herself. As seen below, Kuroda’s life thereafter focused on ridding herself of her positioning as a nuisance among family members and friends.

Contacts with the *Zainichi*

Kuroda moved to a different prefecture when she was a junior high school pupil. Her experience in this new prefecture was not enjoyable because of the loneliness she felt.

> I got on with my classmates rather well, but when I entered my high school, that [nature] of mine [of not being able to communicate well with others] happened again.

In her attempt to 'escape' her peers, Kuroda moved to art college, which she found more enjoyable probably because there were many music venues where she could listen to the 'geeky' music she liked and spend time with those who shared the same tastes. Kuroda's contact with *zainichi* people was concentrated in her 20s and in her memory there was something both enigmatic and intimidating about them. After graduating from college at the age of 20, Kuroda joined a company that designed traditional Japanese clothes, which was run by brothers rumoured to be of Korean lineage. The manager, the younger of the two brothers, 'suddenly got angry' and had a 'gaze filled with uncanny lustre [*sokobikarisuru metsuki*] and arrogant attitude...always checking how his people worked.' Another contact with the *zainichi* happened when Kuroda had lunch with a senior colleague. The person, whom she had thought to be Japanese suddenly said, 'There is one thing which is apparent, though nothing is absolute in the world,' adding, 'I am a foreigner.' Though Kuroda does not remember the context of the conversation, this act of 'confession' remained in her memory. Her impressions of Chinese people, who can be as indistinguishable from the Japanese as Koreans, were similarly anecdotal, but spoke no less to Kuroda's early experience of trauma in the park. She remembered an urban myth she heard in her college of a female high school student who was kidnapped and exhibited in China with her arms and legs cut off. *Egetsunai* (cruel) was her impression of China. According to Kuroda, this view was also informed by movies such as *The Burning of Yuan Ming Yuan* (in cinemas in Japan in 1985), in which the protagonist, a Chinese princess, again cut off the legs and arms of another princess who was her rival in the harem. Having experienced these, Kuroda concluded that 'there was a strange sense of taboo, to talk about *Chosen-jin* [Koreans] and Chinese.'

Leaving the Past Behind

In her early 20s, Kuroda decided to form her own band with some friends, but the band broke up a decade later because the bandmates were '*Chosen* [Korean]-minded' by which she meant 'sa[ying] whatever they wanted to say, twisting my opinions' during their activities. One of the

band members remained close to Kuroda after the band broke up, but, in her eyes, the friend was exploiting her desire for friendship. Kuroda terminated the friendship in her mid to late-40s, when they had a quarrel.

> [S]he did not like me when I did not behave like she wanted me to. When she started complaining on the phone, she continued doing so for two hours. I could not manage my life...[when I said] 'I am fine without anything from you' she was very upset, and stuff like that.

Kuroda had her daughter in her mid-30s. Kuroda's childhood trauma of being isolated in her kindergarten was repeated when she found herself in trouble with other mothers at her daughter's kindergarten. After trying to solve a problem among them, she found that she was 'outcast' by the other mothers.

> [I]t was in the first year of the three years which my daughter was supposed to spend with 20 other classmates, and that person turned all [of the other mothers] against me and I spent another two years being surrounded by enemies....[A]fter I went to a refresher driving course and was able to drive, I entered the wider world. I decided, 'After a few years I will start working again and say good-bye to this place!'

Kuroda then tried 'rebuild[ing]' her life to stand up to these 'enemies'. When her daughter was 10 years old (when Kuroda was in her mid 40s), Kuroda obtained her driving licence and became a security guard. Security guards are, according to her, 'faces, which first welcome the customers', and 'it's about how friendly we should be while we are warning customers' because 'we cannot force the customers'. In order to secure the cooperation from customers, security guards use 'behaviours, facial expressions, glances, words and deeds, and everything which would secure cooperation'. This might have been also a way to escape from the trauma caused by her parents' criticism and her unsettling reactions to it.

> I put a lot of things behind me. I feel like our [Kuroda's and her parents'] temperaments are incompatible, when I hear them speak in a daunting way...it's so, I started to work and I realised, in the course of thinking a lot about it...facial expressions and voices are [important], because it will be the end if there is no chance to see people again, even if the inside of you might be very nice....So, this is where I am starting to rebuild myself.

Currently, it seems that she consciously tries to distance herself from the traumatic words of her mother (‘it is not fun to be with you’). ‘[I]t’s miserable and shameful, and I decided to stop attributing things to such a thing...I wanted to finally be released from such a curse.’ In fact, what she tried to acquire might have been a ‘fun’ self. Rather than fully accepting her ‘shy,’ helpless self, she started to act as someone totally different from what she had been.

Participation in the JFP

Kuroda’s self-image of a helpless girl was then been projected onto her daughter, however. She became preoccupied with the vulnerability of her own daughter. ‘It is not an environment where I can let her wander around’, as criminal cases, like the Kawasaki incident in 2015, often preoccupied her. The Kawasaki incident was a murder case where a 13-year-old boy was brutally killed by his delinquent ‘friends’ who were also teenagers in the riverside area of Kawasaki city in February 2015.

> [M]y daughter was not going to junior high school yet, but I was following [the news of] such incidents, I cared about these things wondering...what his mother did, like how she could have been unaware of it until the situation got this bad. I was interested in that and every time I found [news about] the incident, I was watching it like I was stuck to the television. But at some point they suddenly stopped reporting about it, all of a sudden. I thought it was strange...I was like ‘What the hell is going on when I am really keen to know about it!’

Kuroda eventually found a ‘reason’ for the sudden termination of the media reports on the incident when she discovered the far right online. In mid-2016, Kuroda’s husband started to repeat the myth that ‘most of the crimes were committed by South Koreans’. Kuroda started to conduct some research herself on the Internet to find:

> Various crimes in Japan, the murder case of Ikeda elementary school, where nearly 10 children were killed…and the one who poisoned curry [Y: Ah] Hayashi Masumi? And the other one, in Hikari city, at that time he was a juvenile. He was *zainichi* as well. And in Kobe, a boy beheaded a younger boy called Jun-kun, and put the head on the gate of the school. (Y: Sakakibara [the fake name of *shonen-A*].) That one is also [*zainichi*]. One after another.

Thus, very well-known incidents in which children were killed from the late-1990s to the early 2000s were attributed to *zainichi* Koreans. Kuroda also found that in the Kawasaki incident '[the main perpetrator's] father was a *zainichi* Korean and his mother was a Filipino', and 'all of the rest of the group [who killed the boy], four or five of them were foreigners.' Now, everything made sense to her. '[B]ecause there were *Chosen-jin* [Koreans] mixed up [in the group] the mass media got pressured and the case was concealed.'

In response, Kuroda started to have paranoia about the universal threat of the *zainichi* so much so that she 'could not sleep'. '[T]hey are indistinguishable, I do not know where such people are, maybe the neighbours are [*zainichi*], and I do not know who among my colleagues are [*zainichi*].' Her fear was transformed into 'anger', however, as she discovered far-right revisions of history to the effect that 'there was no such thing as the Nanjing massacre, and there was nothing to apologise for to *Chosen* [Korea].'

Then, Kuroda came to learn about Sakurai and the JFP via Twitter. She joined the party. '[W]hat he said mostly made sense....He acted and spoke in the most understandable way.' Kuroda identified closely with Sakurai's self-assertive attitude as well.

> He says things, like cutting something up [*zubazuba iu* (say something straightaway)], doesn't he? [3-second pause] Well, I do not know how to put this, but I have become able to cut useless things away [*zubazuba kitteikeru*]. Now I am alright being alone. In the past, I was afraid of being alone very much. I did things like pretending to be somebody's friend. Now I am okay with being alone.

Analysis

Table 7.1 below shows the chronology of Kuroda's life according to her narrative. Her fear of enemies within stemmed from her experience with 'the man in sunglasses,' whose identity and intentions were not clear to her, leaving her with a sense of helplessness, loneliness, and a reputation, reinforced by her mother, that she was strange, no fun, and maybe even to blame for her isolation. The fear of insidious threats resonated with her experience with the *zainichi* in her earlier 20s. The obscurity of *zainichi* identity is striking, as their identities were always rumoured or implied and rarely substantiated. A fear of the enemy within, whose cruelty is unpredictable and beyond imagination, was accentuated by the manager who 'suddenly got angry,' and by gory ('*egetsunai*') images of the Chinese in a movie and an urban myth. These

experiences were given new racial meaning as the far-right discourse convinced her that the *zainichi* are 'indistinguishable from the Japanese', and that they perpetrated the Kawasaki incident and the notorious incidents from the late 1990s to the early 2000s.

Table 7.1: Chronology of Kuroda's Life

Year	Age	Personal Event	Comments
1960s	3~5	Left out at Kindergarten	When I talked about it with my mother, she said, 'Because it's not fun to be with you.' [Y: Oh] It has been traumatic to me.
		Contact with 'the man in sunglasses'	'I only remember the sunglasses of the middle-aged guy and the strap of his camera.'
Late 1980s to Early 1990s	20s	Working for a company	[The manager] suddenly got angry, and his glance with uncanny lustre [*sokobikarisuru metsuki*] and arrogant attitude...in some way there appeared a rumour that the president and the chief-manager were not Japanese.
	20s	Confession from a colleague of being *zainichi*	I do not know why he came out that he was a foreigner, and I do not remember the context. But I remember it clearly.
Early 2000s	Late 30s	Being outcast by other mothers	[A fellow mother] turned all [of the other mothers] against me and I spent another two years being surrounded by enemies
2010s	Mid 40s	Got a job as a security guard	It's about how friendly we should be while we are warning customers. it's so, I started to work and I realised, in the course of thinking a lot about [the job]... facial expressions and voices are [important....So, this is where I am starting to rebuild myself.
2010s	Late 40s	Break off her friendship with a former bandmate	[S]he did not like me when I did not behave like she wanted me to.
2015	Late 40s or Early 50s	The Kawasaki incident	I cared about [incidents like the Kawasaki incident] wondering...what his mother did, like how she could have been unaware of it until the situation got this bad.
2016	Late 40s or Early 50s	Contact with the far-right discourse	[I]n Kobe, a boy beheaded a younger boy called Jun-kun, and put the head on the gate of the school. (Y: Sakakibara [the fake name of *shonen-A*]) That one is also [*zainichi*].
2017	Late 40s or Early 50s	Joined the JFP	I have become able to cut useless things away [*zubazuba kitteikeru*]. Now I am alright being alone.

What rendered Kuroda susceptible to this far-right discourse about being cautious of these 'enemies within' was that she herself had been cast as an 'enemy within' by her peers at school and the mothers at the kindergarten and the 'Korean-minded' bandmates who she fell out with. The haunting words of her mother ('it's not fun to be with you') made her feel isolated even in her family, and more importantly, made her blame herself for being 'left-out' while feeling falsely accused. When these feelings were reactivated as a young mother Kuroda began to cast the shame of being an 'enemy within' onto others. At first, the other mothers became her enemies. Then the job of a security guard helped her become 'totally different from [her]self': it killed her un-'fun' self by learning how to be 'friendly' to others through the job.

At the same time, for her, others (customers) are ultimately objects to control, using the technique to be ‘friendly’ instrumentally. Kuroda stopped expecting intimacy and friendship whereby others were willing to do good by her. Thus, Kuroda ceased to attempt to relate to other women, which had ended up making her an ‘enemy within’. Instead, she ‘cut’ them ‘away’ and become ‘alright being alone’ among her enemies.

