

Finding Meaning Online: Grassroots Media & Conservative Activism in Japan

Doctoral Dissertation
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Abstract

This dissertation examines a relatively new phenomenon in Japanese society: internet-mediated grassroots conservative activism. More specifically, it explores the activism of Nihon Bunka Channel Sakura, an internet broadcaster that has promoted and organized some of postwar Japan's largest conservative demonstrations. Guided by the concepts of Strategic Action Field Theory, it explores how Nihon Bunka Channel Sakura maintained cohesion, raised funds, and held protests that regularly drew hundreds to thousands of participants. It is argued that skilled social actors within Nihon Bunka Channel Sakura have built a cohesive grassroots protest organization through the creation of shared meaning for itself and its supporters. Nihon Bunka Channel Sakura's use of social skill within certain fields is explored through an examination of three protest campaigns: the campaign against a 2009 public television documentary, the 2011 campaign against the contents of a planned historical signboard in Okinawa, and the post-2010 activism involving the Senkaku Islands territorial dispute.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	5
INTRODUCTION	7
ORIGINALITY AND RELEVANCE OF RESEARCH.....	10
STRUCTURE.....	11
CHAPTER 1: LITERATURE REVIEW, THEORY, AND METHODOLOGY.....	15
1.1 LITERATURE REVIEW – THE INTERNET & ACTIVISM IN JAPAN	15
1.2 LITERATURE ON INTERNET-MEDIATED COLLECTIVE ACTION	18
1.3 STRATEGIC ACTION FIELDS.....	21
1.4 METHODOLOGY	26
1.5 <i>Notes on Methods & Terminology</i>	30
CHAPTER 2: THE LANDSCAPE OF POST-WAR JAPANESE CONSERVATIVE ACTIVISM.....	33
2.1 THE PRE-1990 PERIOD	33
2.1.1 <i>Traditional Uyoku Organizations</i>	34
2.1.2 <i>Anti-Leftist Student Movements</i>	36
2.1.3 <i>The New Right</i>	39
2.1.4 <i>Old Uyoku and New Uyoku - The “Politics of Futility”</i>	40
2.2 THE 1990’S AND THE ASSERTIVE CONSERVATIVE RIGHT	42
2.3 THE ASSERTIVE CONSERVATIVE RIGHT	46
2.3.1 <i>Conservative Politicians</i>	49
2.3.2 <i>Tsukurukai</i>	53
2.3.4 <i>Kobayashi Yoshinori</i>	55
2.3.5 <i>Nippon Kaigi</i>	57
2.3.6 <i>Tamogami Toshio</i>	59
2.3.7 <i>New Conservative Hate Groups</i>	62
2.3.8 <i>The Net Uyoku</i>	66
2.4 CLOSING THOUGHTS	69
CHAPTER 3: THE BIRTH OF CHANNEL SAKURA.....	71
3.1 TAGATA TAKEO – KAMIKAZE PILOT ACTIVIST	72
3.2 MATSUURA YOSHIKO – A STUDENT OF MISHIMA AND JAPAN’S NEW RIGHT.....	76
3.3 SATORU MIZUSHIMA.....	81
3.4 FUNDING CHANNEL SAKURA	88
3.5 CHANNEL SAKURA’S PROGRAMMING	92
3.6 CHANNEL SAKURA ON YOUTUBE	95
3.7 TAMOGAMI TOSHIO.....	104
3.8 GANBARE NIPPON	105
3.9 CHANNEL SAKURA’S VISION OF THE JAPANESE PEOPLE	107
3.10 CHANNEL SAKURA & THE MAINSTREAM MEDIA	110
3.11 NON-VIOLENCE & LEGAL PROTEST	112
3.12 HATE SPEECH.....	114

