Chapter 2:

Discovering autonomy in protest: Ampo 1960 and 1970

When Prime Minister Kishi’s Government passed legislation ratifying the revised security treaty with the United States in May and June 1960 they brought millions of people onto the streets in protest. The episode marked an occasion through which the very fabric of Japan’s postwar democratic system was brought into question. Kishi’s use of what was seen as questionable political tactics, saw parliamentary democracy stripped of political legitimacy and encouraged many to search for new conceptions of democratic practice and expression.

In 1970 when the treaty came up for renewal again the Satō Cabinet avoided the political theatrics of their predecessor and the treaty was passed through the Diet with little fanfare. On the surface the difference between 1960 and 1970 could not have been greater. The first is depicted as a watershed in Japan’s democratic development, while the second barely reaches the footnotes of historical accounts. But, the power of 1970 lay in its symbolic imagining as a site for potential upheaval rather than in its actuality. Both episodes were pivotal in Japan’s search for a democratic political system. The fervour of the 1960 protests and the anticipation of 1970 saw protest and political activism emerge as the bedrock of democratic political practices.

It is by no means incidental that examining the important sites of protest sees us divide Japan’s temporal space according to the Western calendar – ‘1960s Japan.’ The sites of massive protest, the events through which people expressed their political ideals, had been germinated by the US Occupation Forces and the signing of the US-Japan Security Treaty (Nichibei Anzen Hoshō Jōyaku), called Ampo in Japan, in 1952. One clause in the agreement determined that the treaty be ratified every ten years from 1960. Thus, the ‘decade’ quickly became an

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1 See for example, Rekishigaku Kenkyūkai (ed.), Senso 50 nen o Dō Miru ka, Aoki Shoten, Tokyo, 1995; Hosaka Masayasu, Shōwa Shi o Yomu 50 nen no Pointo, PHP, Tokyo, 1988.
important parameter for conceptualizing time. Despite the anomalies of ‘reality’ and the act of enclosure implicit in a history circumscribed by 1960 and 1970, the power of the ‘future forecast’ – the imagination of 1970 - permeated the present of the 1960s, and is thereby integral to its history. Plans to ratify the treaty at the end of the decade colonized the political and social imaginary of the 1960s, providing the frames of reference in which political parties were organized, demonstrations took place, and the policy of government was formulated.

The experience of 1960 and anticipation of 1970 gave concrete form to, and in some cases shaped, the political ideals discussed in the previous chapter. Issues of agency, activism and protest were prioritized in political debates as activists searched the ruins of Japan’s parliamentary democracy for a semblance of hope and a new foundation for democratic political development. Emerging from within 1970 *Ampo*’s ever-present imagination was a sense of civil society, an autonomous sphere, that framed the political terrain of the period.

In this chapter I will explore these sites of political activism, drawing attention to the centrality of protest to conceptions of democracy and civil society in 1960s Japan. Through concrete forms of activism and organization the character of Japan’s postwar political reconstruction was fundamentally altered and new ideas about an active citizenry found a voice.

**1960: The Ampo demonstrations**

From May 1959 to June 1960, roughly 16 million people engaged in protest against the renewal of a revised version of the US-Japan security treaty (*Ampo*).² Ampo was signed at the San Francisco Peace Conference on September 8, 1951. It allowed the United States to station its military forces at bases in Japan in order

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to prevent domestic rebellion, protect Japan from outside attack, and ensure peace in the Far East. Before its ratification in 1960 the Kishi Government was able to secure some concessions, including deleting the clause that enabled the US to intervene in the internal politics of Japan, but this small concession could not quell the discontent of the Opposition political parties and other leftist organizations. From their perspective the treaty not only brought Japan firmly into the United States camp in Cold War politics but also defined the nature of the relationship between the two countries as a military alliance. In addition, the treaty was passed through the Diet by means widely regarded as undemocratic. Put together, the Kishi Government appeared to be flouting the two ideals that underpinned postwar Japanese politics – peace and democracy. The vehemence of opposition could not be contained.

Opposition to the Ampo treaty was grounded in the unequal military commitments that it necessitated. Many believed that rather than securing the peace, the treaty perpetuated the antagonism of the Cold War world and challenged the fabric of post-war idealism. The treaty ensured that Japan would remain subjugated to the political and military directives of the United States. Left wing activist Mutō Ichiyō notes: ‘All the progressive forces in Japan converged in a joint struggle against the conclusion of the new treaty, warning that the new pact might again involve Japan in a disastrous war and reinstall a fascist regime in Japanese society.’³ It was with these fears in mind that the left wing united in opposition, forming a new coalition in early 1959 called the National Council for Preventing Revision of the Security Treaty (Ampo Jōyaku Kaitei Soshi Kokumin Kaigi).

The People’s Council included four major leftist organizations: Sōhyō (Japan Labor Unions General Council) a federation which drew much of its membership from government and public corporation employees and maintained strong connections to the leftwing of the Socialist Party; representatives of the Japan

Communist Party (Nihon Kyōsantō, JCP); the Japan Socialist Party (Nihon Shakaitō, JSP); and Zengakuren (All Japan Federation of Student Self-Government Association) which represented student organizations nationally on issues concerning education.

It was, in some ways, a natural alliance of leftist forces coming together after a decade of cooperative political activism. The Socialists and Sōhyō had maintained strong relations since the early 1950s and established vast networks of regional, municipal and township councils, to consider political policy and strategies. Likewise, Zengakuren and the JCP had established a strong relationship and fought side by side on a number of issues. The relationship between Zengakuren and the JCP was first established through opposition to the Occupation Forces when they embarked on the ‘red purge’ in an effort to ‘root out the destructive communist elements’ in various companies, enterprises, offices and departments throughout Japan in the late 1940s. With the formation of Minsei (Democratic Youth League) the JCP attempted to set up an affiliated student body that followed its ideological agenda and political directives more closely than Zengakuren, but in the early years the ideological differences between the students and the JCP were ostensibly put aside.

Accounting for relations between the JCP and Zengakuren, Tsurumi Shunsuke notes that in the aftermath of the Pacific War people joined the Communist Party without any ideological proclivity to their cause. ‘In the immediate postwar period,’ writes Tsurumi, ‘young people joined the Communist Party without any real understanding of communism. Joining the Party was based on the antiwar

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4 Despite its mandate within the university, from its inception as a national student body in 1949 Zengakuren fought on a variety of issues. Resolutions enacted at the inaugural convention, including ‘opposition to any attempts to utilize education to further fascism and colonialism’ and ‘opposition to fascism and defense of democracy,’ paved the way for involvement in the political arena beyond the university.

5 Subsequent political activism centered on opposition to the Subversive Activities Prevention Law enforced on July 21 1952, and empowering the Government to dissolve any organization advocating violence and subversion. Students were also active during the 1953 Upper and Lower House elections, which were fought primarily over the question of Japan’s rearmament during the Korean War. See, Anon., Zengakuren, document created by Keihin Kagekiha Kenkyū Kai, Tokyo, 1999. At, http://marukyo.cosm.co.jp/ZGR/ZGR1.html. Viewed June 1999.
sentiments of the people rather than any ideological commitment.” This apparent ambiguity in the membership of Zengakuren may, in part, account for the problems that beset the alliance of left political forces in the lead up to 1960.

Despite the history of cooperation and joint activism, ideological and tactical divisions within the alliance made the Peoples Council difficult to maintain. Even before the formation of the Council fissures had begun to appear within the opposition camp that undermined the possibility of success. The most important of these had been initiated by Bund students, who represented the mainstream faction of Zengakuren during this period. The Communist League (Kyōsandō), Bund, was founded after a June 1958 clash with the JCP’s central leadership had resulted in mass student expulsions and resignations from the Party. Bund’s manifesto was based around the ideals of activism and international proletariat revolution, and it was made up of students who rejected the Party leadership for staying within the confines of parliamentary politics and not engaging in direct acts of resistance. They were opposed to the rigidity and organizational structure of the Party and identified themselves in opposition to its strict ideological agenda, advocating the centrality of activism over ideology and theory.

The students’ rejection of Party directives reminds us again of the emphasis placed upon autonomy within intellectual and political debates discussed in the previous chapter. The students held a fear that the JCP was no different to the conservative government and thus many students turned to Marxist-Leninist ideas on the state as a means to frame their political position and distinguish themselves from the Party. Takazawa Kōji points to the formation of the Communist League,

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7 In early 1957, just prior to the change in leadership within the JCP, the Japan Trotskyist League (Nihon Torotsukisuto Renmei) was founded by members of the JCP disillusioned with the moderate line of the Party. They later became known as the Revolutionary Communist League (Nihon Kakumeiteki Kyōsan Shugisha Dōmei) and argued a rigidly ideological, anti-Stalinist line in their endeavor to bring about revolution.
8 The Marxist-Leninist reading of the state proved an attractive tool for intellectuals in this political milieu. Classical Marxism and Leninism stressed the coercive role of the state and eschewed the ‘revisionist’ notion that the bourgeois state might be reformed. In their reading the state emerged as the institution through which the dominant and exploiting class imposes and
Bund, as the point at which a New Left first emerged in Japan to challenge the JCP’s position as the center of political activism. Bund had established a strong following and took over the leadership of Zengakuren from the rigidly ideological Kakukyōdō (Revolutionary Communist League) in 1959.

The catalyst for the splits and faction fighting in the Peoples Council came on November 27, 1959 when Bund led Zengakuren students into the grounds of the Diet Building to protest the security treaty. The students’ infiltration of the grounds around the parliamentary building was a chance to occupy the sacred space of the Diet, to infiltrate the bastion of parliamentary democracy and fly their red flags. It was a tactic in keeping with their commitment to action but took all of the political parties by surprise with some politicians believing that the students were staging a revolution. The press roundly condemned the illegality of the occupation and the JSP and JCP responded by temporarily expelling Zengakuren from the alliance, thereby exposing the gulf that had developed between the students and the partisan left. Nevertheless, the activism brought renewed confidence to the students and they became increasingly sure of their own revolutionary potential. Then Chair of Zengakuren (Bund) Karōji Kentarō, indicated that the occupation of the Diet was an illustration of students’ ability and willingness to go it alone in the security treaty struggle. He believed that the students would be able to stop the signing of the treaty regardless of the problems with the Peoples Council and the agenda of the partisan left.