What resulted from being ‘alone’ might have been the heightened sense of responsibility to manage risks posed by ‘enemies’ without external help. This was amplified by Kuroda’s encounter with Japanese society’s positioning of parents as having responsibility for mitigating the risk of crimes against their children, which, in Kuroda’s case, she learned about through contact with media reports on crimes such as the Kawasaki incident. One focus of the heated discussion within the mass media was the accountability of the parents of the victim, especially the mother, who in this case had been divorced and raised five children by herself (News Post Seven, 2016; Ishii, 2018). Hayashi Mariko, a well-known novelist, wrote an essay in which she criticised the mother for ‘valuing being a woman’ (more than being a mother), mentioning that she had a boyfriend and identifying this as the reason why she overlooked the ‘signs’ that the boy had been bullied by the perpetrators (Hayashi, 2015). *Shukan Shincho*, a tabloid magazine, created the impression that this woman was not an appropriate mother, quoting the words of a neighbour, who was ‘surprised’ because he saw the mother ‘walking with her daughter and boyfriend the next day after the dead body turned out to be the boy’s’ and she looked ‘as if she did not care [*kerottoshita yousu*]’ (*Shukan Shincho*, 2015, cited in Ishii, 2018). Kuroda’s unconscious positioning of herself when she was following the media reports of the Kawasaki incident as a responsible parent, alone and surrounded by enemies, echoed with such media reports and surfaced as her obsession to know ‘what [the victim’s] mother did, like how she could have been unaware of it till the situation got this bad’.

To Kuroda, the online far-right discourse that attributed blame for the gory incidents to the *zainichi* was compatible with her position in two ways. The storyline of covert enemies seeking opportunities to attack her and her daughter sounded convincing to Kuroda, struggling to live among potential ‘enemies’, others who should have provided her with support, including the mothers at her daughter’s kindergarten, and Kuroda’s own mother. The far-right discourse lessened the pressure on the lonely fighting mother Kuroda by recounting who exactly her daughter’s enemy was, identifying the covert enemy as the *zainichi* and thereby directing her to the path of the JFP. Kuroda’s acceptance of the far-right discourse and her participation in the JFP could be interpreted as an attempt to rebuild the imaginary boundary between a

crimeless daily world and the abnormal world of crime, which was collapsed by the widespread notion that crime happens randomly and the risk is unforeseeable. Associating the *zainichi* with crime and pushing them back onto the side of the 'abnormal world of crime' was an attempt to recreate the time when the *zainichi* found that they were not treated as legitimate members of Japanese society and felt a strong need to hide their identity, as Kuroda's contacts with them in her youth illustrated.

The story of Kuroda indicates the potential danger of assuming that participants in far-right movements are merely pathetic individuals who do not know a better way to work off their frustrations than shouting words of hate on the street and mingling with other similarly sad comrades, as depicted by Yasuda (2012). As Kuroda's case shows, their lives can have more complicated patterns, where seemingly positive and negative sides are intertwined inseparably. Kuroda feared that she had not changed and maybe could not change, having been cast as an unloveable child: 'Essentially, I haven't changed'. This fear was the driver of her continuous investment in becoming 'totally different from herself'. Her effort to be 'different' has two aspects. On the one hand, Kuroda's conscious efforts to overcome the curse of her mother by learning how to be 'friendly' through the job of security guard should be appreciated. But at the same time, her sympathy with Sakurai, who is depicted to '*zubazuba iu*' (say something straightaway), stems from the same desire to be someone who can '*zubazuba kitteikeru'* (cut useless things away). This desire is unconsciously attained by becoming a security guard, which is essentially about controlling others with no need of emotional attachment. Although the latter of the two efforts cannot be approved, depicting Kuroda as a helpless, pathetic person would not only contradict the way she wants to assert herself, but would fail to capture the wholeness and ambiguity of her story, making it difficult to have a dialogue with her.

Conclusion

This chapter revealed the nexus between the spread of the norm of individual risk management regarding crime and the rise of xenophobic sentiment. To some of those who see their lives as battles with potentially malicious others, like Kuroda, far-right discourse claiming that covert enemies, namely the *zainichi*, are conspiring to attack Japanese appear convincing.

Kuroda's case was overshadowed by the transition of Japanese society since the 1990s. The hidden theme of Kuroda's story was how she could 'rebuild' herself as the boundaries between a crimeless daily world and the abnormal world of crime became blurred. The

marginalised position of the *zainichi* that Kuroda witnessed when she was younger provided (misguided) pointers for her on how to interpret changes in Japanese society since the 1990s. The invisibility of the *zainichi* provides space for fearful imaginations, which the far-right exploit. It is noticeable that the analysis of Sato's case (Chapter 6) pointed out a similar phenomenon. Indeed, contrary to the observations in other contexts, where acts of hate are initiated by more or less direct contacts with their victims (see Treadwell and Garland, 2011, for example) Japanese cases are characterised by their lack of direct contacts with the *zainichi* population and uncertainty about the true identity of people who the interviewees believe to be *zainichi*. Kuroda's case illustrated this most vividly. This is in line with Gadd and Dixon's (2011) observation that racists' life stories only feature seemingly trivial episodes related to the minority, if any at all. The precise reason why they still unconsciously rely on concepts like race or nation is, as Gadd and Dixon argued, the concepts' emptiness, which makes it possible to attribute any 'bad' feelings and events to the 'other' side.

Chapter 8 Loving the Authority to be Loved: Authoritarian Personality and the Far Right in Japan

The subjects in previous chapters, especially Naito and Aoki, conflated their own sense of persecution with the hardship of Japan they assumed to be caused by other countries. Takeda, the subject of this chapter, evidences another way far-right activists relate to the nation, or what is supposed to symbolise it, namely the Emperor. Rather than identifying himself with the Emperor, Takeda sought an imagined dyad where the Emperor gave him an unconditional love in return for his respect. The chapter will reveal how the neoliberalist norm that was infiltrating education and Takeda's shame caused by domestic abuse interacted with each other, informing his obsession with the Emperor, and will explore how his longing for a union with such a leader directed his antipathy towards those he imagined to be attacking the presumption of inherited nobility.

Introduction

Authoritarianism is the subject of renewed academic attention in the current political climate. It has been identified as the causal factor for the rise of the ethno-nationalist populist politics, represented by President Trump and Brexit (MacWilliams, 2016; Zavala et al., 2017; Knuckey and Hassan, 2020). While the classic work on the subject (Adorno et al., 1950) focused on the developmental sources of authoritarian personalities, contemporary research points to structural factors that stimulate the authoritarian minds. These factors include: the salience of the norm of tolerance and equality and a backlash against it from older generations (Norris and Inglehart, 2019); economic and demographic change (Bonikowski, 2017; Ballad-Rosa, et al., 2020); and a desire for authenticity amidst acute alienation (Fieschi, 2019).

This chapter will psychosocially explore the attractions of authoritarianism in Japan. The chapter does not seek to assess the relative weight of macro factors over—or under—personality factors. Rather, it seeks to show how personality interacts with situational factors on insecure subjects at moments of political and economic crisis. The chapter will illustrate why a system of symbols was embraced by a far-right activist. It will show how far right ideology enables the love for, and the desire to be loved by an important political figure to coexist alongside hatred towards the media, foreign countries, and minorities, resolving biographically rooted tensions.

The Emperor occupies a unique symbolic place in the ideology of Japanese far-right movements. Although this has not been as central an issue as the rights of the *zainichi* and the diplomatic relationship with South Korea, criticism of the Emperor can provoke the harshest reactions from the Japanese far right.[20] Counter-protests against the rally of Han-ten-ren (Han Tenno-sei Undo Renrakukai/Association for Anti-Emperor System Movements) on 15 August (Japan's anniversary of the end of the WWII) which annually happens in Kudanshita, Tokyo, near the Yasukuni shrine, are among the most important events which draw a large number of activists from all over Japan. A recent incident demonstrated how presumed criticism of the Emperor can incite harsh reactions from the far right. In Aichi Triennale 2019, a modern art exhibition, one exhibit featuring a flaming picture of the Emperor Showa[21] generated strong opposition along with other two works dealing with the 'comfort women' issue and *kamikaze* attackers. Due to threats and blackmailing, the relevant part of the exhibition was suspended for a while (Aichi Triennale no Arikata Kensho Iinkai, 2019). Among the far-right citizen groups which went to the venue to express opposition were those related to Zaitoku-kai and the JFP. 'Takeda', the research participant whose story is central to this chapter, went to Aichi to participate in the street agitations.

The chapter will first give an overview of the recent history of the relationship between Japanese citizens and their Emperor, and an explanation of the emotional concept of *amae*, or emotional interdependency. Then a detailed analysis of the life story of Takeda will be given. The chapter shows how the fear of rejection that intense competition engenders exists side by side with the suppressed desire for unconditional love that the Emperor symbolizes. Though the desire for the Emperor's recognition is specific to the Japanese context, similar dynamics can be observed in other contexts, such as the US and the UK, where national greatness is increasingly contested, and people are exposed to harsh competition.

The Emperor and the People

In order to understand how the far-right activists see the Emperor, it will be indispensable to acknowledge the steadily rising positive reputation of the Emperor among the Japanese during

[20] Their attitude can be contrasted with right-wingers in the pre-war period, who were busy arguing about the desirable locus of the Emperor and the relationship between the Japanese and Emperor (Katayama, 2007) or the post-war right-wing whose ideological centre is the restoration of the pre-war Emperor-centred state (Hori, 2017).
[21] The picture was in reality a block print of the Emperor that the creator had published, and the exhibit was intended to illustrate the 'sublimation' of the artist's internalized Emperor, rather than to criticise him (Asahi Shimbun, 2019).

Emperor Akihito's era (1989-2019). As Figure 8.1 shows, since 2013, positive sentiments toward the Emperor ('Like' and 'Respect') have predominated over negative sentiment and indifference to him. The proportion of Japanese people saying they 'liked' the Emperor suddenly increased after the 1988 census, the first since Emperor Showa died and the new Emperor Akihito succeeded the throne. By 2018, the first census after Akihito indicated his intention to abdicate in 2016, a majority of respondents reported that they 'respected' the Emperor.