3.13 COOPERATION WITH ALLIED ORGANIZATIONS.....	116
3.13.1 <i>The Pro-Taiwan Independence Organizations in Japan</i>	117
3.13.2 <i>Benefits for Allied Organizations</i>	120
3.14 THOUGHTS ON CHANNEL SAKURA’S FOUNDATION.....	124
CHAPTER 4: CHANNEL SAKURA’S MEANING-MAKING.....	126
4.1 PATRIOTIC HEROES.....	126
4.1.1 <i>Yoshida Shoin</i>	127
4.1.2 <i>Saigo Takamori</i>	130
4.1.3 <i>Mishima Yukio</i>	131
4.1.4 <i>Practical Heroes</i>	132
4.2 SYMBOLS ON THE SET.....	134
4.3 RALLYING AROUND THE FLAG AT YASUKUNI.....	137
4.4 YOUTUBE COMMENT THREADS.....	143
4.5 MEANING FROM HISTORICAL COMPARISONS.....	143
4.5.1 <i>Meaning from the Holocaust</i>	144
4.6 THOUGHTS ON MEANING MAKING.....	152
CHAPTER 5: THE ANTI-NHK PROTEST CAMPAIGNS	154
5.1 BACKGROUND – NHK, BIAS, AND PROTEST ACTIVITIES.....	154
5.2 STRATEGIC ACTION FIELD.....	160
5.3 THE “JAPAN DEBUT” PROTEST CAMPAIGN.....	162
5.4 FIRST RESPONSES.....	165
5.6 ISSUES OF CONTENTION.....	170
5.6.1 <i>Editing Interviews with Elderly Taiwanese</i>	170
5.6.2 <i>The Japan-Taiwan War</i>	175
5.6.3 <i>Taiwanese Identity Issues</i>	177
5.6.4 <i>The Paiwan People and a “Human Zoo”</i>	179
5.6.5 <i>Use of Subliminal Images</i>	184
5.7 PROTEST METHODS USED.....	185
5.7.1 <i>Online Video Content</i>	185
5.7.2 <i>Offline Protests</i>	189
5.7.3 <i>The Involvement of Lawmakers</i>	192
5.7.4 <i>Telephone & E-mail Complaints to NHK</i>	194
5.7.5 <i>Class-Action Lawsuit</i>	197
5.8 THE ANTI-NHK PROTESTS: CONCLUSION.....	203
CHAPTER 6: REMEMBERING THE BATTLE OF OKINAWA.....	207
6.1 CIVILIAN DEATHS IN OKINAWA: WHO TO BLAME?.....	207
6.2 THE COMFORT WOMEN ISSUE.....	211
6.3 EVENTS IN THE 2000’S.....	214
6.4 STRATEGIC ACTION FIELD.....	217
6.5 THE 32 ND ARMY HEADQUARTERS.....	217
6.6 A “CENSORED” SIGNBOARD.....	221
6.7 CLOSING THOUGHTS.....	225

CHAPTER 7: THE SENKAKU ISLANDS: PROTEST MARCHES & BOAT ACTIVISM.....	227
7.1 SENKAKU ISLANDS – BACKGROUND	228
7.1.1 Territorial Disputes Emerge.....	231
7.1.2 The Field of Senkaku Island Sovereignty.....	232
7.1.3 Japanese Activists.....	234
7.1.4 A Short Period of Calm.....	239
7.1.5 Channel Sakura & the Senkakus: Pre-2010	246
7.2 THE 2010 BOAT COLLISION INCIDENT	250
7.3 CHANNEL SAKURA & NIHON SEINENSHA	257
7.4 AFTER THE VIDEO LEAKED.....	259
7.5 CROWDFUNDING FOR A BOAT	264
7.6 BUYING THE SENKAKU ISLANDS	271
7.7 LANDING ON UOTSURI ISLAND.....	273
7.8 CHINA’S REACTION.....	280
7.9 INCREASED RESTRICTIONS ON BOAT ACTIVISM.....	282
7.10 RETURNING TO THE SENKAKUS.....	284
7.11 CLOSING THOUGHTS	285
CONCLUSION.....	286
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH	294
LIST OF REFERENCES.....	296

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Introduction

A literature student was sitting at his desk in a classroom at Waseda University, waiting for class to begin. He had expected it to be like any other day, but it turned out to be a turning point for his life.

The professor arrived late. With a stunned look on his face, he informed to the class that Mishima Yukio had just committed suicide. The shock was so great that he could not teach the class. Instead, he sent the students home, telling them to use the rest of the day to think about what had just happened.

It was November 25, 1970. One of Japan's most famous novelists was dead. But it was no normal suicide. Mishima, the founder of his own private student militia, committed suicide after taking a Japanese general hostage and calling on the military to carry out a coup d'état.