Despite the cleavages the protests continued unabated, intensifying in response to the actions of the conservative Kishi Government and its efforts to get the ratified security treaty through the Diet. But the alliance of opposition groups was in complete disarray.

defends its power and privileges against the class or classes that it dominates and exploits. See, Tom Bottomore (ed.), A Dictionary of Marxist Thought, Blackwell Reference, Oxford, 1983.


10 See Hidaka Rokurō, 1960 nen 5 gatsu 19 nichii, 114-120.
On May 19, after protracted negotiations within the Diet, the Mainstream faction of the Liberal Democratic Party (Jiyū Minshutō, LDP), to which Kishi was aligned, launched its bid to force the ratification of the treaty. The timing of the initiative was all-important. Japanese constitutional provisions dictated that if the House of Councilors did not approve a treaty within thirty days of ratification by the House of Representatives, it would come into effect automatically. With the visit of Eisenhower planned for June of that year, May 19 provided a final opportunity to ensure that the bill would be ratified on time.

On the evening of May 19 Kishi put forward a motion to extend the Diet session into the night and approve the revised treaty. Negotiations over the treaty had been going on for over twelve months and yet there was still no solidarity between parties, or even within the LDP, over the form that it was to take. At 5pm, in order to stop the passage of a Steering Committee Resolution prolonging the Diet session, Socialist members of the Lower House engaged in a ‘sit-down,’ preventing the speaker from reaching the rostrum. The government then ordered some five hundred police to drag the Socialists off the floor, and the plenary session opened with only conservatives taking part. It was in this chaotic atmosphere that the vote was passed to extend the session, and just after midnight the treaty was also passed. From this point it was simply a matter of waiting for the treaty’s automatic ratification on June 19.

Massive demonstrations followed as public opinion turned against the governments’ ‘anti-democratic’ methods. The Security Council organized demonstrations around the clock, and over thirteen million people braved the monsoon rains signing petitions, engaging in work stoppages and demonstrating in Tokyo streets. In the month preceding the automatic ratification of the treaty, Tokyo and other large centers of Japan came to a standstill as people took to the streets and showed their disapproval of the government. Students intensified their efforts, defying the directives of the Peoples Council and fighting to stop the security treaty from going through. On June 4 1960, both the mainstream of Zengakuren (Bund) and the anti-mainstream JCP-affiliated students came out to support a strike called by Sōhyō and the Peoples Council. In one of the most
celebrated events of defiance students disrupted train services for extended periods at Shinagawa Station, in what was originally planned as a strike of limited duration by the Japan National Railway Workers Union.

Another massive student demonstration occurred on June 10, 1960, when James Hagerty, President Eisenhower’s Press Secretary landed at Tokyo’s Haneda airport in order to make the final preparations for the arrival of the President. Just days before, distinguished Japanese academics had approached the US Embassy calling on the postponement of the visit and warning of the protests that would ensue, but the suggestion was ignored. When at 3.30pm, Hagerty and Ambassador Douglas MacArthur flew in to Tokyo’s Haneda Airport to make sure that everything was in order for the visit, they found themselves amidst the chanting voices of 10 000 protesters as they sat in their battered and swaying limousine. It was not until 4.30 that a US Marine Helicopter was able to land and rescue the beleaguered officials from what Hagerty later called an ‘uncomfortable experience.’

On June 15 the students attempted to replicate the events of the previous year and storm the Diet. On the first occasion the JCP had been vehement in their criticism of the students and the action had effectively destroyed the unsteady alliance that had been created. Nevertheless the sight of students milling around the Diet building was a powerful symbol of student resistance and they were keen to show their strength once again. On June 15 1960, they met with a heavy police presence and one student, Kamba Michiko, a female Zengakuren leader lost her life. Kamba’s death quickly came to represent a symbolic moment in the struggle. It was a sign of the students’ fearless commitment to activism and contrasted starkly with the inertia of the JCP who were keen to abide by parliamentary procedures. In a policy that dogged the Party over the course of the 1960s, the JCP further undermined its moral authority and political legitimacy by refusing to play any role in the funeral for Kamba, despite her role in the Peoples Council.  

It was the students who had the initiative and energy in 1960, and Bund staked its existence on fighting the security treaty as well as the conciliatory agenda of the JCP. Yoshimoto Takaaki, one of the few intellectuals to support the students’ earlier attempts to occupy the grounds of the Diet, applauded the energy of Bund and cited June 4 at Shinagawa Station and the June 15 struggle as illustrative of their autonomy (jiritsu), initiative, and their ability to lead the struggle in the face of an inept JCP. Takeuchi Yoshimi had a similar reaction to the students’ political efficacy. With regard to the activism at Shinagawa he wrote: ‘Written on the faces of the Zengakuren (Bund) students was a resolution peculiar to innocent youths spurred to desperate action that touched the heart of every onlooker. It was a resolve verging on Nihilism.’ As Takabatake Michitoshi later points out, the essential element of the student demonstrations was not simply the indignation towards the government and opposition to the treaty but the sense of solidarity and purpose. The activism involved the entire university – teachers and students – and for those at Tōdai, Hitotsubashi and other universities in the center of Tokyo it was easy to move directly from the classrooms to the streets.

Outside the political forays of the Peoples Council and the major political parties the Voiceless Voices Association (Koe Naki Koe no Kai) also emerged during the turbulence of June 1960. This group was inspired by the words of Prime Minister Kishi on May 27 when he vowed only to listen to the ‘koe naki koe’ or voiceless voices, and not yield to demands for his resignation from a ‘vocal minority, manipulated by the Communists.’ At a protest following this statement, the General Strike of June 4, a placard appeared at the march that identified its bearers as the Voiceless Voices and encouraged onlookers to join.

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Tomi also note the significance of Kamba’s death. Kobayashi Tomi, ‘Koe naki koe no wakamonotachi,’ Shisō no Kagaku, November 1968 pp. 44-49; Mutō Ichiyō, ‘Beyond the New Left.’


School teacher, Kobayashi Tomi, the founder of the group, recounted the first demonstration in the group’s monthly newsletter, *Koe Naki Koe no Tayori*, which was first published in July of that year.\(^{16}\) She had organized to participate in the demonstration with Tsurumi Shunsuke and others involved with the Science of Thought Group (*Shisō no Kagaku Kenkyūkai*), but due to a misunderstanding only 2 people turned up at the 12 o’clock meeting place, and the two fell in behind the Association Critical of Ampo (*Ampo Hihan no Kai*). ‘Carrying the placards at that first demonstration was a little bit embarrassing,’ recalled Kobayashi, ‘but as we approached the Diet building about 30 people were walking along side us. It was deeply emotional for me … by the time we reached the end of the march at Shimbashi the number of participants had reached about 300.’\(^{17}\) In no mood to return home Kobayashi returned to the Diet building where she finally met up with protestors from the Science of Thought Group and once again proceeded back to Shimbashi.

Over the following weeks this group gained momentum as a ‘spontaneous’ response to the treaty and the politics surrounding its ratification, and the founding members drew up a flier to promote their endeavors. It read:

Citizens! Let’s all walk together. If only for five minutes or a hundred meters, let’s walk together. We don’t have any particular grand point of view nor are we loudly staking a claim. But even the ‘voiceless voices’ can distinguish right from wrong. We want to tell this to the government.\(^{18}\)

The Voiceless Voices came to represent the citizens’ wing of the 1960 demonstrations and evinced the concerns of the wider community. In 1971 Matsushita Keiichi insisted that the Voiceless Voices represented a new kind of citizens’ movement, ‘whose members no longer saw themselves as the


\(^{17}\) Kobayashi Tomi, *Tayori, No. 1, July 15, 1960*.

unorganized mass wing or fellow travelers of establishment-oriented political
groups like the People’s Council.’\(^{19}\) The participants walked along the streets in
‘French style’ demonstrations with hands joined across the width of the street
rather than in the zigzag style of the students. They also marched to the back of
the main demonstration where the crowds were sparser and it was safe for women
and children to walk freely. According to accounts in Tayori demonstrators
moved towards the front only to tend to the wounds of injured students. Walking
the streets in 1960 young people felt ‘drunk on the feeling of emancipation,’
wrote Takabatake.\(^{20}\)

The first edition of Tayori, printed with the assistance of Science of Thought
Group, featured pictures of women and children at the demonstrations and
highlighted the importance of participation and protest. Many people wrote short
pieces reflecting on the style of the Voiceless Voices and the important part that
ordinary citizens could play in the demonstrations. These citizens represented a
segment of the population that had been excluded from the rigid political agendas
of the major parties, and saw themselves as a new force in the political culture of
the period. Sumiko, an activist who came upon the Voiceless Voices group by
chance, recounts in almost comic fashion the incredulous reaction of her children
to the news that she had participated in the protests. Sumiko saw it as an
important opportunity for ordinary people and families to express their opposition
and participate in politics.\(^{21}\)

In the days that followed the ratification of the treaty the press vehemently
attacked the methods of the LDP and questioned the strength of Japan’s
democratic institutions. The Yomiuri Shimbun was indignant that hundreds of
police had been called into the Diet: ‘When the government and LDP so easily
take such extraordinary measures, the prestige and power of parliamentary