Figure 8.1: Sentiments toward the Emperor (%) (Adopted from Aramaki, Murata and Yoshizawa, 2019, p.68)

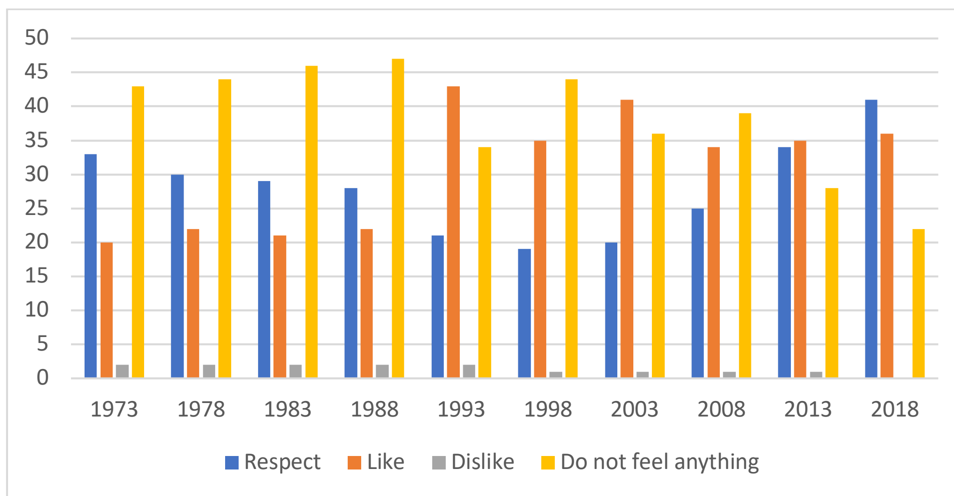
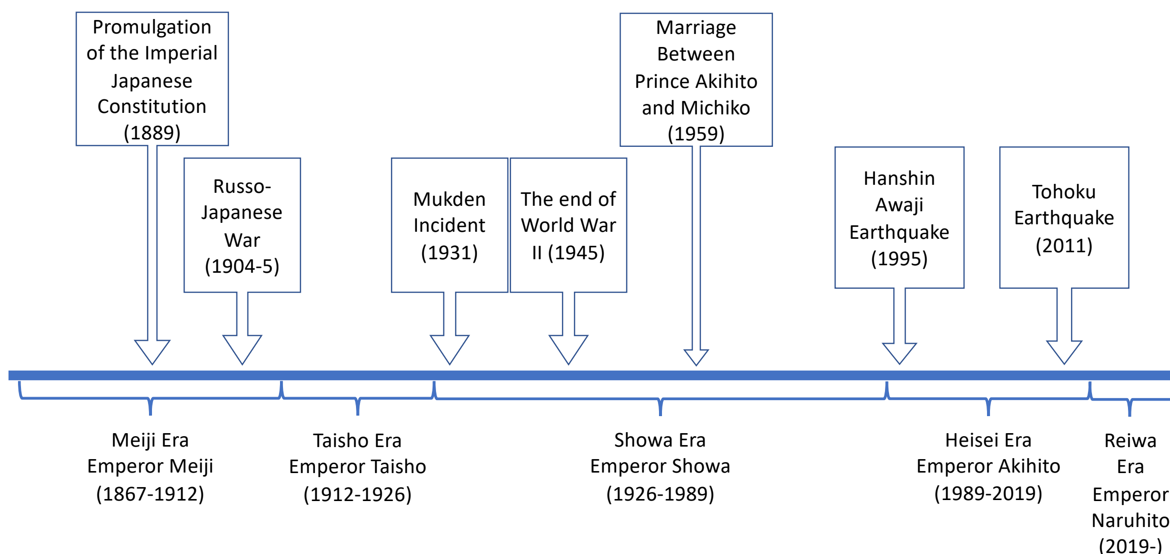


Figure 8.2: Recent Emperors in Japan and Major Events



What does the relationship between citizens and the Emperor symbolize? It has changed drastically over the last 150 years. (For a timeline of recent Emperors and related historical points, see Figure 8.2). Before the Meiji restoration, the presence of the Emperor in the lives

of most Japanese people was minimal (Doak, 2007). The Meiji constitution, promulgated in 1889, declared that sovereignty resided with the Emperor and 'The Empire of Japan shall be reigned over and governed by a line of Emperors unbroken for ages eternal (*bansei ikkei*)' (National Diet, 2003). The Emperor became both the head of a modern state and the inheritor of a constructed mythic tradition. Later, in the face of breakdown of social custom and order, more moral and religious aspects of the Emperor's authority were stressed. These included being the father figure of the family-state, or the descendent of the goddess in Japanese mythology (Gluck, 1985, p.78). Thus, while the 'masculine' aspect of the Emperor became salient along with modernization—represented by the moustache and the military uniform in his portrait (Shillony, 2000)—his authority was also constructed as timeless, and his gender identity was imagined to be androgynous on religious occasions. As Fujitani (1996, p.101) explains, the body of the Emperor was constructed to signify two very different aspects of the monarchy and Japan corresponding to the natures of two capitals, namely Kyoto, where the Emperors resided in the pre-modern era, and Tokyo, the capital of modern Japan (see Table 8.1).

Table 8.1 The Two Threads of Meanings Attached to the Emperor's Body (Adopted from Fujitani, 1996, p101)

Kyoto	**Tokyo**
Past	Present
History	Future
Tradition	Civilization
Gendered Ambiguity	Masculinity
Emperor as God (Emperorship)	Emperor as mortal
Emperor as above politics	Emperor as head of state
Spirituality	Mundane prosperity
Beardless face	Bearded face
Invisibility	Visibility

Although the uniqueness of the role of the Emperor in this pre-war period vis-à-vis the rest of Japanese history can be characterised by factors on the right side of the above list, it was the factors on the left, characterised by spirituality, that helped the system survive. Irokawa (1991, pp.246-250) argues that the concept of *isshi doujin*—the idea that the Emperor cared about his subjects equally as if he was outside of the political system—prevented public dissatisfaction from being directed onto him, even though sovereignty resided with him. The untouchable status of the Emperor was supported by radical Shinto ultranationalism. This decreed that the

authority of the Emperor was derived not from his individual qualities (as was characteristic of Hitler), but from his being a descendant of the goddess Amaterasu (Skya, 2009, p.219).

After the war, the Emperor and his family came to symbolize an idealised form of family in Japan. In what became an era of rapid economic development, the constitution adopted after the defeat in WWII (and which remains as such) declared that '[t]he Emperor shall be the symbol of the State and of the unity of the people...with whom resides sovereign power'. Emperor Showa's so-called 'declaration of humanity' (*ningen sengen*) was a crudely populist attempt to connect with ordinary people in the post-war period. It succeeded in distancing him from military power, refashioning his masculinity within the sacred image of an *arahitogami* (living god). At this juncture, the emperor became 'a soft-spoken, suit-wearing gentleman, accompanied by a smiling chubby wife' (Shillony, 2000, p.31). Events thereafter, such as Emperor Showa's son Akihito's marriage with commoner Michiko, and his children's growth and marriage, completed the transformation with the power of images disseminated through mass media. Thus, as Ruoff (2001) argues, the mass-Emperor system (*taishu tenno-sei*), a concept first coined by Matsushita (1959), was firmly established. Under the 'system', the Emperor was supported by the mass consumerist middle-class culture. As Figure 4 above showed, this period saw the public's indifference toward the institution.

Since the 1990s the Emperor has come to be constructed (and to contrast himself) as more than a mere symbol of the Japanese through acts of consolation. This transition of the nature of the relationship between the Emperor and the people from oneness (the representative of the [supposed] majority of the people) to twoness (an authority with a function distinct from laypeople) might have contributed to the rise of the 'respect' for the Emperor. As Hara's (2019) analysis showed, the Emperor Akihito (on the throne 1989-2019), under the influence of Empress Michiko, made more efforts to console those suffering from difficulties. His style of communicating with laypeople, sometimes kneeling when he was talking to the disabled, the elderly and victims of natural disasters (most notably of the Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake in 1995 and the Tohoku Earthquake in 2011), was seen as an embodiment of 'effeminate monarchy' (Shillony, 2000, p.31). Kawanishi (2016) speculates that the visits to the victims, especially those of the Tohoku Earthquake, contributed significantly to the increase of those who 'respect' the Emperor in the census above. Hara (2019) argues that such efforts have created a new form of relationship between the Emperor and Japanese nationals. According to him, rather than *kokutai* (literally translated as 'the body of the nation') being visualized by thousands of nationals collectively hailing the Emperor as in the pre-war Showa era, each citizen (first those

who have directly communicated with the Emperor, but also those who have watched him through the media) have internalized *kokutai*.

In what follows, the case study of a young male activist reveals the effects of a system of symbols in which respect for the Emperor is fused with far-right thinking in ways that legitimize the resolution of personal insecurities as hatred towards enemies of the emperor system. There is no denying that the popularity of the Emperor among the public stems from the fact that Emperor Akihito, together with Empress Michiko, has promoted the principles of the post-war constitution, such as democracy, harmony with international society, and care for the marginalized strata of the people (Hara, 2019; Ruoff, 2019). At the same time, the emergence of new, individualized *kokutai* is attractive to those struggling under the current unregulated competition which can be found in many parts of society (especially market-related ones). The relationship that these supporters of the Emperor desire is one in which criticism from the outside against the Emperor, or themselves, is silenced.

Amae

The concept of *amae* is indispensable to understand the supposedly rosy relationship between the people and the Emperor, akin to a dyad of mother-child-like interdependence. *Amae* can be roughly translated as 'dependency' (Behnens, 2004, p.2). The term is widely used in Japanese, but it was psychoanalyst Doi Takeo's *Amae no Kozo* (originally published in 1971, English title: *The Anatomy of Dependence*) who made the concept well known. According to Doi, *amae-ru* (the verbal form of noun *amae*) happens when a person in a dyad knows that the other cares about them and acts to their advantage based on this knowledge (Doi, 2007, p.4).[22] Doi (2007, p.30) thinks that *amae* is similar to passive object love, a concept developed by Balint (1952). Balint's 'passive object love' refers to the child's desire to be unconditionally loved by their mother. As separation between a mother and a child inevitably happens, this desire usually persists for the rest of the child's life, throughout adulthood. It can mutate into narcissism, as

[22] Doi (2007, pp.136-139) effectively used Natsume Soseki's novel *Botchan* (first published in 1906) as an example of an *amae* relationship. The relationship between the protagonist, the young man Botchan and his nanny Kiyo captures the subtlety of *amae*. Kiyo's dedication to him is genuine, and she is the only person who understands and supports him within his family. Botchan was slightly annoyed by this, but came to appreciate it. In one scene, it became clear that Botchan had borrowed money from Kiyo, but he didn't dare to return it, thinking, 'If I were to have such a concern [that he is obligated to return the money], it would be as if I doubted Kiyo's mind, and it would be the same as trying to insult Kiyo's mind. I do not return [the money] not because I take advantage of her, but because I think she is the other half of myself'. He is grateful to Kiyo, but he does not show it to her, because he thinks this is the best way to show his gratitude, rather than returning the money. Thus, the intimacy of the dyad is secured by one side's dependency and the other side's acceptance.

according to Balint, narcissism is a substitution for this desire to be loved by someone else when such an 'other' is unavailable and forming a dyad is impossible. This passive object love reproduces the interdependence between the two actors, as is the case with *amae*. Compared with the somewhat awkward idea of 'passive object love', the term '*amae*' is widely used in Japan, and as such Doi (2007) used it to theorise interpersonal relationships among the Japanese. As Borovoy (2012) pointed out, with the memory of the pre-war nationalistic, totalitarian regime of the Japanese empire looming in the 1970s, Doi attempted to argue for the importance of interpersonal dependency in society (contrasted with what he believes is Western individualism), although sometimes the line between healthy interdependency and totalitarianism is quite vague.

At the same time, Doi is cautious enough to point out the downside of *amae.* He argues that the Imperial system in Japan is itself the ultimate expression of idealization of *amae*. In Japan, Emperors have been allowed to depend on politicians and bureaucrats around them, without harming their authority (Doi, 2007, pp.91-93). Considering that after the Meiji period, people imagined the gaze of the Emperor as 'the loving, forgiving, all-embracing, protective, and self-sacrificing look' (Fujitani, 1996, p.242), the idealized relationship between the Japanese and the Emperor in the pre-war period can be understood as mutual *amae*, where each party is supposed to accept the other's dependency. In this sense, the desire for *amae* can reveal what makes totalitarianism attractive to the people.

It should be noted that this study does not treat *amae* as a phenomenon unique to Japan. Although Doi is regarded as a *Nihonjinron* type of author (Sugimoto, 1999 for example), and his analysis indeed shares many traits characteristic of *Nihonjinron*, such as ignorance of the diversity of 'Japanese' culture (Befu, 2001), he claims that *amae* is a potentially universally applicable concept rather than a unique feature of Japan, although he seems to think it is salient in many Japanese contexts (Doi, 1988). Psychological inquiry discovered that behaviours that can be categorised as *amae* are found in other contexts, such as the US (Niiya, Ellsworth, and Yamaguchi, 2006). As mentioned above, there is a similarity between Doi's concept and that of Balint (1952). Thus, this study suggests that it will be fruitful to be attentive to *amae* when analysing authoritarianism in other contexts to understand why some people come to acquire such an attitude.