The literature student watched the Japanese television news coverage of Mishima's failed coup. At one point, Mishima walked out onto a balcony and tried to address a group of soldiers assembled in front of the building. But his speech was drowned out by the jeering and shouting of annoyed and angry soldiers. Television news helicopters also contributed to the noise. The speech failed to win over the soldiers. Mishima went inside and committed ritual suicide with a Japanese sword.

The young literature student strained to hear what Mishima was saying, but it was too difficult. The noise from the news helicopters was just too loud for

him. It made him come to a conclusion about the state of postwar Japan: a patriotic man's voice could not be heard. When he later sought out and read one of Mishima's last articles, the following passage deeply impacted him:

*"I cannot have much hope for the future of Japan. As days pass, I feel more and more deeply that if things should proceed this way, 'Japan' might end up disappearing. Japan might disappear, and in its place, a large economic country, which is inorganic, vacant, neutral, medium colored, wealthy, and shrewd, would remain at one corner of the Far East. I don't feel like conversing with those people who think that that is all right."*¹

Thirty-four years later, the former literature student – Mizushima Satoru – would meet someone else whose life had been touched by Mishima. Together, they would found an alternative media outlet that would try to break through what they considered to be the noise of the mainstream media. They wanted to prevent the "disappearance" of Japan that Mishima had warned was coming. Anyone with an internet connection would be able to view their programs and hear their message.

This is a dissertation that examines a relatively new phenomenon in Japan: internet-mediated grassroots conservative activism. More specifically, it

¹ From Mishima's 果たし得てゐない約束—私の中の二十五年 (The Promise that is not fulfilled—25 years in me), 1970. English translation from: Joseph Verbovsky, "Overcoming Modernity in Yukio Mishima," Discussions, 2013. <http://www.studentpulse.com/articles/797/2/overcoming-modernity-in-yukio-mishima>.

explores the activism of Nihon Bunka Channel Sakura (Japanese Culture Channel Sakura: hereafter referred to as Channel Sakura), an internet broadcaster that has promoted and organized some of postwar Japan's largest conservative demonstrations.

The protests have goals that many readers would consider very far from the mainstream of Japanese society. For example, Channel Sakura has called for the complete dissolution of NHK, Japan's national broadcaster, on the grounds that it is an "anti-Japanese" organization. They have also regularly held demonstrations outside of the offices Japan's second most popular newspaper, denouncing its journalists as traitors and agents of communist China.

Yet now in 2014, ten years after its founding, Channel Sakura is arguably as strong an organization as ever. How do we make sense of this phenomenon? How can one explain its ability to maintain cohesion, raise funds, and regularly hold protests that draw hundreds or even thousands of participants?

This dissertation answers these questions by arguing that skilled social actors within Channel Sakura (and its protest wing, Ganbare Nippon) are able to create shared meaning for its supporters and allies. As a part of Japan's assertive conservative right, Channel Sakura taps in to an existing niche of the Japanese population that find value in a worldview that treats Japan's colonial conduct and participation in World War II as something worthy of pride. Although they are a minority within Japanese society, they are ever-watchful for new opportunities to challenge the existing order and advocate on behalf of their views.

Guided by Fligstein & McAdam's theories of Strategic Action Fields² and Social Skill, I will explore Channel Sakura's emergence and participation in several protest campaigns. As a challenger within several fields, the social actors leading Channel Sakura seek out chances to challenge those who want to maintain the status quo. Lacking the resources of the incumbents, the challengers must try to compensate by finding new and innovative means of taking action. And to maintain cohesion and continue carrying out collective action, social actors must create shared meaning for themselves and their collective partners. This meaning comes through explaining the state of the field and their position within it and explaining their activist campaigns in a manner that can induce cooperation in others.