\(^{19}\) Matsushita Keiichi, ‘Citizen participation in historical perspective,’ (1971) in Victor
Koschmann (ed.) Authority and the Individual in Japan: Citizen Protest in Historical Perspective,
University of Tokyo Press, Japan, 1978.
\(^{20}\) Takabatake Michitoshi, ‘1960 nen Ampo,’ 94.
\(^{21}\) Tayori, No.1, July 15, 1960.
government cannot be preserved.'\(^{22}\) The *Asahi Shimbun*, in its editorial of May 21 noted: ‘Kishi might think that he is presenting Ike with a bouquet on June 19 but that is the thinking of a petty bureaucrat concerned with protocol. It is like a retainer performing tricks before his master. He seems to be forgetting the importance of the loyalty he owes to the people.’\(^{23}\) The press reflected upon the ‘immaturity’ of Japan’s political institutions and the international implications of turmoil. On June 17 the *Asahi Shimbun* carried a ‘*Joint Declaration of the Seven Major Newspapers,*’ which stated: ‘We therefore sincerely appeal to the Government and the Opposition parties to respond to the fervent wishes of the people by agreeing to protect parliamentary democracy and by dispelling the unusual anxiety now troubling the people.’\(^{24}\)

As a poll taken by the *Tokyo Shimbun* indicated, the political alliances of the demonstrators were varied, and the large number of protesters did not necessarily reflect opposition towards the treaty itself with just 27% of people surveyed believing that the treaty was unnecessary. These polls indicate that the agenda of opposition parties did not always correspond with that of protestors. In May and June of 1960 the struggle took on a dimension of protest that went beyond the framework of the partisan Left. Nevertheless, 74% of those questioned favored the resignation of the Kishi cabinet.\(^{25}\) The status of the Kishi cabinet had reached an all time low in terms of public opinion. On June 16 the government was forced to ask for the postponement of President Eisenhower’s visit; on June 19 over 300 000 demonstrators surrounded the Diet; and on June 23 Prime Minister Kishi, despite the treaty having passed automatically through the House of Councillors, announced his resignation.

Having been central players in the political ferment and activism of the postwar years, and playing a leading role in coordinating opposition to the LDP, the

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\(^{22}\) *Yomiuri Shimbun*, May 20, 1960.

\(^{23}\) *Asahi Shimbun*, May 21, 1960.


\(^{25}\) *Tokyo Shimbun*, in George Packard, *Protest in Tokyo*. 
opposition parties appeared to be in a prime position to take leadership in 1960. In the aftermath of the demonstrations the JCP claimed a victory for ‘peace and democracy’ and applauded the activism of the Japanese people but they were by no means at the center of the protests, and many people were reluctant to see the resignation of Kishi as a victory. The mass opposition towards the LDP did not translate into votes for the progressive forces. In the elections of November 1960, the LDP was re-elected and Ikeda Hayato was formally appointed Prime Minister. Despite political wrangling, the corruption of democratic processes, the use of police in the Diet building, and an apparent disregard for Japan’s largest demonstrations, the LDP sustained an electoral victory with an increased majority on their 1958 result. By contrast the JSP lost seats and the JCP increased their representation from just 1 to 3, with a 0.4% swing. Like the LDP, the opposition parties were left to lick their wounds and brood over lost opportunities.

Having staked its existence on the anti-treaty demonstrations, in a frenzy of ‘self criticisms’ and faction fighting, Bund dissolved into three separate groups in August 1960. The only faction to survive intact, arguing that failure to bring about revolution was grounded not in the failure of students but in the relative independence of political processes from the Marxist laws of economics, was the regionally-based Kansai Bund. The sense of failure prevalent in the mainstream faction of Zengakuren ushered in a period of splits into factions and groups which, in turn, kept reuniting and splitting up anew. Amidst the recriminations and fighting Marugakudō (League of Japan Marxist Students), the rigidly ideological group that superceded Kakukyōdō (League of Revolutionary Communism) in June 1960, emerged as the mainstream faction of Zengakuren. Nevertheless, like Bund, their relations with the JCP had been dealt a severe blow in 1960 and thus the JCP sought to establish a new student base through Zenjiren (Zenkoku

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Neither side of government could claim a solid victory after the tumultuous affair. The JCP lost complete support of the most active students, as well as losing at the polls, and the LDP retreated into economic policies hoping to avoid the unsteady ground of politics and foreign relations. What did survive 1960 was the energy of the students and the spontaneity and enthusiasm of ‘citizens.’ 1960 Ampo emerged as a site at which to protest the character of Japan’s political system and contest the centrality of parliamentary democracy to postwar Japanese politics. The hope that intellectuals invested in parliamentary democracy prior to 1960 did not survive the political upheaval and in its stead many searched for new democratic foundations. In fact the notion of shimin, a combination of the character for city (shi) and people (min), gained currency on the streets of Tokyo and in the political discourses of intellectuals for the first time in 1960.27 Hailing from 1960 Ampo were the cultures of protest developed by Bund students and the Voiceless Voices. The domain of protest and activism was given a solid grounding outside the auspices of the established political parties.

The passing of the security treaty dealt a severe blow to Japan’s democratic development and undermined the legitimacy of parliamentary democracy. Nevertheless, in the soul searching and recriminations that followed 1960 Ampo a thread of hope emerged. In the following section I will argue that 1960 Ampo did not signal the failure of the demonstrations but the decentering of the parliamentary system as a foundation for democratic practice. Following on from this, the protests signaled the emergence of new conceptions of ‘the people,’ community and citizen in Japan. It was not simply a case of being against the state but an episode through which to forge identity outside the sphere of the established political institutions and nurture a new foundation from which to participate in the nation’s political affairs.

1960: Contesting Democracy

In considering the security treaty crisis Rikki Kersten has indicated that the issue of the treaty itself was just an ‘excuse for a crisis.’ ‘The real focus of the crisis,’ writes Kersten, ‘was Japan’s postwar democracy. The process of revising the 1951 security treaty simply showcased the crisis of confidence in Japan’s democracy that was already simmering near the surface of Japanese political life.’

While Japan’s progressive intellectuals had reason to be critical of the treaty it was the apparently unhealthy state of parliamentary democracy and the way in which the new treaty was negotiated that came under scrutiny. The conduct of the parliamentary players in 1960 put another nail in the coffin of Japan’s existing democratic institutions.

Takabatake Michitoshi argued that there were two important dimensions to the 1960 struggle. First, protest manifested itself in a ‘national reform movement’ (kakumei kokumin undō), concerned with the health and efficacy of parliamentary democracy. Rather than contesting the nation’s political institutions and revolting against the political system, the demonstrators operated within the paradigm of the existing constitution and the democratic guidelines established during the occupation period. It was a struggle founded upon the ideals of the postwar political environment, a nation liberated from war and striving to embrace the hopes and goals derived from that experience. According to Takabatake, 1960 Ampo was for the protection of parliamentary democracy and for shedding the nation’s unequal alliances and restrictions. Despite being critical of this agenda because it failed to challenge the existing institutions Takabatake found heart in second trend - the new styles of activism and the alternative interpretations of political institutions, the state, and democracy. Takabatake indicated that 1960 saw the re-conceptualization of the ‘people’ and activism that went beyond the restrictions of the existing political parties, and laid the foundations for dynamic cultures of protest through the 1960s. Takabatake’s analysis highlights the

28 Rikki Kersten, Democracy in Postwar Japan, 203.
concrete ways in which ideas about citizenship, democracy and activism were reevaluated after the protests of 1960.

i. Disillusionment with parliamentary democracy

Many intellectuals greeted the passing of the security treaty with complete disillusionment in parliamentary democracy. On May 21, 1960, two days after the treaty had been passed by the Lower House of the Japanese Diet, Takeuchi Yoshimi resigned his professorship at the Tokyo Municipal University. He sent a short statement outlining the reason for his decision to about 300 friends and colleagues and it appeared in the *Asahi Shimbun* the following day. He indicated that, as a ‘public official’ he could no longer stand by and watch the constitution being flouted by the country’s top officials and he believed that May 20 had seen parliamentary government rendered ineffectual.\(^{30}\) Takeuchi admits that the idea of ‘protecting the constitution’ came to him after he had decided to resign his post: it was a ready justification for something he felt necessary in the face of a government he later described as a dictatorship that had obstructed parliamentary democracy. In an essay published at the end of May 1960, ‘Democracy or Dictatorship,’ he related his antipathy towards the government, describing Kishi as a fascist: ‘Until the dictatorship is overthrown,’ he writes, ‘it is meaningless to argue about whether one opposes or supports the Ampo treaty.’\(^{31}\) For Takeuchi, like political scientist Maruyama Masao, the demonstrations were in response to the derailment of parliamentary democracy.

The track record of Kishi Nobusuke was a major cause for concern to activists interested in the government’s democratic integrity. Having risen up through the ranks of the government in the 1930s, Kishi was a figure whom political scientist, Kuno Osamu, would describe as a ‘professional politician’ (*purō seijika*) as opposed to a ‘working citizen.’\(^{32}\) He was the Minister for Commerce and Industry


from 1941-1943 and Minister of State and Deputy Munitions in 1943-44. Kishi was listed as an A Class War Criminal after the war, but with a record as a staunch anti-Communist SCAP (Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers) officials released him in December 1948 and dropped the charges. After his release Kishi used his strong financial connections and influence within the LDP to claw his way back into the political arena, becoming Prime Minister in February 1957. Kishi’s personal history and his record as Prime Minister riled the democratic sensibilities of many progressive intellectuals in Japan, with 1960 just one in a longer line of incidents that incited fears of a fascist resurgence.