Case Study: Takeda

Introducing Takeda

Takeda was one of the most active young members I encountered in the movement. He was 20 years old at the time of the interview and had been active in the street-based activities since his high school days. He was working in a temporary job.

He struck me as a polite and organised person because of his quick response to my direct messages, his casual business attire, and remarks such as 'I should have prepared for the interview'. His interview was replete with laughter, which could be heard even when he talked about painful experiences. Still, his sudden cancelling of the second interview, or his impromptu use of dialect while he was referring to the time of his arrest (in the interviews he mostly used standard Japanese), gave me the impression that he was temperamental, although good at suppressing or concealing his own emotions.

At the time of the interview, Takeda was engaged in supporting a regional-level far-right political party, after learning that street activities rarely achieved the goals of the movements. However, somewhat contradictorily, he was still engaged with more or less provocative street-based activities, such as distributing fliers in which he called Mun Jae-in a 'criminal' upon his arrival at Haneda Airport, or trolling fans of BTS (a Korean boys' band) in front of their concert venue. He had also been arrested and detained for hitting a counter-activist a few months before the interview. As I listened to his story, I was wondering why such street activities attracted him so much.

The long history of Japan featured heavily in Takeda's thoughts. He was preoccupied with *kokutai*, the tie between the Japanese and the Emperors, flagging what he believed was their unbroken lineage of more than 2000 years. As I will show in the analysis, Takeda's idealization of this tie reflected a desire for *amae* he could not satisfy. His dissatisfactions were often displaced in his political posturing. The US and European countries were accused of being arrogant despite their short histories (compared to Japan). At school he opposed history teachers who did not agree with his 'historical revisionism'. His antipathy to South Korea's role in the territorial dispute over Takeshima/Dokto island was another recurrent theme, in which he asserted his righteousness by invoking a sense of being supported by his peers. Koreans, whom he claimed stole the territory from Japan and disgraced the Emperor, were his main enemies. Although Takeda had not actually met many foreigners, any *zainichi* people or Koreans, the *zainichi* and foreigners *in general* were regarded by him as bad people. Though he claimed he did not believe in the *zainichi* conspiracy theory any longer, his description of

Filipinos as *dojin* (savages) at the time of the interview suggested he harboured deeply racist attitudes and had a blind belief in the supremacy of the Japanese culture.

Childhood

Takeda was born in 1998. His story began when he was in a nursery, where he was an active child. 'I spent all my time with my close friends in my nursery, boys and girls, and we would make muddy balls, run outside, ride a scooter and fall off my bicycle.' Despite this image of happy childhood, Takeda revealed how the violence from his drunken father cast a shadow on his life. Takeda remembered he and his mother took refuge from his father when he was about four years old. When he was a second grader at elementary school (7 or 8 years old), Takeda's parents got divorced (later to reunite), and his mother took him and his sister back to her prefecture of origin. Takeda depicted himself as a spirited kid who cleverly adapted to his environment, a narrative that concealed the shame of powerlessness his father's violence engendered.

> Mmm, ah, my dad, so since my childhood, in my family, the education, well, his disciplining was strict, and when he got drunk, in my impression, we usually got hit, left out on the balcony, and when I was on the balcony, I just slept there, [murmuring] well, until my mom let me out when my father went to bed, I had to do that, you know. It was painful when I was a small child, but as I grew up, I learnt and I found that there was a socket on the balcony...so I hid [a charger] on the balcony, and a few books, and when he told me 'You go out to the balcony' I was like 'Absolutely!' and went there and charged [his devices].

Despite his dad's abusiveness, Takeda insisted that 'if he did not drink much, he was just a normal, generous father' and he 'respect[ed] him for what he does at work'. Takeda's father's teachings were characterised by his strong obsession with order and cleanness. Sunday was the day for cleaning, and the family did so 'as if it were New Year's Eve'. The arrangement of things was decided by Takeda's father and 'if things were in a bit of a different way, troubles would start.'

Despite the violence, Takeda appeared to be more critical of his mother than his father. Smiling wryly, he declared that he had 'a feeling of hopelessness [*akirame no kanjo*]' about her for around a decade, since he was about 10 years old.

> she was not a person at a decent level [*teido no takai ningen ja nai*]. I mean [Y: at a decent level?] I mean, she was taking medicines, and when two different things happened simultaneously, she would be troubled, if not panicked, unable to do anything for 20 or 30 minutes [laugh].

Takeda's negative view about his own mother, with no hint of understanding that her mental well-being may have been affected by his father's violence, echoed his father's family's antipathy towards her. Takeda's paternal grandmother 'look[ed] down on her like "somebody without a decent background [*dokono no umano hone ka shirenai*]"'—Takeda's mother's maternal grandfather was apparently a *yakuza* member. In contrast, Takeda's father's family formed a large but reputable clan, the members of which would gather on special occasions. Hence, the notion of lineage shaped Takeda's worldview, possibly leading to his worship of the unbroken lineage (*bansei-ikkei*) of the Emperor, and the imagined tie between him and the Japanese which accompanied it.

This polarized view of his family also found resonance in his authoritarian political opinions: there was the authority characterised by order on the one hand, and on the other hand, there were those not 'at a decent level', who needed education from authority, or should be forcibly made to leave. Takeda therefore positioned himself as a hero who survived the harsh world despite his mother's failings, obscuring how the positioning he acquired derived from a symbol of orderliness—his father—who was responsible for the disarray to which he, his sister and his mother were exposed.

The Path to Far-right Ideology

Takeda's first step towards becoming an activist was when he went to the prefecture of his mother's origin after his parents' divorce. There, a priest presented him with a series of comic books about Japanese history.

> I was simply impressed by how long the history of Japan is, like Himiko [an ancient queen] lived in this far back in the past, when other nations, like Vikings and people like that, lived like monkeys and orangutans, there was a kind of civilization in Japan.

The long history of Japan occupied a central place in his political thoughts. His respect for Japanese history had been refashioned into a worship of the Emperor and the consolidated relationship between him and the Japanese people (whom he referred to as *shinmin*, aka,

‘subjects’), a relationship which he described as *kokutai*. Takeda remembered his first impression of the Emperor when he saw him on one of his visits on television as an elementary school pupil: ‘At a glance I felt how great he is, so many people came to see him’. To Takeda, the length of the 2680-year history of Emperors (including a mythological period) was evidence of the solidarity of the Japanese people (‘the *shinmin* have been one and have never caused a revolution’), which is ‘the identity of Japanese.’

As his reference to ‘monkeys and orangutans’ shows, his attachment to the long history of Japan was immediately connected to his disdain for (inferior) foreign nationals, and hatred of Western developed countries. He rationalized that the West was ‘afraid of Japan’ because ‘neither the US nor Britain have as long a history as Japan has’ or the subsequent ‘solidarity’. Europeans simply could not understand ‘why...the Japanese die for the Emperor, nobody has resisted against the Emperor’. Takeda’s pride in the length of Japan’s history contrasted with his antipathy towards the US, which he had felt since his youth: ‘How can a country with no longer than a 500-year history be arrogant like that?’

Takeda’s nationalistic sentiment was reinforced by an authoritarian attitude. His great-grandmother had impressed upon him her recollection of the pre-war times: ‘the truth was not that the Army got out of control, nor did the government, but it was us nationals and the mass media which caused the war’. According to her, the nationals and the mass media criticised the government for being ‘spineless’ and drove it to go to war. A similar tendency towards scepticism of the righteousness of the common people could be found in Takeda’s memory of reading *Hadashi no Gen*.[23] The illustration of the protagonist Gen as a hero rebelling against authority was not convincing to him. Takeda ‘wondered...why Gen acted as if he had been a good guy, though he was such an unruly kid?’ Thus, at the early stage of his life, Takeda developed distrust in the mass media and the lay public, who illegitimately criticised authority in his eyes, thereby leading the country to a great failure. Consequently, he over-estimated the power of the public and the media to shape Japan’s history.

Takeda remembered that he started to find ‘textbooks strange, society strange’ when he was in the sixth grade in elementary school (11-12 years old). He was not convinced by a supplementary textbook on the subject of social studies which said ‘Japan annexed Korea and colonized it’, because he thought an annexed country could not be colonised simultaneously. He started to go to libraries and consulted popular books such as *Chu-kan-ron*, an anti-Korean

[23] A comic book series about the survival of a boy and his family and friends in the atomic bomb attack on Hiroshima and the post-war period.

publication, or those published by Tendensha, a far-right/right-wing/conservative publisher. These books equipped him with 'historical revisionism' (*rekishi-shuseishugi*). The beginning of his grassroots activism may be the point when he wrote 'Great East Asian War (*Daito-a senso*)'—a term coined by the pre-war Government to refer to the Pacific War and not used by the post-war Japanese Government—in a history quiz in the sixth grade of elementary school.

> [T]he teacher did not accept it as a correct answer...she said that she just followed the textbook...I mean, in the first place, there is no evidence that textbooks are correct. For example, in this part of the textbook, it says that [quickly] [Japan] invaded [other countries], but 'Miss, can you tell me in what sense was it an invasive war?' and related to this topic, they refer to the issue of comfort women, but 'is there any primary source for the comfort women issue?'

Takeda's obsession with correcting the textbook and teachers continued until the first grade of high school. Despite his authoritative personality, he described himself as 'a cocky pupil who turns on teachers'.

As a Guardian of Rules

Takeda depicted himself as a spirited, somewhat mischievous boy, surrounded by friends, and maybe even courageous, voicing his objections to teachers' teachings. At the same time, he was proud of how favoured he was by teachers. Takeda relayed anecdotes about serving as a committee member of his classroom, being regarded as 'one of the most decent' by a teacher whose classroom had descended into chaos, or his friendship with an arts and crafts teacher who let him exclusively use the crafting room during breaks. The senior pupils of the table tennis club apparently liked him for practising hard and designated him as a 'future captain.'

Takeda became increasingly involved in confrontations at school as if he were a guardian of authority and order. There was a male pupil he did not like because he was not serious about table tennis. '[H]e was laughing foolishly all the time, and he was not keen on practising, and he ridiculed us when we were practising [laugh].' He was 'very upset' and said 'If you continue kidding, you go, never to return, or get hit by me!'. Eventually, Takeda punched him. What happened afterwards seemed to persuade Takeda that violence is acceptable to secure 'order', much as it had been for his father.

> I wrote an essay of reflection [*hansei-bun*]. But in the chapter, I was arguing how legitimate my violence was, I explained the legitimacy, and I wrote something like, it was wrong to take a pupil to student counselling [*seito shido*] due to an incident in which nobody was even injured. But they [teachers] accepted it.

Still, Takeda's self-positioning as a guardian of order and authority did not necessarily always see him come out on top in the caste-like hierarchy at school. Takeda stood for election for the head of the school council. 'Basically, those in the third grade voted for me.' Still, he lost to a pupil who 'was, so to speak, in "the first team"'. He could not secure enough votes from his fellow and junior graders and lost the election. When he was in the first grade of high school (15-16 years old) he was appointed as a conductor of his class for a chorus competition at his school. A few pupils from the 'basketball society and baseball society' sabotaged practice and played with their smartphones, which upset him and made him confront them. It ended up in a quarrel and Takeda told a pupil that 'Our class does not need you, like someone from the zoo'. Eventually, Takeda chose to step down from the conductor role.