Originality and Relevance of Research

Through this research, I aim to contribute some new material to the understanding of conservative and right-wing politics and activism in Japan. As Higuchi Naoto noted in early 2014, despite a great deal of journalistic attention being devoted to nationalist and xenophobic organizations in Japan, there exists a "paucity of research" from scholars on the topic.³

This is especially true when it comes to the citizens' groups that emerged in post-1990's Japan. Most existing studies on conservatives and right-wingers in Japan focus either on traditional "uyoku" groups, conservative politicians, or the government bureaucrats who screen history textbooks. Studies on the

² Neil Fligstein and Doug McAdam, *A Theory of Fields* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012)

³ Naoto Higuchi, "Japan's Far Right in East Asian Geopolitics: The Anatomy of New Xenophobic Movements," University of Tokushima, Social Sciences Research 28 (December 2014).

disputes over historical issues such as the “comfort women”, the “Nanking Massacre,” and history textbooks have placed most of their focus upon state-level actors, politicians, or left-leaning groups that have fought against the right. This dissertation will address the gap in existing empirical research about the grassroots activism of Japanese conservative groups. There is also a lack of research on internet-mediated activism and internet media in Japan, so this dissertation will also contribute to an improved understanding of that topic.

From a sociological perspective, this dissertation will contribute an example of how Fligstein and McAdam’s theories of fields and social skill can be used to make sense of collective action. Rather than taking a “positivist” approach, I will be employing a “realist” approach. The use of the word “realist” in this context refers to idea that an event has its own real context that facilitates change, and it should not be confused with how the terms “realist” or “realism” are used in other theories. This means that my research is primarily empirical in nature and focuses on specific social actors in a unique historical and cultural context, employing the concepts of field theory and social skill to understand how they have organized, maintained cohesion, and created meaning for themselves and their followers. It will provide a valuable example of how the theoretical concepts of Fligstein and McAdam’s research are reflected in specific real world cases of conservative activism.

Structure

Counting this introduction chapter, the dissertation will be divided into nine sections. In chapter one, I will conduct a literature review of existing research

about internet-mediated activism in Japan and in other countries. The same chapter will introduce the concept of Strategic Action Fields and explain my research methodology.

Chapter two will introduce the landscape of conservative activism in postwar Japan. Because Channel Sakura was created by people with roots in both the traditional postwar right-wing and the post-1990's conservative activist organizations, the historical and social context will be explored. The chapter will also describe the existence of a segment of Japanese society that supports conservative activism. While serving as background for the later introduction of Channel Sakura, it will provide a detailed picture of the different organizations and individuals who make up the assertive conservative right in postwar Japan, something that has until now been lacking in academic studies of Japan's history disputes.

Chapter three will describe the founding Channel Sakura and Ganbare Nippon as a confluence of skilled social actors from different conservative backgrounds. It will also provide basic information about Channel Sakura's fundraising, programming, and conception of grassroots activism. This information is especially important for understanding how their organization has maintained financial stability and social cohesion.

Chapter four will look into the ways that Channel Sakura creates shared meaning for its supporters. This includes the use of historical stories and slogans to link their activism to a lineage of Japanese patriots who worked to save their country in times of crisis. The chapter also looks in to the use of

symbols and how non-Japanese history can be used to create meaning for Japanese activists.

Chapters five through seven will detail Channel Sakura's role in three protest campaigns. Each was chosen because they involved distinctly different types of targets, different types of activist tactics, and differing outcomes.

The first campaign (chapter 5) was against NHK for the airing of a "biased" historical documentary. It was chosen as a research topic because it involved a campaign against perceived media bias. Unlike the other two cases, it took on a legal dimension through a class-action lawsuit. Its outcome was a very small victory, with only one individual within the lawsuit being awarded damages. Other goals, such as the complete destruction of NHK, were unrealized.

The second campaign (chapter 6) was a protest against a proposed memorial signboard in Okinawa. It was chosen as a research topic because it involved a campaign against what Channel Sakura considers "anti-Japanese" academia. It also involves the action of outsiders from Tokyo trying to influence a local government decision in Okinawa. Its outcome was a victory for Channel Sakura – the signboard's contents were changed to reflect their demands.

The third campaign (chapter 7) is the activism surrounding the Senkaku Islands territorial dispute. In this case, Channel Sakura and Ganbare Nippon took advantage of destabilizing events to successfully organize major street demonstrations, raise money to buy a fishing boat, and carry out landings on the islands. It is one of the few fields in which a small organization can have a very visible impact. As the key players in this strategic action field are states, applying

field theory creates an interesting understanding of how international politics can impact private activist groups. The chapter also serves as one of the only comprehensive looks at Japanese activism around the Senkakus by drawing together fragmented sources that only provided narrow views of particular events.