Despite the wartime history of parliamentary leaders and the fear of a right wing resurgence in Japan, Maruyama Masao had placed his faith in the processes of democracy and the possibility that it could be realized in 1960. Maruyama played an important role in the protests of 1960 and depicted it as a test case for Japanese democracy. In the aftermath of the event, when people ceased protesting and returned to their jobs, he spoke of Japanese democracy as an ‘unrealised fiction’ and signalled defeat. Even in the throes of battle he indicated his disillusionment with the government and democratic institutions in Japan, and depicted the government institutions as the antithesis of democracy. In his article of August 1960, Time for Choice, he writes:

This is the moment in our people’s democratic history of greatest danger and greatest opportunity. All the major issues of postwar have become concentrated. On the one extreme naked power was concentrated in Kishi’s hands, on the other the principles and ideals of the post-war democratic movement became concentrated in our hands … At this moment in history, let us rise above our differences and join hands so that the security of our nation may be guaranteed, not against any foreign country but first of all against the authorities.33

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Maruyama’s call to arms points to another key theme that I will return to later – the responsibility of the people to uphold and live democracy. More importantly for present purposes it graphically illustrates the antagonism towards the political authorities – the evil within. Maruyama’s despondency with the state of democracy was clear; the apparent failure of 1960 *Ampo* saw Maruyama retreat from the political limelight and leave the fray of activism.

Tsurumi Shunsuke wrote in 1960 of his complete incredulity at the incidents of May 19. Like Yoshimi Takeuchi he also resigned from his post at the Kyoto Institute of Technology, indicating that he could not continue to work as long as Kishi and the Chair of the House, Kiyose remained in the Diet. In July 1960 Tsurumi wrote that postwar democracy, in fact the 15 years since the war, dissolved into nothingness on May 19 and that Japan was suddenly swept back to defeat and the Manchurian incident. ‘It all became clear,’ he writes, ‘the incidents of May 19 made me feel that the spirit of prewar Japan had been transposed as the defining characteristic of postwar political institutions.’ 34 Tsurumi felt that the wartime spirit of Japan had returned like a ‘poisonous breath’ and manifested itself in the figure of Kishi, Prime Minister and embodiment of the Wartime State.

Tsurumi explains that Japan’s recent history was crystallized in that moment of deception and tyranny. In a sense it all seemed completely inevitable. ‘Hopes were dashed,’ laments Tsurumi, ‘there did not seem to be an alternative history in which I could trust and I came to recognize the essence of the Japanese social system and institutions.’ 35 Of course, Tsurumi, who was educated in the United States only to return to Japan during the Occupation period, had never placed any trust in the Japanese political institutions. As I indicated in the previous chapter, the idea behind *Shisō no Kagaku Kenkyūkai* (Science of Thought Research Group), in which Tsurumi was a founding member in 1946, was to document political beliefs and ideals, in the face of an authoritarian political system. The

35 Tsurumi Shunsuke, ‘Nemoto kara no minshushugi,’ 127.
idea behind *Shisō no Kagaku* was not simply to make the state accountable or to promote the ideals of parliamentary democracy, but to ensure that the intellectual community and, by extension, the ‘common people’ were not silenced by the authority of the state. The political machinations of 1960 simply confirmed the insecurities about the state that informed Tsurumi’s political philosophy from 1945. Thus while Tsurumi was bitterly disappointed by the political outcome in 1960, he was not altogether surprised.

The approach of these progressive intellectuals was based on opposition not just to the conservative government but also to the institutions of the state, including the left wing parties. As I indicated earlier, the structure and approach of the partisan left in Japan did not emerge from the 1960 protests unscathed. Many, including Maruyama Masao and other prominent advocates of democracy, radically rethought the role of the intellectual in political affairs after 1960 and expressed ambivalence towards the partisan left. Likewise, poet and essayist Yoshimoto Takaaki argued that the majority of the Japanese people - ‘the masses’ - operated independently of any leadership in 1960 and had exposed the hypocrisies of the existing left parties. Groups such as Zengakuren (Bund) felt defeated by the treaty renewal and resented the JCP for claiming victory. Mutō Ichiyō concurs with this view, stating:

> The respect for the Party (JCP) as the vanguard faded away very fast, and dissolution spread among activists. In this atmosphere, ideological defection of a number of well known progressive intellectuals and student leaders occurred.38

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36 As noted by Rikki Kersten ‘after 1960 Maruyama shifted his intellectual interests away from the analysis of contemporary politics and went back in history to medieval times.’ Rikki Kersten, *Diverging Discourses: Shimizu Ikutaro, Maruyama Masao and Postwar Tenkō*, Nissan Occasional Paper Series No. 20, Oxford University, 1994, 5.


38 Mutō Ichiyō & Inoue Reiko, ‘Beyond the New Left.’
The disavowal of the JCP was particularly pronounced within the intellectual community and pervades the writing of all the intellectuals and activists who were active in groups such as the Voiceless Voices. Even one time member of the JCP Iida Momo was extremely critical of the ideological and tactical agenda of the JCP after 1960. In 1965 he reflected on the ‘impotence’ of the JCP and ‘paralysis’ of the peace movement in Japan under the leadership of the partisan left.\(^3^9\) Iida had been alerted to the bureaucratic style of the Party machine when he was purged from the JCP in 1964, but had been cautious about its centrality to the political protest throughout the 1950s. Discussing his ostracism from the Party with Tessa Morris-Suzuki in the early 1980s he stated: ‘Suddenly, it seemed, I had gone into the shadows of history, I felt immensely isolated … all my life and all my achievements had gone into my work for the Party. Now I had nothing, I had to start again, in the dark and on my own.’\(^4^0\) Even for Iida, a person committed to the communist cause, 1960 Ampo saw the Party lose its efficacy as a political tool.

The distrust of the nation’s political institutions evident in the work of Takeuchi, Maruyama, Tsurumi and Iida underpinned the analysis of many, if not the majority of intellectuals and activists after the 1960 Ampo demonstrations. In fact, the distrust of the state became one of the threads that linked the Pacific War with 1960. In the analysis of the demonstrations published with unwavering regularity throughout the decade, 1960 came to the fore as the temporal site at which the political parties, including those in opposition, had been deceptive and had unalterably damaged the sanctity of Japan’s parliamentary democracy.

\textit{ii. The emergence of autonomous movements}

In the wake of 1960 participation and activism were radically rethought and new styles of activism emerged as intellectuals turned away from the postwar ideal of


\(^{4^0}\) Iida Momo interviewed by Tessa Morris-Suzuki, \textit{Shōwa: An Inside History of Hirohito’s Japan},
parliamentary democracy. Writing on the gulf between ‘the people’ and the state in 1961, social scientist and antiwar activist, Ishida Takeshi wrote:

The present conditions obtaining to Japan demonstrate clearly that there is a gradually widening gap between the will of the people and the policies of the majority party. The struggles last year against the ratification of the revised mutual security agreement were a good demonstration of the truth of this matter. Those struggles represented the last line of resistance of the people at a time when the gap between the people and the government had reached its maximum extent.\footnote{Ishida Takeshi, (Sengo Nihon no Seiji Tsaisei, 1961) ‘Progressive political parties and popular movements,’ Journal of Social and Political Ideas in Japan, Center for Japanese Social and Political Studies, Vol. III, No. 1, Tokyo, April 1965, 117.}

A direct corollary of the anti-state rhetoric and the questioning of the states’ centrality to national politics was the renewed emphasis on ‘the people’ within political and social discourses. The reaction of intellectuals to the demonstrations - their enthusiasm for the concrete expression of political commitment that manifested itself in 1960 - alerts us to the way in which ‘the people’ were being re-conceptualized around notions of activism, community, responsibility, individuality and citizenship. The pleas of Maruyama Masao concerning the role of the people in protecting and revitalizing democracy indicates the power that the demonstrations had over conceptions of democracy.

Joining Maruyama, though not necessarily subscribing to his political philosophy, there was a polyphony of voices emphasizing the possibilities exposed during 1960 Ampo. A statement issued in September 1960 outlining the ambivalence towards the organized left and a commitment to activism is indicative of the common ground that was established between the diverse range of voices. Tanigawa Gan, a leading figure in the Kyūshū based Circle Group Movement, brought prominent intellectuals together around the issue of activism and protest.\footnote{The intellectuals included Yoshimoto Takaaki, Tsurumi Shunsuke, Fujita Shōzō, and Sekine Ōzawa Shinichirō, who was involved in the organization and issuing of Methuen, Australia, 1984, 301.}
the statement, notes that the primary aim behind the statement was to ‘confront the chronic state of activism in Japan, the internal problems that beset the existing organizations, and the concurrent silencing of alternative voices.’

In the aftermath of 1960 intellectuals and activists alike were concerned with bringing the new voices of protest to the forefront of political debate.

Yoshimoto Takaaki was perhaps the most influential critic in determining the way that 1960 came to be read. Well after the ideal of protecting the sanctity of parliamentary democracy had proven to be a forlorn hope, Yoshimoto’s prior assessment of the students’ strength and commitment, and the sincerity of their protests, came to occupy the centre ground in appraising the significance of the demonstrations.

It was the work of Yoshimoto Takaaki that led people such Takabatake Michitoshi and other activists of the 1960s to emphasize the demonstrations as a site in which new forms of social democracy and resistance emerged. Yoshimoto did not identify a new democracy in 1960 but, like many others, he did identify the sphere of protest as the temporal and physical location of ‘the people.’

Yoshimoto Takaaki and Shimizu Ikutarō both saw the Ampo demonstrations as a missed opportunity to bring the peace movement in touch with concrete political issues and a clearly defined agenda, and they decried the fact that it had become a test case for democracy. In an analysis written after the events, Shimizu claimed that the slogan urging the people to ‘protect democracy’ resulted in a diffusing of the people’s energy and in confusing the objectives of the movement.