> It might sound strange if I use the term 'status,' I mean, the order, or hierarchy in the classroom, such things affected me more or less [laugh]. [Y: Well.] Well, Honestly, I thought maybe I was in the lower class [in the hierarchy]. I was in the group of 6 or 7, the group of the ordinary, which could not win the place of 'first team'.

The conflict at school was concurrent with the conflict at home, as Takeda explained. In the first grade of high school, 'me and my father had a big one. Punching each other.' Being told to tidy up his room, he said 'This is my room, let's take the picture of this room and upload it online and see whose opinion gets supported' and that's how I came to have the big fight [murmuring]'. After beating his father up, '[h]is authority was lost...due to the muscle'. Hence, in addition to Takeda's investment in physical strength he found power in being popular on the Internet, mediated by 'likes', 'favourites' and 'retweets', somewhat reminiscent of the popularity contest he pursued in school. After fighting with his father, Takeda was made to go to a different prefecture, where his aunt lived.

Joining the Far-right Movements

Takeda developed his far-right standpoint during junior high school and high school, first going to the library and next watching websites, such as 'Hoshu-sokuho' (Breaking News for Conservatives) and 'Kokumin no Shiranai Han-nichi no Jittai' (The Reality of Anti-Japan That

Nationals Never Know). Takeda became active as a *neto-uyo* (online right-winger). His antipathy towards the *zainichi* at that time was connected with the Takeshima issue. His antipathy began:

> [a]fter I learnt that South Koreans come [to Japan] on Takeshima day, I had known that South Korea was such an absurd country to some extent, in a nutshell [Y: What do you mean by 'absurd'?] They deprived us of Takeshima, and try to pick a fight with us, and land on Takeshima and do this and that...

Due to his respect for the Emperor, he showed hatred towards South Korea. He stated that since the demand of the South Korean President Lee that the Emperor should apologise, '*Taikyokuki* (the national flag of South Korea) is the flag of the enemy to me'. He had come to know about Zaitoku-kai through Twitter when he considered stopping being a *neto-uyo* after another confrontation with a teacher of history.

> But it does not change anything, does it? I buzzed on Twitter a bit in my high school days. I wrote 'Shina' when I was supposed to write 'China' [in an exam]. The teacher did not accept my answer and I confronted her, using the whole timeslot of a lesson. I talked about it on Twitter and got buzzed...but how much buzz I got, the teacher did not accept my answer, in the end ...The teacher said it was based on the textbook, and the teacher insisted on that logic.

It was then that Takeda found a counter-protest hosted by Zaitoku-kai against South Koreans regarding the Takeshima issue and decided to join it. When he arrived at the site of the activity Takeda was 'overwhelmed' by the black announcement cars and the weight of the speakers. The next day, when he talked about it at school, his friends' reaction was unexpectedly positive in his eyes.

> Well, local friends cheered us on. People cheered. [Y: I see] They do not know Zaitoku-kai and stuff like that, but [to them] on 22nd February it is noisy, it is a tradition. [Y: I see]...So people there are concerned with the Takeshima issue. [Y: Uh-huh] So, there was a friend who asked me to drive South Koreans out, bring back silent morning to [the city]. [Y: I see] So people understand the problem. It is not because the right-

wingers are noisy, but it is because South Korea invaded Takeshima and that's why the right-wingers make noises.

The branch leader took care that nobody would be arrested, and Takeda was 'impressed by their decency as it was very different from the impression I had had about Zaitoku-kai through research', namely ruthless 'blokes' that he was afraid of. Invited by the leaders, Takeda joined Zaitoku-kai.

Downfall

A few months after his participation in Zaitoku-kai, Takeda had to move back to the previous prefecture because his father came to his aunt to 'forcibly' take him back. After his father spoke for several hours about how deeply he loved his son, his aunt got 'fed up with it'. Soon after he went back to the prefecture to live with his parents and sister, in May 2015 when he was in the second year of high school, the police officers and officers from the city council came and took Takeda, his sister, and his mother into protection from his father's domestic violence.

They eventually ended up in a shelter for victims of domestic abuse, where Takeda's mother told him she 'was unable to take care of two children.' This was the final straw in Takeda's disappointment in his unprotective mother. Takeda came to be housed in a temporary protection centre [*ichiji hogosho*].[24] Because he was the oldest of the children, he enjoyed a better status than younger boys there who had apparently been involved in delinquent behaviours, about which he 'felt lucky [laughter]'. Still, due to his age, it was difficult to find the next institution. Takeda spent two and a half months there, which according to him was extraordinarily long, watching fellow children disappear from the institution to their new homes. Looking back at those days, he stated 'There would be no worse life than that. Living in the centre and withdrawing from the high school...until then I just thought I only had a bit of trouble with parents, but once I was taken into care, I felt like "my family was really bad"'.

After leaving the institution, Takeda had to live at a temporary shared house with other juveniles. He stayed there up to the age of 18, working and saving money, and he moved to a metropolitan area in the summer of 2016. Despite the turmoil Takeda experienced, he said he was 'enjoying it, my life' because:

[24] An institution to protect children and juveniles who have been involved in delinquency and child abuse.

> I became acquainted with those young people, whom I would not have met if I had not gone to the institution...like, [those] fooling around [on a bike] without their helmets on...we are still friends, definitely....Thinking each other as interesting breeds [laughter]. If we had known each other at school, we would have been in trouble [laugh][Y: Like 'baseball boys' (laugh)] Yeah, yeah, yeah, like them we would have been in trouble.

Takeda distinguished himself from those he regarded as different 'breeds', though he seemed to regard them as friends. Still, as his remarks showed ('I felt like 'my family was really bad'), he might have realised that their situations were not very different from his own. Now it was only his engagement in politics through Zaitoku-kai activities that maintained the thin line between him and those delinquent boys.

After coming to the city in 2016, Takeda got a job at a public institution related to employment security. Takeda said that because of the 'nature of the office' which closely connects with local 'leftist' politicians, his boss at that time 'was not comfortable about' his affiliation with a far-right local politician. Takeda was asked to move to another branch operating in the countryside where he could not commute, so he had no choice but to quit the job at the end of the contract.

Meeting with his father for the first time after being taken into care got him thinking. Takeda's father asked him to come back to him, but Takeda did not 'like to be a member of the clan' of his father.

> Being distant from both families, while maintaining the attitude to indicate that 'It was you who are to blame for all the troubles.' He will be reminded of it every time I see him as long as my family name is different.[25] There's nothing wrong in reminding him of it. No, there isn't.

Takeda's ambivalence toward the lost authority of his father and the loss of his job can be seen as motivating his subsequent involvement in a confrontation with a counter-activist during a street agitation several months later. He organised a street agitation, when one counterdemonstrator teased him. Takeda tried to hit the counter demonstrator and was subsequently arrested. Takeda's initial explanation about the incident was: 'As a coordinator of a demonstration, I held a demonstration, which was permitted under the security by-law.

[25] Takeda used his mother's family name.

There was a despicable interruption, and the police did not exclude the interrupter, so I did.' But as I asked to specify what was particularly provocative about the activist, he answered:

> At that time, they said something about my own family I think [Y: I see] Then I was like 'It's none of your business'. [Y: Uh-huh.] There is no connection between my political activities and my familial circumstances. Like 'Your mother is crying' or 'You cannot get a job,' they are unrelated. Then 'Okay I will do'.

Takeda's anger was such that his first-person even changed from the rather polite '*watashi*' and '*boku*' to the informal sounding '*ore*' when talking about this incident.[26] He was released 10 days after the arrest.

Analysis

Takeda divided the world into two in his narrative. There was the world of authority and order (symbolised by his father) at one end of the spectrum, and one of mess and unruliness at the other (most notably symbolised by his mother). Later the unruliness came to be symbolised by the fellow pupils he confronted, as well as by the Japanese public who pushed the government to adopt expansionist policies in the Asian sphere, and by the counter-activist who teased him. In order to comply with/honour his father's rule, Takeda tried to side with authority and despised unruliness.

Although in his youth Takeda identified with authority, thus hating rebellious kids, it is noticeable that he did not position himself as blindly following the rule of his father (remember that he tried to present himself as having made much of his time at the balcony to which he was kicked out). At least unconsciously, Takeda might have known that he obeyed his father not out of respect for him, but due to the power he had, namely fear of violence and drunkenness, and he might have even harboured a desire to rebel against his father. His mother's inability to protect him led Takeda to feel contempt for her—'she was not a person at a decent level' (*teido no takai ningen ja nai*)—and to become invested in a rivalrous sense of masculinity. Others who failed to protect him, such as his aunt, who was a Communist, or his leftist boss who made him quit his job, were similarly disowned and dismissed as disloyal, hypocritical, and/or weak.

[26] There are several Japanese words corresponding to 'I' in English. Speakers choose different forms of 'I' according to the circumstances.

Thus, as he grew older, Takeda came to believe that there are only two types of authority: the 'fake' authority which supported the oppressive exercise of power, like that of his father which he toppled in the end; and 'genuine' authority, which is supported by the respect of subordinates, who are treated mercifully within an *amae* relationship. The teachers of history were identified as 'fake' authorities, for they imposed textbook descriptions which Takeda found unconvincing. In his mind, the US and the Western countries, who were illegitimately enjoying their power despite their short history, were also among the 'fake' authorities. Takeda's sensitivity to different types of authority was strengthened by his experience at school. He realised that his identification with authority could not always garner support from other pupils under the caste-like hierarchy there, where popularity counts for more. Having toppled his father, after years of being made to feel afraid and unwanted, Zaitoku-kai became attractive to Takeda. It equipped him with the sense that his insecurities were geopolitical and not a personal failing. Support for Zaitoku-kai's activities from his classmates gave him the sense of being loved. The fact of being accepted by other adult activists may have also rendered the movements a 'genuine' authority for him.

Through confrontation with those whom he regarded as opponents of order, rule and authority—foreigners and the left—Takeda could assert himself as the one on the right side of authority, who can even use violence. To ascertain this, he even seemed to put himself in a position where such a confrontation was likely to occur. The teasing by the counter-activist about his mother and his lost job evoked a strong sense of shame, exposing what he did not want to acknowledge—that the true causes of his discomfort were his desire for *amae* which his mother failed to provide, and that he was not on the side of the authority in terms of his socio-economic status. Even though he tried to draw a line between himself and those delinquent children whom he regarded as different 'breeds', the fact that he had been in care, had lost his job, and had no social status at that time rendered the stigma of exclusion inescapable. The teasing of the counter-activist ('Your mother is crying') was particularly poignant to him, considering how many troubles he went through because of the lack of proper care from his parents. Takeda's violence against the counter-activist was the most manifest form of what Bion (1967) called 'attacks on linking', an attack on an emotional truth that was too painful and persecutory to acknowledge, and hence defended against through hateful attacks on those who threaten by appearing to know better. That the counter-activist seemed to have correctly pointed out the unacknowledged shame and still showed no sympathy to him reminded him of how he had been rejected by his family and peers, despite his plucky efforts. Such an attitude is in contrast with the *amae* relationship that he longed for, especially that with

the Emperor. In the relationship, the Japanese (including him) respect him just for what he is, and in return, he supposedly gives them unconditional love.

Conclusion

Takeda's story is that of a person who invests in an authoritarian, masculine identity in response to an environment in which 'fake' authority prevailed, and in which survival of the fittest seemed an acceptable 'go it alone' position for a young man to take. In Takeda's case, such an environment was not only observed in his home, but also at school. He experienced the culture of 'school caste' (Suzuki, 2012), formed under the norm of 'hyper meritocracy' (Honda, 2005). This stresses the importance of developing children's survivability (especially communication skills) over respect for teachers or academic achievement, resulting in lawless popularity contests in classrooms, as Suzuki's (2012) interviews also illustrated. The more Takeda complied with the newly prevalent norm of unregulated competition, the stronger his longing for an imagined *amae* relationship with the Emperor became; an emperor who is supposed to provide the Japanese with unconditional love, and is accepted, unlike Takeda, because of his lineage. Unable to come to terms with the weak parts of himself that he disowned, Takeda projected them onto those who held different opinions to him, including his teachers, his boss and leftist politicians, as well as those whom he defined as foreigners, the *zainichi*, and inferior racial minorities.