Finally, the last chapter will summarize the findings and make suggestions about future research possibilities.

Chapter 1: Literature Review, Theory, and Methodology

This chapter will review the scholarly literature that informs this dissertation. The review will explore existing research on activism in Japan, as well as literature on internet-mediated collective action. It will then move on to introduce the theoretical framework of this dissertation, which is based on the theory of Strategic Action Fields. Lastly, It will explain the research methodology used in the coming chapters.

1.1 Literature Review – the Internet & Activism in Japan

Although the study of internet-mediated activism is a relatively new topic, there has been a considerable amount of research about its existence in Japan. In the 2003 book, *Japanese Cybercultures*, international scholars analyzed the nature of internet use and internet activism in Japan. In their introduction to the scholarly articles contained within the book, editors Nanette Gottlieb and Mark McLelland examined the question of whether or not the internet has “leveled the playing field” for activist organizations in Japan. Although they felt that the internet was a tool that gave increased voice to such organizations, they concluded that activist organizations such as Tsukurukai in 2001 lacked access

to the “finance, facilities, and expertise” that were necessary to truly exploit the potential power of the internet.⁴ The nature of the internet has changed vastly in the last 14 years, creating a need for new research into Japanese conservatives’ use of the internet in activism campaigns of the last few years.

More recent developments on internet activism and alternative media in Japan have been studied by Gabriele Hadl in 2010 book *Civic Engagement in Contemporary Japan*.⁵ Hadl looks at how several small independent media organizations have used video sharing sites such as YouTube to expand the distribution of their news content. Through such alternative media outlets, Hadl sees the opportunity for civic groups to create forums in which misunderstood social issues can be discussed and addressed.⁶ Other scholars have examined other aspects of internet politics and media in Japan, such as anti-Korean sentiment on bulletin boards and the online activities of major political parties.⁷ All of these studies provide an interesting insight into the ways in which various groups within Japanese society are using the internet, but scope of research is limited and structural factors that influence activist campaigns have been overlooked. They also do not provide any information about the activities of right-wing online media or right-wing internet activists.

There is also many illuminating works of research available about the views of nationalists, conservatives and right-wingers in Japan. Most recently,

4 Nanette Gottlieb and Mark McLelland, *Japanese Cybercultures* (New York: Routledge, 2003)

5 Henk Vinken et al., *Civic Engagement in Contemporary Japan* (Heidelberg: Springer-Verlag, 2010) pp. 153-169.

6 Ibid page 166

7 Mark McLelland, “‘Race’ on the Japanese internet: discussing Korea and Koreans on ‘2-channeru,’” *New Media & Society* 10, No. 6 (2008): 811-829 & Leslie M. Tkach-Kawasaki, “POLITICS@JAPAN: Party Competition on the Internet in Japan,” *Party Politics* 9, No. 1 (2003): 105-123.

notable contributions have included Togo Kazuhiko's analysis of the increasing assertiveness of the right-wing in a Japan under Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) rule, Kaihara Hiroshi's study of conservative views on history and morality, and Bryce Wakefield and Matthew Penney's look at public discourse about right-wing nationalism.⁸ On the left, Szczepanska has explored the views and activism of groups that have been fighting against Japan's right.⁹

Two scholars have conducted excellently informative research on right-wing activism in Japan: Daiki Shibuichi¹⁰ and Nathaniel M. Smith.¹¹ Their primary focus is on extreme right-wing groups (*uyoku*), but their research provides an illuminating window into a realm that resembles my own topic of research. There has also been some research in recent years on Zaitokukai, a radical xenophobic group that gained attention for its use of "hate speech" against Korean residents of Japan. (The findings of their research be discussed in greater detail in Chapters 2 and 7.)

However, non-extremist Japanese conservative activism has been almost completely ignored. Aside from the account of Tsukurukai's 2001 activism in *Japanese Cybercultures*, little has been written on the subject in the last 13 years. Much has occurred in the those years, and it needs academic attention.