Likewise Yoshimoto believed that the objectives of peace and democracy had been too broad to sustain and that intellectuals such as Maruyama had introduced a fictional (gisei) democracy, an idealistic vision of political institutions and society,
that could not possibly be realized in Japan. Yoshimoto implicated groups such as the Voiceless Voices in his criticism, depicting them as beholden to a bourgeois democracy that had undermined the political effectiveness of the struggle to overthrow the treaty. Yoshimoto and Shimizu felt that the recourse to political values represented a departure from the existing (essential) identity of the people and the nation, and that the struggle was drowning in the philosophical rhetoric of the progressive intellectuals.46

Both Shimizu and Yoshimoto were critical of analysis and activism that stressed a new subjectivity or the realization of a democratic political philosophy, because it defied their understanding of the existing character of the people and the nation. Instead, Yoshimoto looked towards the activism of the students who occupied the grounds of the Diet. In the activism of the students, Yoshimoto, who remained extremely influential among student groups throughout the 1960s, identified a sense of *jiritsu* (agency and autonomy) that he saw as the essence of ‘the people.’ Yoshimoto noted that Zengakuren (Bund), by operating as non-aligned individuals and by taking a critical stance towards the established parties, opened up a space for the ‘masses’ to participate within the political sphere. Despite the revolutionary agenda of the Bund students, Yoshimoto believed that the stress upon activism within their philosophy proved far more inclusive and powerful than the hierarchical relations contained within the established left.

For groups such the Voiceless Voices, Yoshimoto’s reading of 1960 *Ampo* was at once challenging and at the same time empowering. While Yoshimoto’s reading of the events saw him being critical of the ideological agenda of many activists, and the intellectual critique that emphasized democratic renewal, the positive signs that he garnered from the demonstrations provided a powerful basis from which to understand political activism in the 1960s. Yoshimoto stressed that the essence of the Japanese people and their agency within postwar politics had manifest itself in 1960 *Ampo* in a dynamic display of autonomy.

46 Yoshimoto Takaaki, ‘Gisei no Shūen,’ *Minshūshūgi no Shinwa*, pp. 43–76.
Tanigawa Gan was also concerned with conceptions of an active community and the development of a concrete basis for political participation in postwar Japan. Throughout the 1950s Tanigawa had been active in establishing a regional association of ‘circles,’ or community based groups, throughout Kyūshū. In 1958 this culminated in the enlistment of 50 circle activists and the publication of Circle Village. As Sasaki-Uemura points out the circle village was a sphere not mired in the prewar conceptions of village but committed to a dynamic and progressive conception of community that resisted the meaningless abstraction of nation as a basis for identity.\(^{47}\) Tanigawa did not glorify or elevate a particular circle village but identified the idea of the village, the village community, as an ‘invaluable place for determining the mental illness of Japanese civilization.’\(^{48}\) It was from this perspective that Tanigawa urged the ‘citizens movements’ established during 1960 *Anpo* to bear in mind their relationship with their hometown, mother, earth and country, and to consider whether they would restore kinship roots or break with those foundations. Contributing a short article to the August 1960 edition of the Voiceless Voices publication *Tayori*, Tanigawa outlined his support for the citizens and praised them for traversing the lines of demarcation established by the other demonstrating sects and parties. In an effort to bring meaning to the massive demonstrations Tanigawa put forward a challenge to the demonstrators. ‘What are the objectives of the Voiceless Voices opposition?’ asked Tanigawa, ‘surely it is not simply [opposition] to the treaty or prominent people. [The object of opposition] is the curtailment of activism, the end of enlightenment, it is the silencing of the world.’\(^{49}\) The article betrayed Tanigawa’s commitment to establishing an autonomous base for political participation and ideas while also giving a voice to the village and community as a microcosm of wider political and social problems and possibilities. Tanigawa believed that locating activism in relation to a particular social, political and

\(^{47}\) Wesley Mak Sasaki-Uemura, ‘Citizen and Community in the 1960 Anpo Protests,’ 240.

\(^{48}\) Tanigawa quoted in Wesley Mak Sasaki-Uemura, Citizen and Community in the 1960 Anpo Protests,’ 240.

geographic location protected the nation from itself. He was thereby concerned that the energy behind the 1960s protest be reconciled with his conception of the circle village and the ideal of community, activism and identity.

Takeuchi Yoshimi’s critique of 1960 *Ampo* contained a similar sense of both sanguinity and trepidation. In the December issue of *Shisō no Kagaku*, Takeuchi described the demonstrations as the first appearance of a national(ist) movement (*kokumin undō*) based upon principles rather than instrumental economic concerns. His analysis of the ‘success’ of the 1960 demonstrations centred on the emergence of the people as autonomous subjects. But he also harbored fears about the nature of the people’s consciousness and expressed concern that the principles embedded in the demonstrations were ‘coiled around memories of war and the subsequent occupation.’

Takeuchi was concerned that victim consciousness and a hatred of war drove the people, rather than any metaphysical or abstract sense of peace. He also believed that compared to China, Japan lacked any sense of independence as an ethnic nation (*minzoku dokuritsu*). For Takeuchi 1960 *Ampe* was framed by a pre-occupation with how it might be perceived from abroad – from China - and a view to subsequent developments in activism. The success of 1960 was premised upon its potential rather than any sense of victory or achievement; 1960 was represented as a positive signifier for the future, the ground upon which to move forward towards 1970.

Many other progressive intellectuals, particularly those involved with the Voiceless Voices were more positive about the democratic philosophy in 1960 and the significance of the Tokyo demonstrations. Tsurumi Shunsuke noted that while demonstrating was not new to the Japanese people in 1960, the protest heralded a new political consciousness among the demonstrators.

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despondency at the course of events in the Diet, Tsurumi saw a glimmer of hope in the ability of citizens to operate outside the framework of the JCP and confront the meaning of democracy, participation and responsibility in concrete ways. Likewise political philosopher Kuno Osamu conceptualized the idea of the citizen (shimin) in relation to the Voiceless Voices and the activism of 1960.\textsuperscript{52} He defined the citizen as someone who was directed by their situation in life, their occupation and their independence, and believed that politicians were so far divorced from the citizen that they failed to even recognize them. Kuno stressed the importance of giving the ordinary citizen access to political processes and lamented the political situation in which the voice of the citizen was either not heard by politicians or completely ignored. Kuno was enthusiastic about the emergence of citizens’ movements in 1960, and in recent interviews he stresses the significance of the Voiceless Voices to the protest and activism of the postwar period.\textsuperscript{53}

A survey of these intellectuals and activists indicates that the significance of 1960 demonstrations and the sites of success and failure were contested. In 1960 the political institutions, the political system, and the way in which people interacted with it was transformed and re-appraised. As the state reinforced its unresponsiveness, its pragmatism and its isolation from the people, notions of autonomy, agency and civil society were given form and expression. The complete disillusionment of people such as Maruyama Masao with the apparent corruption of Japan’s democracy was offset by the qualified optimism of activists and intellectuals who invested far less trust in the machinations of the parliamentary system. For those who carried hope from the demonstrations, 1960 Ampo came to be seen as a concrete illustration of democracy based on the people and autonomy rather than on the political apparatus. It was the site at which the seeds of citizenship began to sprout.

\textsuperscript{52} Kuno Osamu, ‘Seijiteki shimin,’ 29.
Anticipating 1970

1970 *Amo*, when the treaty came up for renewal again, is widely regarded as the ‘ghost image’ of the 1960s, the chance for protest that never really eventuated. Unlike 1960 *Amo*, it is not the basis of any major studies and intellectuals fell silent about the turn of events soon after the security treaty had been renewed and the demonstrations were over. The political maneuvering of the Satō government and the concurrent political wrangling of the opposition took the impetus away from the activists. Nevertheless, 1970 *Amo* does provide an occasion at which to decipher the character of Japan’s democracy. The anticipation of 1970 *Amo*, the upheaval of 1970 as it was imagined over the course of the 1960s, shaped the nature and direction of politics. In addition, massive protests did in fact take place in June of that year with millions of people taking to the streets. The protests that occurred illustrate the centrality of protest and activism, not simply as displays of political opposition, but as an illustration of political and social autonomy. The protests of 1970 indicate the symbolic power of protest and provide us with a glimpse into the activism that I will discuss more fully in subsequent chapters.

The year 1970 existed as a political site well before its present had been realized. 1970 was not merely a year in the progression of time; its existence, its temporal location, was determined with the agreements between Japan and the United States to ratify the security treaty every 10 years, thereby prescribing 1970 a role, an identity, well before its present had been actualized. From this political projection onto the future, 1970 was imagined throughout the 1960s as the site for political change, the site for resistance, the site for revolution, the site for national renewal, or conversely, the site for careful political maneuvering. In 1965, Rōyama Masamichi referred the politics of the period as ‘a rehearsal’ (*yokōenshū*) for 1970. The political and social developments of the 1960s cannot be understood without foregrounding 1970.