In the case of Takeda, the sense of persecution came from the accusation by the South Korean President that the Emperor should apologise regarding the territorial dispute over Takeshima, which in South Korea is understood in relation to the colonisation by Japan. Related issues included the denial of the terms which were used by Imperial Japan, such as *Shina* (China) and *Dai-to-a Senso* (Great East Asian War). In conjunction with the antipathy towards the US, who dropped the atomic bombs and is 'arrogant' in spite of being 'a country with no longer than 500-year history', these issues evoked in him a strong sense of indignation and anger. The leftists' efforts to reflect upon the wrongdoings during the Imperial period were, for Takeda and many who share his political views, an illegitimate accusation which was imposed on the Japanese under the post-war geopolitical conditions where Japan had to submit to the rule of the US.

It is not difficult to point out the similarity between this sensitivity regarding criticism against the Emperor and former President Trump and his supporters' discourse of 'Presidential harassment', hatred against 'political correctness' and 'fake news'. Both indicate a strong sense

of victimization and silencing, despite the paradoxical fact that they were in power. The intimate relationship between the President who always prioritises his people, and the respect for him might be contrasted with the world of harsh competition and power, in which only the strong survive and those who suffer are derided as 'losers'. Any attempt to be critical of this romanticized relationship will be regarded as an invasion of it and thus heavily opposed. The paradox for men like Takeda is that while they yearn for the imagined harmony between the Japanese nation and the Emperor, the means they propose to achieve this involves the exclusion of all potential rivals, including minorities in Japan. The outcome is a nationalistic form of masculinity, played out in online performances that obsessively redraw fixed and firm boundaries between legitimate and illegitimate members of Japanese society.

As Takeda's case shows, more nuanced and evidenced-based forms of history are portrayed by those with nationalistic mindsets as the imposition of 'leftist' views and vilified in online far-right discussion that questions: 'Why should the Japanese be apologetic about WWII when we liberated Southeast Asian countries from colonisation by the Western powers?' 'Why is only Japan criticised for the "invasive war" even though many European countries had long engaged themselves in such kind of acts?' These are common questions shared by the far-right activists, including Takeda. Tempting as it is to dismiss these questions as illiberal lunacy or 'historical revisionism', what needs to be understood is why they are such powerful rallying cries to young men who have had difficult starts in life, as much as those who consider themselves to have failed at school, at work, or as fathers.

Chapter 9 Conclusion: Recognising Undefined Painful Feelings

Undefined Painful Feelings

The stories of the far-right activists collected in this thesis illustrate how their provocative activities emerge from a mixture of malaise and suffering which many people could relate to. A man who cannot leave behind a childhood trauma of being powerless, identifying himself with the image of a soldier saving Japan from its Korean and Chinese 'enemies'; a woman who harbours deeply ambivalent feelings regarding her childhood relationship with her mother, but articulates these as hate for South Korea, bringing up what Japan did to 'them' in the past; a former 'salaryman' who is troubled by his inability to perform anything approximating hegemonic masculinity, and hence is peculiarly sympathetic to Imperial Japan's soldiers; a mother who is worried about the safety of her daughter and comes to identify *zainichi*—descendants of ethnic Koreans—as covert violent perpetrators pretending to be Japanese; a young man who lives with domestic abuse perpetrated by his father, who seeks recognition from the Emperor and attacks those who appear to be the Emperor's enemies. When they interact with various transitions that have taken place in Japanese society since the 1990s, these personal painful feelings surface and become uncontainable.

Such painful feelings are often nameless in the accounts of far-right activists, though we can ascribe labels to them. They are typically multi-layered—over time one hurt has compounded or agitated another (for example, when the painful feeling of giving up on the hope of acquiring an ideal masculine persona sparks a reminder of unresolved childhood conflicts about being 'timid')—but because they seem personal, each painful feeling falls short of the level of suffering that these participants felt able to recognise as a pervasive social problem. Although all of the participants had at least some period of being employed in 'precarious jobs', none of them were in serious financial trouble, destitute or starving. Most felt lonely, though none were alone and entirely lacking in social connections, to the extent that *kodokushi* ('lonely death') was an immediate threat. None of them had undergone a period of *hikikomori*; a long-lasting social withdrawal to one's room, which according to the Cabinet Office (2019) is practiced by more than a million Japanese people, both young and old. (However, see Toivonen [2013] and Berman and Rizzo [2019] for their criticism of the moral panic around *hikikomori*). These aspects of Japanese society, which Anne Allison (2013) detailed in *Precarious Japan* as the most salient social issues and as evidence of the fall of

Japan from the status of a 'super stable society', are not necessarily the primary sources of the unease felt by far-right activists, although they do cast a shadow over their lives.

A central claim of this thesis is that multi-layered sufferings, which can be subjectively experienced as undefined unease, underpin the commonly observed phenomenon of how 'normal' the far right seems to be, and how those involved appear to all intents and purposes to be 'ordinary Japanese' (*futsu no Nihonjin*). Their sufferings are not the kind that give people an identity (desired or not), unlike poverty, race, and so on, through which individuals can bond with others and fight against the social structure. Rather, their sufferings leave them with a suspicion that they were just born strange, their parents were not good enough, as most people feel, or they were a little unluckier in love or at work than others. Rather than acknowledging this suspicion, which makes them fearful, they would prefer to think that their sense of shame, anger, and confusion comes from somewhere else and is something shared among their fellow Japanese. In an attempt to disguise their personal problems as a national problem but being unable to pinpoint any problem with the social structure of Japan causing their painful feelings, they become invested in the far-right discourses that find scapegoats elsewhere, such as those with foreign origins, neighbouring countries conspiring against Japan, leftists and critical historians, and so on, along with anyone who tried to persecute them. This process draws them to embrace grandiose ambitions—whether they are about the restoration of a stronger Japan or a tighter bond with the Emperor or fencing off any foreign interventions—that give them a feeling of powerfulness and importance, attributes they fear they lack. The simple and clear (if not easy to attain) solutions that the far right promotes provide them with a sense of relief.

The sense of entrapment and longing for an exit were prominent in the life stories I solicited. Naito's self-esteem was too low for him to be eager to change his 'crap' life but instead he desperately wanted Japan to be emancipated from its status, as he saw it, of being an effeminate demilitarised country. Aoki hated people who brought up what had happened during the war and wanted Japan to be strong enough to fend off these voices. When she talked about Japan, she seemed also to refer to her own past, which had been tinged with deep feelings of ambivalence toward her mother. Sato and Kuroda tried hard to overcome their 'timid' selves, which they attempted to do by changing jobs as well as by participating in the far-right movements. Takeda tried to convince others and himself that he was a streetwise kid who could survive without support from parents, while his longing for *kokutai*—an imagined unity between the Emperor and the Japanese—revealed an unacknowledged desire for care. The far right's sense of entrapment is not only provoked by personal events. The life stories featured struggles with norms of Japanese society in various scenarios including schools, marriages,

child rearing, work and so on. One of such norms was gender. Particular forms of femininity and masculinity prevalent in postwar Japan haunted their minds, although it was hard for them to contest the norms due to their own personalities, abilities and marital status. Such norms often induced shame and sparked interest in the pride promoted by far-right movements. Sakurai and other far-right leaders' taboo-breaking behaviours resonate with those who harbour the desire to escape the situation in which they feel they are entrapped. Indeed, in conjunction with the scarcity of the negative experiences related to the *zainichi* and foreigners, who tend to be the subjects of such taboos, the case studies suggested that the taboo-breaking attitude itself was more important as the source of attraction than what the taboo is about.

This sense of entrapment and longing for exit are in no way unique to the case of Japan. Hochschild (2016) illustrated how white Americans suffer under the pressure to achieve the 'American Dream', given the deteriorating economy and the perceived prioritization of minorities through affirmative actions. Norris and Inglehart (2019) attribute the sense of entrapment among social conservatives in the US to the prevalence of university education and urbanisation, which have shifted power to the social progressives. These sentiments have led to a withdrawal from the present and a longing for an alternative self, often intertwined with nostalgic sentiments relating to an idealised past, as is commonly found in catchphrases by populist politicians, such as 'Make America Great Again' or 'Take Back Control'. In relation to the latter, Richards notes how the Brexiteers were driven by 'a thirst for visions of rebirth into an untrammelled freedom in the world' (Richards, 2019, p.179), which they supposed was accomplishable by throwing away authoritative but faceless institutions and their spokespeople, namely the EU and domestic 'liberal' elites. Accordingly:

> Populism is a catalyst that tunes into, and amplifies, the phantasy of humiliation at being governed that sits in the psyches of us all, and hooks it up with real issues, bringing the regressive craving for absolute freedom into the service of 'independence' movements linked to anxieties about material security and cultural identity. (Richards, 2019, p.180)

Although the anxieties are not the same, a strong attachment to the idea of 'independence' can also be found in the case of Japan. The tale of making Japan independent of supposed 'oppressors' (which can include the international order after 1945; former colonies and colonial subjects which now accuse Japan of wartime atrocities; the pressure to humanize the Emperor; leftist politicians; the media; and the perceived existence of 'taboos' about criticising the *zainichi* and foreigners) attracts those who harbour a particularly strong sense of

entrapment. They aim to 'restore' Japan, so that its leaders can freely pursue their interests while guarding their people. 'Japan First' has become their motto. Seen in this way, it makes sense of why many of my interviewees mentioned one of Sakurai's remarks during his speech on the last day of his electoral campaign in 2016: 'It's the Independence Day for our souls' (*tamashii no dokuritu kinenbi*).

The Presence of Nation

One of the contributions of the current study is its finding that the visibility of minorities is not a necessary condition for racism. Recent studies have argued that visibility of sexual and ethnic minorities is one of the keys to understanding interpersonal violence (Wallengren and Mellgren, 2015; Mills, 2019; Colliver and Silvestri, 2020). In most ethnographic studies, bad experiences involving direct contacts with visible minorities are assumed to be the mechanism that lends some sense of reality to the racists' projections of hate (Treadwell and Garland, 2011, for example). By contrast with these studies, the life stories in this thesis are characterised by their lack or scarceness of episodes involving direct contacts with the minorities, who for the most part are physically indistinguishable from the ethnic majority. Takeda and Aoki did not have any close contact with the *zainichi* and foreigners before joining the movements. Sato and Kuroda had some annoying experiences with people they assumed were 'Koreans' but they confessed that they were not sure about their identities. Of course, in reality, they might have had contacts; it is likely that because of the assimilation of the *zainichi* they might have been mistaken in thinking that they had not seen any of them. However, although it would be misleading to compare Japanese far-right movements (which use verbal harassment and demonstrations) with hate groups that routinely use interpersonal violence against minorities, it is noteworthy that racism does not require the perpetrators to have a real-life experience of the people against whom it is directed. The current study furthered the arguments of Gadd and Dixon (2011) that perpetrators of hate crimes project unrelated experiences of shame onto the empty category of race, and for this reason the factors that trigger their hatred in the moment are often seemingly trivial and petty. This study demonstrated that even trivial experiences with a minority can be unnecessary: rather, the invisibility of the minorities can render even emptier the category that designates the minorities to be discriminated against, enabling the activists to project their wildest fantasies and delusions onto them. Kuroda's attribution of all the incidents involving the victimisation of children to the *zainichi* is a typical example of this.