⁸ Kazuhiko Togo, "The Assertive Conservative Right in Japan: Their Formation and Perspective," *SAIS Review* 30, no. 1, (2010): 77-89

Hiroshi Kaihara, "Contemporary conservative thoughts in Japan: conservative views on morality, history, and social issues," *International Relations Asia Pacific* 9, no. 2 (2009): 339-364

Matthew Penney and Bryce Wakefield, "Right Angles: Examining Accounts of Japanese Neo-nationalism," *Pacific Affairs* 81, no. 4, (2008): 537-555.

⁹ Szczepanska, Kamila. *The Politics of War Memory in Japan: Progressive Civil Society Groups and Contestation of Memory of the Asia-Pacific War*. New York: Routledge, 2014.

¹⁰ Shibuichi Daiki, "Contemporary Japanese Rightist Movements," PhD diss., National University of Singapore (2006)

¹¹ Nathaniel Michael Smith, "Right Wing Activism in Japan and the Politics of Futility," PhD diss., Yale University (2011)

1.2 Literature on Internet-Mediated Collective Action

Internet-mediated collective action has been studied by many sociologists in recent years, using a range of different theoretical approaches to show how activist organizations and social movements function. Examples of these approaches include Resource Mobilization Theory, New Social Movement Theory, and Frame analysis.

Resource Mobilization Theory (RMT) treats activists as taking part in rational actions that seek to increase their leverage within a political system.¹² The Resource Mobilization perspective places its main focus on how groups (Social Movement Organizations) interact and compete. As its name suggests, it treats the mobilization of key resources as crucial to collective action. The resources mobilized usually refer to physical resources (money, equipment) or persons (organizational staff, volunteers). When applied to cases involving the internet, the use of such technologies is usually treated as a tool for the mobilization of resources. Notable examples include Hara and Estrada's study of MoveOn and Stormfront¹³, Temirkulov's study of protesters using the internet in the Kyrgyz "revolutions" of 2005 and 2010, and Breuer, Landman, and Farquhar's study of social media in the 2010-2011 Tunisian Revolution¹⁴. There is also Eltantawy Wiest's study of the 2011 Egyptian revolution, which treats

12 J. D. McCarthy and M. N. Zald, "Resource mobilization and social movements: A partial theory," ed. S. M. Buechler and F. K. Cylke, in *Social Movements: Perspectives and Issues*, Mayfield Publishing Company, Mountain View, California, 1987. pp. 149 - 172.

13 N. Hara, "Analyzing the Mobilization of Grassroots Activities via the Internet: A Case Study," *Journal of Information Science* 31, no. 6 (2005): 503-14.

14 Anita Breue, Todd Landman, and Dorothea Farquhar, "Social Media and Protest Mobilization: Evidence from the Tunisian Revolution." *Democratization* (2014)

social media as a resource mobilized by anti-government activists.¹⁵ However, as Eltantawy and Wiest note, RMT does not fully address "the powerful influence of outside conditions, particularly the social, political, and historical contexts of the movement." Another major weakness of RMT is that it "neglects the existence of collective entities and socially constructed meaning as important social conditions for collective action as well as the emotional and affective background for individual decision-making and action."¹⁶

Scholars of New Social Movement (NSM) Theory and Cultural Framing Theory address the issues of shared meaning and collective identity that are neglected by structural theories such as RMT. The NSM approach places its focus upon "the content of movement ideology, the concerns motivating activists, and the arena in which collective action is focused – that is, cultural understandings, norms, and identities rather than material interests and economic distributions."¹⁷ It has also been used to study social movements that take place within virtual communities.¹⁸

The Framing approach seeks to analyze similar non-material factors, considering how social movements and collective actors define and construct

15 N. Eltantawy and J. B. Wiest, "Social media in the Egyptian revolution: Reconsidering resource mobilization theory," *International Journal of Communication* 5 (2011): 1207-1224.

16 Andrea Hemetsberger "Understanding consumers' collective action on the Internet - a definition and discussion of relevant concepts for research," *Advances in Consumer Research* 30 (2003): 161-161.

17 Rhys H. Williams, "The Cultural Contexts of Collective Action: Constraints, Opportunities, and The Symbolic Life Of Social Movements," ed. David A. Snow, Sarah Anne Soule, and Hanspeter Kriesi, in *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2004)

18 Brad McKenna, Lesley A. Gardner, and Michael Myers, "Social Movements in World of Warcraft," *AMCIS 2011 Proceedings - All Submissions*, no. 83 (2011).