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Of course many activists had espied 1970 with a sense of anticipation, hoping that it would provide the next big opportunity for the progressive forces in Japan. The hope was fuelled by the demonstrations that had already rocked the country including the January 1968 demonstrations against the visit of the nuclear powered aircraft carrier Enterprise when it came into the port at Sasebo; those at Haneda airport in November 1969 with the departure of Prime Minister Satō on a tour of Asia and the United States; and the folk guerilla concerts in Shinjuku Station through 1968-69. In addition, between 1965 and 1970, the struggles that rocked the universities as students protested issues related to education and politics further incited a revolutionary atmosphere. Oda Makoto graphically illustrated the international dimensions of this atmosphere appearing at an antiwar rally in Washington while Satō was negotiating with Nixon in November 1969. He teamed up with the Student Mobilization Committee at Dupont Circle Square and marched on the Japanese Embassy in Washington.55

In this political milieu Mutō Ichiyō, writing in Iida Momo's book Towards 1970: Revolutionary Essays published in 1968, advocated that with the approach of 1970 a strong, national framework for activism had to be established.56 His views, and those of Iida Momo, were far more radical than Oda Makoto and other prominent members of Beheiren at this time, but they reflect the palpable sense of anticipation among most of the leading activists.57 Mutō notes that the incidents at Haneda, protests at Sasebo, the formation of Beheiren and the Anti-war Youth League (Hansen), and the activism of ‘citizens’ during the 1960s were not sudden developments but were ushered in within a changing political landscape. Mutō believed that an opportunity existed to draw upon the changes that had already occurred and construct a revolutionary movement in the lead up to 1970.58

56 Iida Momo (ed.), 70 nen e no Kakumeiteki Shiron, San’ichi Shōbō, Tokyo, 1968.
57 There were a number of articles published in Asahi Janaru, Sekai, Shisō no Kagaku, Beheiren Nyūsu and Shūkan Ampo during this period with titles such as ‘Towards 1970.’
Writing in the 1990s Kurihara Kōhei depicts the activities of groups such as Beheiren within the wider context of 1960s anti-establishment radicalism and youth - the hippie movement and communes and non-sect student radicals of Zenkyōtō. But at the time there was very little sense of being a peripheral or underground movement; no matter how small the demonstration it was still representative of ‘the people,’ an expression of postwar ideals. The years leading up to 1970 were synonymous with protest, demonstrations and resistance as activists sought to realize the potential that 1970 had come to promise. The anticipation of 1970 not only inspired activism, it encouraged self-reflexivity and sociological inquiry into the nature and dynamics of protest and the distance that had been travelled since the demonstrations of 1960.

i. The political machinations

While my goal in this section is to outline the modes of activism and the conceptions of protest that were ushered in by the anticipation of 1970 Ampo, it is important to consider the political machinations of the episode. In many ways the political maneuvering of the government, as well as the character of protests that occurred prior to 1970, provided an ambiguous precursor to the Ampo demonstrations. As I have already indicated the anticipation of 1970 was an important stimulus for political activism but in terms of confronting the dictates of the government, of protesting against the state, the upheaval is conspicuous for its failure. The protests of June 23, 1970 appeared to be forlorn hope as the tides turned against the anticipated upheaval.

Like the political activists organizing in opposition to his government, Prime Minister Satō and the LDP formulated policy and strategy to deal with the approaching renewal of the US-Japan security treaty in 1970. Not surprisingly, Satō looked to 1970 with some trepidation. Not only was there the lingering

memory of the massive 1960 demonstrations and the consequent resignation of Prime Minister Kishi, but also the fact that Satō had staked his political career upon the US relationship and its benefits to Japan and was under considerable pressure to make it work. Satō had given his full support to the unpopular war in Vietnam and the policies of the Johnson administration, and had campaigned hard for maintaining strong ties with the United States.

In many ways the Ryūkyū Island chain, over 1000 kilometers south of Kyōshū, held the key to the successful negotiation of the political terrain. The islands, the largest of which is Okinawa, had been occupied by the US military since the end of Pacific War in what John Dower refers to as a ‘grotesque appendage to the US nuclear strategy in Asia.’\(^60\) It was the most explicit and enduring symbol of Japan’s subordination to the United States in the late 1960s and its return to Japanese sovereignty was being demanded on all sides of politics. The JCP and JSP were demanding the return of Okinawa and newspaper polls revealed that the vast majority of people were keen to see its early return.\(^61\) Thus in 1969-70 the Satō administration attempted to trade off the ratification of the security treaty with the much heralded return of Okinawa to Japanese sovereignty after almost 25 years of US military occupation. The two objectives went hand in hand. The return of Okinawa was one of the political goals that the Satō administration had pursued since 1965 and it made all else, including the defence relationship with the US, seem palatable to many Japanese. According to Satō the return of Okinawa would mark the end of the postwar period in Japan and represented a long awaited resumption of sovereignty over Japanese territory.\(^62\)

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\(^{62}\) Satō was willing to pay for Okinawa in order to secure a deal prior to 1970. Satō paid US$320 million for American facilities on Okinawa; he agreed to an aid program for South East Asia and the economic rehabilitation of Indo-China once peace had returned; and finally, contradicting the free trade commitments expressed in the communiqué, Satō secretly agreed to restrain Japan’s flourishing exports of synthetic fibers to the United States. Some believed that the price was too high and Sato eventually became unstuck over the last of them and was forced to resign in July
Even before Satō had secured the reversion of Okinawa to Japanese sovereignty the conditions under which it would be returned were a source of contention. Satō emphasized the notion of ‘Okinawa hondo nami’ - Okinawa under the same conditions as the rest of Japan - but the massive US bases were set to remain and play a key role in America’s ‘East-Asian defence umbrella.’ US Bases occupied 117 square miles or 12.7% of all the land area of the Ryūkyūs and 22% of the main island of Okinawa and they played an important part in the war in Vietnam. For many in Okinawa, including the newly elected Chief Executive Yara Chōbyō, liberation from military rule and the reintegration with Japan was not all that was required. Yara Chōbyō indicated that the reversion to Japan would be rendered meaningless unless the issue of the Ampo Treaty and the bases in Okinawa were also addressed. ‘The situation on the main Japanese islands,’ stated Yara, ‘simply can’t be compared to Okinawa which is covered with American Bases which impinge upon the lives of the Okinawan people in all sorts of ways.’

The response of pacifist groups on both sides of the Pacific was alarm. Even before 1969 progressives such as Ishida Takeshi decried the nationalism underlying the movement for reversion, and others within antiwar groups spoke of Japan’s remilitarization and condemned its re-emergence as an imperial power.

For groups such as Beheiren the return of Okinawa to Japanese sovereignty was fraught with the problems that characterized the governments’ foreign policy throughout the 1960s. Together with the Okinawa Reversion Council, Beheiren were concerned about the conditions under which reversion would take place and

1972. But, with this curb on Japanese exports kept under wraps Nixon and Satō were able to reach an agreement and November 21, 1969 the two leaders issued a joint communiqué promising the return of Okinawa by 1972. Satō indicated that, in the hope of securing all Japanese territory, the return of the Bonin Islands from Russian sovereignty would also be pursued.

Okinawa was the only Japanese territory to endure invasion and ground warfare in the final months of the Pacific War, and yet, paradoxically it was the only territory that did not gain access to the peace and democracy secured in the Postwar Constitution. Okinawa was the only territory to be kept under the rule of the US military when the Occupation period came to an end in 1952.

saw it as an opportunity lost. They called for the ‘liberation’ of Okinawa rather than simply the ‘reversion’ and demanded the complete withdrawal of the US military.\textsuperscript{66} JSP Chairman Narita Tomomi declared that ‘historians of the future will have to write down that Prime Minister Satō, in collusion with President Richard Nixon, drove this nation into ruin and humiliation.’\textsuperscript{67}

For many the terms negotiated by Satō confirmed the suspicion that the government did not represent the ideals of the nation. The speedy return of Okinawa had disguised the wider issue of an unequal military alliance: American bases on Japanese soil, Japan’s inability to determine its own international agenda or forge relations in Asia independently of the United States, and its military and strategic responsibilities under the terms of the Ampo security treaty. In an effort to avoid the wrath of the people in 1970 the government had relinquished control over the nation; at the very moment that full sovereignty was restored to Japan the LDP reaffirmed its dependence upon what was little more than a military pact with the United States. Okinawa was left as a ‘keystone of the Pacific,’ a ‘grotesque appendage’ to the US military strategy in Asia.

Despite these concerns the return of Okinawa was the most successful aspect of the strategy on Satō’s part and went a long way to placate the vehement opposition shown by the partisan left throughout the 1960s. With Okinawa secured the next step for Satō was to avoid the political debacle of 1960 and ratify the treaty with as little fanfare as possible. The only change that was to be made, and one that appealed to those on the political left and right, was that after 1970 the treaty could be scrapped with just one year’s notice. During the negotiations with Nixon, Satō encouraged the Americans to leave the treaty substantially unchanged so that it would be passed automatically on June 23 without having to

\textsuperscript{67} Narita Tomomi at a demonstration in Yoyogi Park, November 16, 1969. Quoted in \textit{Mainichi}
be negotiated through the Diet. In addition, the government was able to time sessions of parliament to ensure that it would not be sitting throughout June when the bill would be automatically extended. While many accused the Satō government of foul play by avoiding debates in the Diet, it was in fact a legitimate political tactic that saw Satō avoid the theatrics of 1960. In 1970 there was to be no flouting of parliamentary democracy or underhand tactics that would inspire the wrath of a responsive and active public. By avoiding the political machinations of the Diet, Satō effectively removed the political catalyst for demonstrations and opposition - the moment that the left had spent years preparing for, and the space in which they planned to launch their attack, had been taken away.

In case the maneuvering of the Satō government was not enough to derail the protest of 1970, problems emerged within the opposition movements themselves. The demonstrations, protest, activism and radicalism of the late 1960s provided a second ambiguous precursor to June 23, 1970 that only really offered hope to activists with a strongly revolutionary agenda. In the eyes of the media, the demonstrations of this period were marred by violence and sect rivalry as students fought each other with staves, threw molotov cocktails at police and disrupted train services. Throughout 1969-70 articles about student riots, police arrests and injury dominated the front pages of the national newspapers. Newspaper editorials in late 1969 and articles relating the injury of innocent onlookers or children in the vicinity of student rallies undermined the political legitimacy and efficacy of the Leftist organizations and movements.68 October 1969 saw headlines such as ‘violence on anti-war day’ reporting on the arrest of 1,221 students and carried photographs of students throwing molotov cocktails.69 Just one month later

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68 For example reports of November 16 reported the injury of kindergarten children from homemade explosives. See, *Mainichi Shimbun*, November 16, 1969.
69 To deal with the arrests the Tokyo procuratorial authorities established a special prosecution office manned by 170 procurators. See, *Mainichi Shimbun*, November 20, 1969. Patricia Steinhoff notes that the huge number of arrests debilitated the student movement during this period and the fines that had to be paid to avoid prison sentences. See, Patricia Steinhoff, ‘Student protest in the 1960s,’ *Social Science Japan*, No. 15, March 1999, pp. 3-6.
similar headlines re-emerged when the district of Kamata near Tokyo’s Haneda airport was turned into a war zone in an unsuccessful bid by students to stop the departure of Satō for the meetings with President Nixon.