Instead of race, in the accounts of the activists, nation played the role of the category for 'othering' the minorities. Just as race is associated with various other signifiers, nation was associated with various other objects, such as international conflicts. These objects in turn fuelled the hatred against other 'nationals'. Thus, as Naito's case vividly illustrates, the distinction between a nation-state and its people collapses, as if international conflicts between Japan and neighbouring East Asian countries are immediately translated into the relationship between the Japanese and those affiliated with these countries, including the *zainichi*. This conflation is even more salient in those whose self-identity is closely defined by their identification with Japan, and for whom this identification is tinged with a sense of persecution that chews away at any semblance of pride. The imagined convergence convinces far-right activists that a change in Japanese society will relieve their own painful feelings. In turn, the 'sufferings' of Japan are felt to be their own and resonate with their personal sense of persecution or failure. This is why the decline of Japanese society since the 1990s has come to matter to them, even though they are not necessarily directly involved in the transition. The taken-for-granted nature of the presence of the nation in the meaning-making of the world reminds us of how banal nationalism is, being embedded and reproduced in people's daily lives (Billig, 1995; Fox and Miller-Idriss, 2008). Being aware of this proximity between one's self and the nation in some people's imagination will be useful for making sense of racism which coincides with national events driven by populist politics, such as Brexit. Now the existence of nation-states and the conflicts between them are taken so much for granted that acting on the assumption that nationals from different countries are potential enemies is deemed as an instinctive, honest, and pragmatic way of behaving—in other words, these ideas can appeal to the norm of authenticity, which is core to the populist democracies (Fierschi, 2019). In this context, racism intertwined with nationalism is likely to be tolerated and potentially appreciated as a sign of authenticity.

Recognition

The apparent lack of a causal relationship between activists' experiences and their investment in far-right discourses appeared uncanny to external observers of their activities. This uncanniness has generated hypotheses which are appealing but simplistic, such as Yasuda Koichi's (2012) attribution of the rise of the far-right movements to the abovementioned 'precarious' state of society. Even worse is the dehumanisation of these racists, which underpins the idea that a simple criminalisation of acts of hate will lead to the betterment of

the current state of society. For those who belong to the majority population, this dehumanisation might arise from a sense of shame and guilt about the social structure that has perpetuated racism, which they themselves might be benefiting from. Although this itself is understandable, as Michael Rustin (1991; 2000) argued, punishing racists without engaging with them risks adding to their sense of persecution, increasing the motivation of some to perpetrate racist attacks and harassment.

Gadd and Dixon (2011) argued for the possibility of giving more resources and recognition to the subjectivities of the racial and ethnic minorities so that they can withstand the perpetrators' projection of hate. These arguments should resonate in Japan. As seen above, invisibility underpins the activists' projection of their shame onto the *zainichi* whom they neither know nor see. For example, the diversity of their emotional attachments to South/North Korea is ignored altogether (Fukuoka, 1993). The denial of their subjectivity will lead to a conflation of their identity with their national affiliation, which underlies the racism in the Japanese context.

Still, one should be careful not to assume that recognition of the minorities' subjectivity will solve the entire problem. As the case studies have shown, the targets of racism are not limited to the *zainichi*, but include Koreans, Chinese, and sometimes other subjects who can be regarded as 'anti-Japan' (*han-nichi*). Even if one accords recognition to the subjectivity of any specific group of people, those with a paranoiac mind-set will just find someone else to project their hate onto. A further difficulty is that expecting the minority to stand up and speak up risks overburdening them with the problems of their oppressors, who form part of the majority population. This burden may well be too much for some to bear.

In her discussion of the supporters of Donald Trump, referring to Freud's *Melancholy and Mourning*, American philosopher Noëlle McAfee (2019) argues for the importance of acknowledging the supporters' stories, humiliations and traumas. According to her, this will 'open[s] the door to putting them into words so that they can be thought through and worked through' (McAfee, 2019, p.187). By creating a deliberative space which enables this to happen, McAfee argues, we can move 'from a paranoid-schizoid politics to a politics of mourning lost idealizations and of coming to terms with ambiguity to the reality that there are no ideals, utopias, or even banisters to tell us which way to go' (McAfee, 2019, p.187).

Although McAfee argues that it is 'we' who work through humiliations and traumas, it is not clear how those who are not on the far right can experience that process (in a clinical situation it should be those who harbour the shame who have to work it through). Here, Jessica Benjamin's (2018) idea of the 'moral third' and her insights into the importance of 'witnessing'

give us some insights into what attitudes might be useful to deal with the traumatized far right. Her argument is primarily about how the cycle of hate and violence can be stopped in Israeli-Palestinian conflicts. Noting the difficulty of making each party acknowledge the painful feeling of the other, she draws attention to the role of bystanders who witness. Witnessing is not equal to doing nothing here. Just as Judith Butler (2017) finds witnessing useful, Benjamin finds an active role for witnessing: to contribute to building a world beyond the 'only one can live' mentality, by 'recognizing suffering and validating the truth of what happened' (Benjamin, 2017, p.216). This may be crucial in dealing with the far-right activists, who suffered from and struggle with their environments and the pressures from norms: what they seemed to need is an empathetic gaze of others (especially those close to them, like families) on their own histories and the painful feelings that accompany them. Letting them breathe by easing the uncontainable painful feeling will produce a mental state where they might refrain from automatically retaliating against the others whom they used to see as the cause of their painful feelings and start to 'work through' their thoughts and feelings. This is what Benjamin called the 'moral third' (Benjamin, 2009).

The Need to Acknowledge Investment in Multiple Narratives

What would it be like to 'recogniz[e] suffering and validat[e] the truth of what happened' (Benjamin, 2017, p.216)? Concerning this point, I would like to highlight the following finding from the interviews: it is crucial to recognize not only the individual agonizing events which the subjects have lived through, but also the ambivalence and multiplicity of their narratives regarding these events.

Ambivalence was one of the recurrent themes of the life stories. Take Takeda (Chapter 8) as an example. His narrative was contradictory in that he appreciated the authoritarianism first introduced by his father's behaviour, while also wanting to assert his delinquent self. This ambivalence made his persona seem to oscillate wildly from a guardian of the order of classrooms to a violent youth. What analysis revealed, however, was that his identity as a far-right activist satisfied the needs manifested in both of the lines taken by his narratives at the point of his interviews: he was a loyal subject to the Emperor who would not hesitate to use violence to tame his enemies.

Analysis of the life stories found that sometimes people are greatly troubled by being invested in two contradictory narratives, which causes inner conflicts. Previous studies have observed how gender and socio-economic norms can be a cause of shame when subjects'

environments did not allow them to conform to them (Hollway and Jefferson, 2000/2013; Gadd, 2012). What had not yet been captured was the extent to which the subjects internalised these norms to the point of feeling them as part of themselves. The life stories recorded in this thesis have repeatedly shown the efforts of the activists to change their life courses and adjust their positioning to comply with these internalized norms, while also longing for ways of life that are opposite to such norms. As was the case with Sato (Chapter 6) who was to some extent climbed the social ladder as a salaryman and Kuroda (Chapter 7), who changed her way of life by becoming a security agent, sometimes they successfully complied with these norms, but many struggled with the pressure, oscillating between submission and denial.

Acknowledging a contradictory subject is important to grasp the completeness of their story, even though it might not be easy to put aside the Cartesian notion of a rational subject. Without doing so, recognition of subjective 'truths' (Benjamin, 2017, p.216) would be impossible. Allowing for the possibility of investing in two contradictory narratives would be an effective means to counter the dichotomous thinking that characterises far-right activists, who, for example, press *zainichi* to choose South/North Korea or Japan.

This observation will add a new perspective to the definition of strain, which has been a suspected cause of crime and deviance (Agnew, 1992). It has been pointed out that some people—typically youths—join in far-right movements to ease strain, caused by factors such as inability to attain ideals of masculinity, a perceived threat to the social status of their in-group as defined by race and/or ethnicity, or missed chances for economic success (Blazak, 2001; Treadwell and Garland, 2011). The stories recorded in this thesis demand a more nuanced understanding of the cause of strain. Some of the subjects do not only suffer from the difficulty of achieving what they desire, but also from the conflict between their desire and the desire to give it up, which grew bigger as they tried harder. Awareness of this meta-level conflict may explain the strain of those who join in far-right movements, although they sometimes seem to have the means to attain their aspirations (see Hamm, 1993).

The subjects' long struggles with the contradictory discourses that they have become invested in suggest that we should expect the acceptance of anti-racism to take time. Even if activists do somehow accept the norms of anti-racism, the conflicts this acceptance causes – with the fact that they have previously engaged in racist activities, for example – will continue for a long time, sometimes ending up in a state of denial. The danger of ignoring the complexity of people's investment in narratives is evident in the anecdotes of sociologist Robin DiAngelo (2018). Through her job as a consultant on building an inclusive environment at workplaces, DiAngelo observes that those workers who belong to the racial majority and identify

themselves as liberalists become enraged when someone points out that they judge others according to their racial traits. This is because they feel saddened and shocked to face their racism, which is normally hidden (from others as well as themselves) behind their race-blind attitude. DiAngelo (2018) warns against the dichotomous thinking that assumes people are either racist or non-racist. Such a way of thinking would simply let those who think they are liberals assume that racism has nothing to do with them, turning a blind eye to how they themselves are influenced by race-centred thinking, which is deep-seated in American society. DiAngelo's argument resonates with the observations of the current study. Dichotomous thinking stems partly from a lack of understanding of the 'irrationality' of human beings, namely the possibility of investing in contradictory narratives. What seems to be important is to be prepared to accept that there is no such thing as a single true self: the racist self and the self accepting anti-racism are both true. The racist part would be felt as shameful, but it should be accepted that getting rid of an invested discourse is not easy. This does not mean that we can simply sit back and wait until people stop investing in racism altogether while minorities are being victimised. At the same time, however, the lack of preparedness to acknowledge one's own slow process of change will end up in superficial prevalence of anti-racist norms, which would prevent people from sincerely facing up to their deep-seated racism. The stories of the far-right activists recorded in this thesis remind us of how banal the attraction to racism is, thereby warning against othering racism.

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Appendix A

What Made People Participate in Zaitoku-kai-Related Activities?
Participant Information Sheet

You are being invited to take part in a research study which is trying to understand why people join Zaitoku-kai activities. Please read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. The researcher (Yutaka Yoshida, a PhD student from the University of Manchester) is happy to answer any questions you may have about this research. His contact details are at the end of this document.

What is the research about?
The main aim of the research is to understand how and why people become involved in Zaitoku-kai activities. The researcher wants to learn about what leads people to become involved in Zaitoku-kai activities, what the lives of those involved are like, and what activities of Zaitoku-kai they participated in.

Why have I been chosen?
The researcher is asking 20 people who have been joined Zaitoku-kai activities to take part in one-to-one interviews. The researcher is approaching those who are introduced by other participants, as well as those whom the researcher came into contact with when the participants engage themselves in offline- or online-activities.

What would I be asked to do if I took part?
You would be interviewed on two separate occasions. The interviews will be conducted by Yutaka Yoshida, a PhD student who belongs to School of Law, the University of Manchester.