The negative appraisals of the press were exacerbated by the fact that the large left-wing organizations such as Sōhyō and the Japan Socialist Party resigned themselves to the fact that the treaty would be ratified well before June 1970 and showed little interest in a large scale and coordinated struggle over the issue. The JSP had suffered a massive defeat in the December general elections and union members were increasingly reluctant to participate in general strike action or political issues that did not impinge directly upon issues confronting people in the workplace. On June 23 strikes by Sōhyō members were generally limited to one or two hours duration in stark contrast to the events a decade before. The disinterest of the Sōhyō hierarchy was graphically illustrated by Chairman Horii who left Tokyo for the United States on June 13, just days before the automatic ratification of the Treaty and the anniversary of 1960, to attend a seminar on environmental pollution. Horii returned to Tokyo three days ahead of schedule, on June 19, after widespread criticism that he had jumped ship, but it did nothing to disguise his apathy.

With reports of violence plaguing the various sects and organizations and competing views over the best course of action, the potential for coordinated national demonstrations and activism on June 23 was further inhibited. The apparent inertia was represented by many in the media as an inability to replicate the massive demonstrations that characterized June 1960. But, with 1960 also plagued by faction fighting and splits in the opposition it would be more accurate to say that 1970 had not lived up to its expectations, to its promise of unified activism and political upheaval. In the months prior to June 1970 it appeared that the government’s political maneuvering, the antipathy being expressed towards violent protest, and the resignation of the opposition parties to defeat, would see 1970 result in little more than a series of dashed hopes.
In the light of the political machinations that I have outlined the opposition to the treaty in 1970 did not have the same sense of urgency that it did 5 or 10 years earlier. When the treaty was automatically ratified on June 23 1970 it was not expected to meet with the same vehement antagonism or despondency that greeted its forced ratification in 1960.  

On June 22, just one day before the automatic renewal of the treaty an article appeared in *Sankei Shimbun* which reflected upon the demise of the opposition and compared the atmosphere to the demonstrations of 1960.

We greet the historical day today when the fixed term of the security treaty will expire. However, the calm atmosphere shows a complete change from the “1960 Ampo” … From the viewpoint of political dynamics, this may be the result of efforts not to make the “1970 Ampo” a political issue. There is no concrete, political schedule for seeking Diet approval, and the anti-security treaty forces have no idea about mounting the struggles. The anti-Treaty forces themselves have receded and remain confused, as symbolized by the decline of the JSP.

In view of the significance of this day, which has been identified as the peak of the struggle since many years ago, what is the matter? It could be said that “1970 Ampo” was a big ghost image after all. What the security of a nation should be is a serious question on which the existence of the nation depends. Nevertheless, “1970 Ampo” has failed to be a political season. This fact is important. Thinking of the situation 10 years ago we are keenly aware of the contrast between the present and the past.

It was not the ‘contrast between the present and the past’ but rather the contrast between the imagined 1970 and the limited protests of early Shōwa 45 – the 1970 that existed before its present had revealed itself. 1970 was not only expected to replicate the events of 1960 but according to many it would see the overthrow of the government and the displacement of the security treaty. By 1970 it was clear to all that this was not going to happen; Satō had secured the return of

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72 Shōwa 45 is 1970.
Okinawa, negotiated an alliance that could be scrapped with just one year’s notice, and he had not contravened the democratic system. Satō had, in sum, spent the latter part of the 1960s ensuring that the imagined 1970 would be avoided. It is in this context that, on June 22, he issued a statement regarding the treaty that claimed solidarity between the government and the people. He stated:

> The fact that the Japanese people now enjoy peace, an unprecedented economic prosperity and a great improvement in the standards of everyday life is eloquent testimony to the wisdom of the electorate in their choice of foreign policy. The Japanese government is convinced that its decision at the threshold of the 1970s to maintain that established and successful policy will meet wide support from the people.73

Paradoxically the statement sounds remarkably similar to Kishi’s assertion in 1960 that he speaks on behalf of the ‘voiceless voices’ of Japan. As I will indicate below the unfolding reality of 1970 revealed the incredible similarity between 1960 and 1970 – the continuing vibrancy of civil society defined in opposition to an unresponsive state. Satō’s policies in the late 1960s, his efforts to return Okinawa at a premium, and his reluctance to alter the treaty so that it would pass without fanfare was driven by a fear of 1970.

ii. The cultures of protest

June 23 1970 saw the largest street demonstrations of the postwar period in Japan. The national newspapers reported that 1.6 million people came onto the streets of 1,345 cities and towns around Japan. The national police agency estimated the figure far lower at 774,000 persons but even this figure represents a massive increase over the previous peak of 555,000 demonstrators recorded in one day during 1960. The central rally jointly sponsored by the Socialist and the Communist parties drew the greatest turnout of 220,000 (87,000 according to police) at Yoyogi Park near Meiji Shrine.74 This event marked the only joint

action taken by the JSP and the JCP during the period and was addressed by Socialist chairman Narita Tomomi who called for the ‘establishment of a government ready to scrap the treaty.’ In a separate rally held at Meiji Park in Sendagaya a crowd of almost 50,000 (28,000 by police estimates) staged a demonstration sponsored by the anti-Communist Party student sects, the Anti-War Youth League (Seineniinkai), and the All-Japan Joint Struggle Committee (Zenkyōtō). Representatives from the various student organizations made speeches criticizing the rally held at nearby Yoyogi Park and expressed a firm resolve to intensify their own struggle. Radical groups such as the Marxist Leninist Faction (ML ha) and the Anti-Imperialist Student Council (Hantei Gappyo) also staged zig-zag style street parades, attacked police boxes, threw molotov cocktails and used weapons against police as they proceeded through Aoyama 3-chome. Newspapers reported that many police, students and onlookers were injured in the hostilities and riot police arrested 501 people. The rally held by Beheiren and other civic groups was held in Shimizudani park, the site of their first demonstration in 1965, and reportedly drew a crowd of about 30,000 (police-14,500) people who listened to speeches and then proceeded on a march to Ginza via the Diet Building. As many had done 10 years earlier, demonstrators spread out across the street holding hands in ‘French style demonstrations’. One of the significant differences to 10 years before however was that a feminist group led the demonstrators as they set out from Shimizudani Park to Shinbashi.

Beheiren had coordinated the ‘June Action Committee’ which began demonstrating everyday from the beginning of June and calling for ‘large scale mobilization without Gewalt’ (without violence). They had attracted only 250 people to the first of the demonstrations but the number steadily increased as they approached June 23 with about 4000 people participating. Massive demonstrations were staged by the Committee on June 14 as they mobilized

75 Narita quoted in Mainichi Shimbun, November 16, 1969, 384.
people for a day of joint action (daikyōdō kōdō) and on June 15 they staged demonstrations commemorating the death of Kamba Michiko in the Diet building demonstrations of 1960. With some student groups reconciling themselves to the fact that June 23 did not represent an opportunity to instigate revolution, Beheiren was able to forge an alliance with anti-JCP sects (Han Yoyogi-ha) that were affiliated in the loose federation of the National Joint Struggle Council (Zenkoku Zenkyōtō). The edition of Beheiren’s English language publication Ampo: A Report from the New Left in Japan published after the protests noted that the demonstrations were ‘the biggest in Japanese history’ and concluded: ‘Literally millions of people took to the streets in June. And the June action was only the opening for the 70s. They’ll be back.’

The following day the national papers reported the fact that record numbers of people had demonstrated in the parks and on the streets of Japan. In spite of, or perhaps because of the inertia of the opposition parties, and the emphasis taken off June as a ‘political season,’ record crowds emerged to express their antipathy to the state and their commitment to activism. In a recent account Thomas Havens refers to the demonstrations as the ‘enigma of June 1970,’ protests occurring despite the numerous factors conspiring against them. But it was clear in 1970 that protest and activism had a logic and symbolism that made it more than simply a reaction to government policy or the dictates of the partisan Left. Okinawan representative Kyan Shinei wrote in July 1970:

In our country, the day June 23 1970, when the fixed term of the security treaty comes to an end and is automatically ratified, is etched into the national consciousness. It is the day that, from the bottom of our hearts, the people of the this nation (kokumin) whom desire peace and independence, stand up and demand the abolition of the military alliance that is Ampo.

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78 Thomas Havens, Fire Across the Sea, 204.
Whether or not the crowds were demanding the abolition of *Ampo* is unclear but certainly June 23 seemed to have been ‘etched onto the national consciousness,’ a day set outside for popular political expression. It highlighted the enduring distrust of national politics and the reticence towards the parliamentary democracy as a vehicle for political expression. The scale of the demonstrations also hinted at the importance placed upon autonomous political activism.

In 1968 Hidaka Rokurō had outlined the gulf between the people and the government stating: ‘the majority in the Diet has become a minority outside the Diet, and yet the government, especially since Satō took power has been reticent about employing flexible policies in response to changes in public opinion and criticisms by the mass media and the people in general.’

Surveys published by Hidaka indicated widespread antagonism towards the government’s foreign policy stance. One survey to which he referred in the article posed the question: ‘Do you believe that the government’s foreign policy reflects the views of the nation (*kokumin*)?’ The question itself was illustrative of the negative sentiment towards the government and the significance placed upon foreign policy in Japanese politics at this time. With just 12% answering in the affirmative, Satō’s claims to represent the people in his foreign policy position seems like little more than self-deception. In the light of these surveys Hidaka emphasized the importance of direct democracy and highlighted the encouraging signs that had emerged throughout Japanese society. The national election results of the previous December seemed to indicate support for the Treaty but, as Mutō Ichiyō noted, the turn out for the elections were at a record low of 68.5% of eligible voters and less than 50% in Tokyo, Osaka, Saitama and Kyoto.