The interviewer will help you to talk about your experiences using a 'life story' approach. The interview is an opportunity for you to tell your story without being interrupted. The interviewer will help you identify which things you most want to talk about. The interviewer will be interested in hearing whatever things you think are important about your experiences that led to your participation in the Zaitoku-kai activities. The interviews will usually take 60-90 minutes but if you need longer the interviewer will be able to listen to you for as long as you need. The interviews will take place at a place where it is hard for other people to hear what you are saying. You may choose a public space, like a café, where you find it easy to talk or a more private space, such as a university office can be arranged. The interviewer will need to record the interview so that he has an accurate record of what has been said. You can ask for the recording to stop at any time during the interviews. The researcher will make sure that your name is not recorded so that the anonymity is secured.

What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?
The decision to take part in the research is completely up to you. If you agree to take part but then change your mind, this is fine—you can withdraw at any point and you do not need to provide a reason. If you do decide to take part, the researcher will ask you to confirm your consent. The consent will be verbally recorded using the script attached, so that you do not have to sign your name anywhere.

Will I be paid for participating in this research?
The researcher is willing to compensate you for your time with (3,000 yen Amazon voucher per interview)and will provide light refreshments. if you have travelled to the interview, the

researcher is able to reimburse receipted travel expenses to cover your trip. Money for travel will be given to you after the interview (up to 1,000 yen to cover).

How is confidentiality maintained?
After the interviews, the researcher will listen to the recording and type up what was said—the interview will then be deleted from the audio-recorder. All recording equipment and typed up versions of the interview will be kept in a locked filing cabinet or on a password secure computer that only the researcher can access. The researcher will do their best to ensure that your responses cannot be traced back to you by giving you and anyone else you mention in the research "fake" names.

Confidentiality will be maintained unless you tell us that you, or someone else, are at risk of harm or danger.
If an interviewee did say that they or anyone else were now at risk of harm or danger the researcher would tell suitable entities (i.e. Jidou-soudansho (child consultation centre), Fukushi-jimusho (welfare office), Haigu-sha bouryoku soudan shien senta (consultation and support office for domestic violence victimization), or the police) about this. The researcher would want talk to you about how best to pass this information on before doing so.

What happens to the interview data?
Once the interview is completed, the researcher will transfer the recording to the data storage owned by the University of Manchester, which is strictly protected. Your name and other identifiable information will be removed. The results from the interviews may be used in academic works where some of what you say may be used in quotation form. If you do not want the anonymized results of your interview to appear in Japanese or English publications do let the researcher know.

For what purpose is this research conducted?
This research is conducted as part of the completion of the doctoral thesis, which will be submitted to the University of Manchester. A copy of the thesis will be stored in the University's library so that anyone interested in it can read it. Aside from the submission of doctoral thesis, this research might result in the publication or production of journal articles, books and presentations.

Who can I contact if I have any questions?
If you have any further questions concerning the research, you can contact
Yutaka Yoshida, School of Law, the University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL. Email: yutaka.yoshida@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk TEL: xxx-xxxx-xxxx or his supervisors:
Professor David Gadd, School of Law, Williamson Building, the University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL. Email: david.gadd@manchester.ac.uk
and Dr Erica Baffelli, School of Arts, Languages and Cultures, the University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL. Email: erica.baffelli@manchester.ac.uk

What if something goes wrong?
At the end of the Interview, if you feel upset or need further help or advice, please let the researcher know and he can advise you who to contact.

If you are unhappy about the conduct of the research and wish to make a formal complaint about the conduct of the research you can contact the University of Manchester's Research Governance and Integrity Manager, Research Office, Christie Building, University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL, by emailing: research.complaints@manchester.ac.uk or by telephoning (+44) 161 275 2674 or 275 809

Appendix B

在特会の活動に参加する背景についての研究：参加者の皆さんのための情報シート

在特会関連活動への参加動機についての調査にお誘いをさせていただいています。以下の情報をよくお読みになった上、必要な場合は他の方ともお話してください。調査担当者（吉田穣・マンチェスター大学博士課程在籍）はこの研究についてのどのような質問にもお答え致します。調査担当者の連絡先は当該文書の末尾に記載されています。

当該研究について

当該研究の主たる目的は、なぜ人々が在特会関連の活動に参加をするのか理解することです。どのような要因が人々を在特会関連の活動に参加させ、参加をした人々はどのような生活を送っており、人々は在特会のどのような活動に参加しているのかを知りたいと思っています。

なぜあなたが選ばれたのか

この研究では、在特会の活動に参加されたことのある20名の方に、１対１のインタビューをお願いしています。調査担当者は、他の参加者から紹介された方や、ネット上・ネット以外の活動をされている方で連絡できた方にお願いしています。

参加された方にお願いしていること

２回に分けてインタビューをお願いしています。インタビューは調査担当者によって行われます。

インタビュワーは、ライフストーリー・アプローチという手法を用いて、あなたが御自身の経験をお話するのをお手伝いします。インタビューは、御自身のストーリーを自由にお話いただく機会となります。インタビュワーは、あなたが最も話したいと望まれているものが何なのかを見定めるお手伝いをいたします。インタビュワーは、在特会の活動にあなたが参加するに至るまでにあなたが経験されたことのなかで、あなたが大切だと思うどのようなことでもお聞きしたいと思っています。インタビューは６０～９０分かかりますが、あなたが望まれる場合は、あなたが必要なだけお話を伺います。インタビューは、他の人があなたのお話を聞くことが難しい場所で行われます。あなたは、御自身が話しやすいと感じる、例えばカフェのようなパブリックスペースをお選びになることもできますし、よりプライベートな、オフィスのような場所を御用意することもできます。インタビュワーは、お話いただいたことの正確な記録が得られるように、インタビューを録音する必要があります。インタビューの間は、いつでも録音を停止いただけます。匿名性を確保するため、あなたのお名前が録音されないようにいたします。

参加したくなくなったとき・気持ちが変わったとき

研究に御参加いただくか否かはあなた次第です。参加に同意されたあとにお気持ちが変わられても、問題はございません。あなたはどの時点でも参加を辞退できますし、その際に理由を御説明頂く必要もございません。参加されることとなりましたら、調査担当者は同意確認をいたします。同意確認は音声録音の形で行われるので、あなたのお名前はどこにも残りません。

この研究に参加することについての報酬

インタビューごとに３千円をお支払いする上、また、簡単なお茶とお茶菓子を御用意いたします。インタビューの場所までお越しいただいた場合には、レシートをいただければ交通費をお渡しすることができます。お渡しできる交通費は１０００円までで、交通費はインタビュー後にお渡しします。

匿名性保持について

インタビューの後に、調査担当者は録音を聴いて文字起こしを行いますが、その後インタビューはレコーダーから消去されます。録音機材及びインタビューを文字起こししたものは鍵をした書類棚又は研究者のみがアクセスすることのできるパスワードのかかったコンピュータに保存されます。あなたや、あなたがインタビューで言及された方については、お名前を変更することにより、できるだけ発言が誰のものかわからないようにいたします。

あなたや他の誰かが受傷等の危険にさらされているということをお伝えいただいた場合は、匿名性保持の例外となります。もしインタビュー参加者が、当該参加者又は第三者が現在受傷等の危険にさらされていると述べた場合には、調査担当者はこのことについて適切な主体（児童相談所、福祉事務所、配偶者暴力相談支援センター、警察等）に通報いたします。通報を行う前にどのように通報するのが最適か御相談いたします。

インタビューのデータの取扱いについて

インタビューが終了した際には、研究者は録音したものを、厳密な保護が行われているマンチェスター大学が管理するデータ・ストーレッジに移します。あなたのお名前等あなたの身分に関する情報は削除されます。インタビューの結果は学術的成果物において用いられ、あなたのご発言の一部が引用という形で利用される可能性があります。もし、匿名化された後のインタビュー結果であっても、日本語又は英語の文献において引用されることが望ましくないとお感じになった場合には、研究者にお知らせください。

この調査は何のために行われているか

この調査はマンチェスター大学に提出される博士論文執筆の一環として行われてい

ます。博士論文は関心を持った人が閲覧できるよう、大学図書館に所蔵されます。博士論文提出の他にも、この調査は学術雑誌論文、本、またはプレゼンテーションにおいて使用される可能性があります。

御質問について
もし調査についてさらに御質問がある場合には、以下の者に御連絡ください。
（調査担当者）
吉田　穣
School of Law, the University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL.
Email: yutaka.yoshida@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk
TEL: 080-8165-9318

（指導教員）
法学部教授
David Gadd
School of Law, Williamson Building, the University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL
Email: david.gadd@manchester.ac.uk

文学部教授
Erica Baffelli, School of Arts, Languages and Cultures, the University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL
Email: erica.baffelli@manchester.ac.uk

問題が生じた場合

インタビューが終了した後に、あなたが感情的に大きく動揺したり、支援や助言を必要とする場合には、担当調査者にお知らせいただければ、適切な御相談先をお知らせいたします。

調査について御不満をお持ちになり、正式な抗議を行われる場合には、マンチェスター大学の研究管理・適正化担当官に御連絡いただけます。

研究管理・適正化担当官　(Research Governance and Integrity Manager)
Research Office, Christie Building, University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL
Email: research.complaints@manchester.ac.uk
TEL: (+44) 161 275 2674 or 275 8093

Appendix C

MANCHESTER
1824

The University
of Manchester

What Makes People Participate in Zaitoku-kai-Related Activities?

VERBAL CONSENT FORM

I am a student at the University of Manchester in the United Kingdom. I am studying what makes people participate in Zaitoku-kai-related activities.

If you agree to participate in this study, I would like to ask you to tell your life story, including your experiences of Zaitoku-kai-related activities. Your participation is voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason. You can choose not to answer questions without giving a reason.

The interview will be audio-recorded. Your name will not be recorded and any other identifiable information will be removed from the transcript. Audio recordings will be destroyed once the transcripts have been completed. The results from the interviews may be used in academic works, such as the doctoral thesis, journal articles, books and presentations.

Do you agree to participate in the research? (Please answer 'Yes' or 'No' to the recorder).

Do you confirm that you have read the attached information sheet on the above project and have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions and had had these answered satisfactorily? (Please answer 'Yes' or 'No' to the recorder).

Do you agree that the results from this interview are used in the academic works in Japanese? Please answer 'Yes' or 'No'.

Do you agree that the results from this interview are used in the academic works in English? Please answer 'Yes' or 'No'.

Do you have any questions before we start the interview?

Appendix D

MANCHESTER
1824

The University
of Manchester

What Makes People Participate in Zaitoku-kai-Related Activities?

口頭同意書

私は英国・マンチェスター大学において研究をしている学生です。研究内容は、在特会に関連する研究に人々が参加する要因についてです。

この研究に参加することについて御同意をいただけた場合、在特会関連の活動に関してあなたが経験したこと等に関するライフ・ストーリーをお話いただくこととなります。参加は任意であり、理由を述べることなくいつでも参加を中止いただけます。また、質問に答えないでいただいても構いません。

インタビューは音声録音されます。あなたの名前その他のあなたを認識することのできる情報は書き起こし文からは削除されます。書き起こしの作業が終了した後、直ちに録音は消去されます。インタビューの結果は、博士論文、学術雑誌記事、本又はプレゼンテーション（以下「論文等」という。）において使用される可能性があります。

研究に参加していただけますか（「はい」か「いいえ」でレコーダーにお答えください）。

上記の研究プロジェクトに関するインフォメーション・シートをお読みになり、質問をする機会があり、質問に対して十分に答えられましたか（「はい」か「いいえ」でレコーダーにお答えください）。

インタビュー結果が日本語の論文等において使用されることについて同意されますか（「はい」か「いいえ」でレコーダーにお答えください）。

インタビュー結果が英語の論文等において使用されることについて同意されますか（「はい」か「いいえ」でレコーダーにお答えください）。

インタビューを開始する前に御質問はございませんか。

以上