If nothing else the figures, achieved immediately after the return of Okinawa had been secured

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82 Satō’s approval rating fell to a record low of 14% by early 1972 and he was forced to resign over the deals that he had done with President Nixon in 1969. Mutō Ichiyō, ‘Beyond the New Left.’
by the Satō government, indicate that Japan’s opposition parties did not provide
the alternative avenue for political expression.

Tokyo University Professor Shinohara Hajime drew similar conclusions in 1971,
lamenting that ‘so far, [the trend in] national politics has been to follow meekly
the prevailing situation … A positive political style like that of Roosevelt has
been practically unknown in Japanese politics. Unless the people are given the
sense that national politics is achieving something worthwhile they will not trust
politicians regardless of the lip service that they receive.’ In the June edition of
Beheiren Nyūsu, activist Fukutomi Setsuo reflected upon the sense of despair and
the challenge that activists faced in June. ‘As we come to meet the first June of
the new decade with the US Army launching a full-scale invasion of Indo-China,’
wrote Fukutomi, ‘what can our citizens’ activism sketch out? Alternatively, in the
empty hopelessness of the situation, what can we bring forward?’ Fukutomi
advocated a style of activism that would facilitate ‘individual subjectivity’ (kojin
shutaisei) and further encourage community subjectivity and local movements.

The disillusionment with the state that characterized the 1960 demonstrations had
not dissipated by 1970 and many intellectuals and activists remained hopeful that
the people were looking towards groups such as Beheiren for political expression
rather than to the Diet. Niimura Makibumi saw the actions of groups such as
Beheiren and other citizens groups as an important part of the month-long series
of protests. ‘One of the special features of the 1970 struggle,’ wrote Niimura,

was that various different styles and groups emerged in opposition to
Ampo. They were “mini-demonstrations.” In 1960 we could identify a
lot of citizens’ activism (shimin undō) but in 1970 the numbers were
even greater. [The level of citizens’ activism] had increased
dramatically.

83 Shinohara Hajime, ‘Bunka henyō to chihō seiji no kadai,’ Sekai, April, 1971, 38.
84 Fukutomi Setsuo, ‘6gatsu no atarata nan kyōdō kōdō o mitomete,’ Beheiren Nīsu, No.57, June
1970.
85 Niimura Makibumi, ‘10 nen mae [6 gatsu]: 70 nen anpo kara 70 nen dai tōso e,’ Sekai, August
1970.
Niimura sites small-scale demonstrations held throughout June in parks and streets around Tokyo such as Edogawa Park, Aoyama and Jingumae, as examples of the active citizenry. He saw the demonstrations of June 14 as the clearest example of the new trends in protest and applauded the involvement of disparate citizens and groups. Writing in 1969, Beheiren Chairman Yoshikawa Yuichi indicated that Beheiren could not be understood within the frames of analysis that the press had established, fitting demonstrators into predefined groups such as ‘students,’ ‘workers’ and ‘citizens.’ Yoshikawa noted that Beheiren’s strength was its plurality and it was representative of activism that defied the existing frames of reference.

Founding member of the Voiceless Voices, Kobayashi Tomi, paid little heed to the tactical limitations or political machinations of 1970 Ampo, drawing attention instead to the sense of hope that was engendered in the lead up to 1970. Over the course of the 1960s Kobayashi had interviewed various people at demonstrations throughout Japan. In a 1968 article she reflected upon the dynamics of protest, styles of activism, the enduring passion for social change and renewal, and the desire to shift the structures of power and the nature of organization that characterized the political system in Japan. In her article ‘The voiceless voices of youth’, Kobayashi begins by discussing Kamba Michiko, the student killed in the demonstrations in 1960, and the reaction of fellow demonstrator and friend Fukuda who made regular visits to the site of Kamba’s death. According to Kobayashi, individuals from the Voiceless Voices were able to mourn Kamba, to reflect upon her significance and learn from the episode in a way that members of the political parties were unable to do. The subjectivity (shutaisei) that the ‘average citizens’ encouraged allowed for a plurality and individuality that brought them into touch with Kamba and did not threaten political allegiances as it did in the JCP. The non-aligned nature of the movement allowed them to circumvent the ‘group psychology and political goals’ that circumscribed the

mourning. Kobayashi believed that this was the enduring facet of 1960 that had become stronger in the lead up to 1970. The demonstrations throughout the period - the style of activism and the accessibility of the movements - made people reflect upon their individual subjectivity, identity and responsibility.\(^87\)

In terms of direct democracy and legal forms of political expression, Fukutomi Setsuo alluded to a trend that emerged in the protest, and one that quickly came to take the middle ground in the political cultures of protest in the 1970s - localized styles of activism and the development of community based networks.\(^88\) On June 23, Beheiren and the localized groups identified earlier exemplified the new style of activism and were able to muster independent and autonomous groups throughout the country in an attempt to foster community based activism and individual initiative. Their focus on foreign policy issues was gradually eschewed for the sake of localized issues and the fostering of community resistance but their style provided an important precursor to later trends in activism.

The June 16 edition of *Tokyo Shimbun* drew attention to the new trend stating: ‘The most noteworthy change during the past 10 years is the conspicuous decline of the “established left-wing,” represented by the Socialist Party and Sōhyō, and the rapid emergence of the “new left-wing,” such as violent student groups, the Anti-War Youth Committee (Hansen) and Beheiren.’\(^89\) This statement draws attention to the fundamental shift that had transpired over the course of the 1960s as new forms of activism came to occupy an important place in national politics. June 1970 was not simply about political success or failure; it was about the location of political power, the nature of activism, and the foundations for an autonomous subject in postwar Japan.

Various cultures of protest had emerged in 1970 that were drawing on the dynamism of protest and activism internationally. At its most radical some protest groups were coming to the fore in an effort to finally bring about revolution where

\(^{87}\) Kobayashi Tomi, ‘Koe naki koe no wakamonotachi,’ *Shisō no Kagaku*, November 1968, pp. 44-49.

\(^{88}\) Fukutomi Setsuo, ‘6gatsu no ataratana kyōdō kōdō o mitomete.’

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the mass demonstrations had failed. Two significant events that have come to occupy the center ground in popular histories of the period and which represent conspicuous examples of the divergence in protest, were the hijacking of the JAL plane on route to Korea in late March 1970 by The Red Army Faction (Sekigun ha) and the ritual suicide of novelist Mishima Yukio in November 1970. The Red Army was an extremist faction that had split from the Communist League in May 1969 believing that it was necessary to create an army and stage an armed insurrection as part of the strategy of worldwide simultaneous revolution. It represented the most militant end of the student agenda. Mishima, on the other hand, was a staunch rightwing nationalist who attacked the pragmatism of the state and revered the Emperor as the spiritual head of the nation. Both represent the opposite extremes of largely symbolic forms of protest in 1970 and in many ways their confluence is problematic – they maintained very different political agendas. Nevertheless both highlight the significance attached to protest in the 1960s and the disparate forms that it had taken by 1970. They give us some indication of how far activism and political expression had come since 1960 when activists had sought to protect parliamentary democracy and usher in new forms of citizens’ activism. Protest had reached a peak as a mode of political expression by 1970 and there was no discernible boundary to its form or focus.

By 1970 protest was not simply ‘against the state’; protest had its own motivating factors, its own rationale, and was guided by its own political and cultural significance. Government policy remained the focus of opposition but it was the failure of parliamentary democracy in 1960, and the subsequent disillusionment with the state that emerged as the impetus behind the protest and resistance of 1970. We are reminded here of the formation of groups such as the Science of Thought Group which stressed the importance of individual political expression independently of the state, as well as people such as Yoshimoto Takaaki who saw the state and parliamentary democracy as a fiction – the deception of the nation.

89 Tokyo Shimbun, June 16 1970.
90 For example the Mainichi Shimbun publication on the postwar period, Mainichi Shimbun, Sengō Nihon no 50 nen, Mainichi Shimbunsha, 1995.
The state was silenced as a legitimate sphere through which to speak for the nation after the Pacific War and in its wake people looked to the sites of political activism. 1960 and 1970 Ampo framed the decade within the promise of activism facilitating the search for alternative means of political expression, for the enactment of social and personal autonomy.

**Conclusion**

By 1970 the cultures of protest were diverging in a hundred different directions. Protest was disparate and multifaceted; movements could not be readily defined or coordinated and they had limited strength when it came to policy or governance. Sato had effectively divested the demonstrations of June 1970 of their political significance, the crisis point that many were hoping for did not eventuate, and the opposition parties and union leaders lost interest in the entire event. Yet, record crowds emerged on the streets. June 23 had maintained its national significance from 10 years before. To protest, to express political ideals and desires was central to the political culture of the period. In 1970 thousands of demonstrators were brought into touch with the energy, enthusiasm and disillusionment of 1960. They responded to the symbolism of the moment rather than to any concrete goals, acknowledging the centrality of protest to the political culture - to Japan’s democracy.

During the 1960s these concrete sites of political activism – both real (1960) and imagined (1970) – attributed to the cultures of protest vibrancy and relevance that sustained them over the course of the 1960s. The cultures of protest brought the notions of agency, participation and activism to life as a basis from which Japan could articulate a postwar identity. In this context the Vietnam War, and the widespread opposition to Japan’s involvement in that war, became an important basis for new forms of protest and activism. In the following chapter I will illustrate that the civil society that emerged in 1960 became a powerful foundation from which to articulate Japan’s place in the world. The representation of ‘the people’ within protest and activism – as autonomous subjects - emerged as a basis upon which to perform a national identity. It was a concrete and powerful sphere.
of activism that could be harnessed not only in opposition to the government but also as a means of circumventing the dictates of the state.