("frame") issues of importance.¹⁹ Like NSM Theory, Frame Analysis has helped move the study of social movements "beyond the structural determinism of resource mobilization and political opportunity models and away from the dubious psychology of rational choice approaches."²⁰ Frame Analysis has been applied in ways that make valuable contributions to the understanding of internet-mediated collective action, for example: demonstrating online collective identity construction among environmentalists²¹, exploring museums use of social media to engage with online audiences²², analyzing the YouTube video and comment response to the Climatic Research Unit email controversy (Climategate)²³, and examining the interactivity between media producers and social media users during the Egyptian Revolution.²⁴

Critics of the cultural approaches taken by NSM theory and Framing have argued that political and economic structures are neglected at the expense of culture. It can be "overly ideational" and "overly instrumentalist and strategic" in its conception, reflecting a "dichotomous understanding of culture and

19 The most famous works outlining Frame Analysis are: Erving Goffman, "Frame Analysis," New York, NY: Harper (1974) and David A. Snow, E. Burke Rochford, Steven K. Worden, and Robert D. Benford, "Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation," *American Sociological Review* 51 (1986): 464-481.

20 Robert D. Benford, "An Insider's Critique of the Social Movement Framing Perspective," *Sociological Inquiry* 67, no. 4 (1997): 409-30.

21 Robert Ackland and Mathieu O'Neil, "Online Collective Identity: The Case of the Environmental Movement," *Social Networks* 33, no. 3 (2011): 177-90.

22 Jenny Kidd, "Enacting Engagement Online: Framing Social Media Use for the Museum," *Information Technology & People* 24, no. 1 (2011): 64-77.

23 Amanda J. Porter and Lina Hellstein, "Investigating Participatory Dynamics Through Social Media Using a Multideterminant "Frame" Approach: The Case of Climategate on YouTube," *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 19, no. 4 (July 2014).

24 Summer Harlow and Thomas J. Johnson, "The Arab Spring| Overthrowing the Protest Paradigm? How The New York Times, Global Voices and Twitter Covered the Egyptian Revolution," *International Journal of Communication* 5 (2011).

structure.”²⁵ Or, as Langman has pointed out in her analysis of the Occupy Wall Street movement, the identity and culture-centered approach is a “useful starting point,” but it does not do enough to address material/political factors.²⁶

In order to address the shortcomings of these approaches, I will turn to a theoretical approach that recognizes the importance of examining collective action by studying both political and economic structures together with non-material culture and existential motivations.

1.3 Strategic Action Fields

This dissertation will make use of the general theory of Strategic Action Fields, proposed by Neil Fligstein and Doug McAdam in 2011 and 2012. Its aim is to provide a broad perspective of social change and social order through the concept of Strategic Action Fields (SAFs), which are “mesolevel social orders...the basic building block of modern political/organizational life in the economy, civil society, and state.” They recognize that there have been “fruitful” contributions to the understanding of social order by scholars of social movements, economics, organizational theory, and structural political science. However, specialization within each discipline has led to a “balkanization” of research that prevents and constrains the exploration of commonalities that exist between disciplines. Elements such as “collective action, social space, culture, organization, the state, and mobilization, which are present in all these literatures, have not been integrated into a systematic theory in any of the subfields.” Thus,

25 Ann Mische. "Cross-Talk in Movements: Reconceiving the Culture-Network Link" in *Social Movements and Networks: Relations Approaches to Collective Action*, edited by M. Diani and D. McAdam . (2003). Oxford University Press. p. 279.

26 L. Langman. "Occupy: A New New Social Movement," *Current Sociology* 61, no. 4 (2013): 510-24.

to gain a bigger picture of collective strategic action within constructed social orders, SAF theory incorporates such elements into a systematic perspective.²⁷

A strategic action field is a “constructed mesolevel social order in which actors (who can be individual or collective) are attuned to and interact with one another on the basis of shared (which is not to say consensual) understandings about the purposes of the field, relationships to others in the field (including who has power and why), and the rules governing legitimate action in the field.”²⁸ All forms of collective actors, whether they are organizations, government systems, or social movements, are created from SAFs. Some fields can be inside other fields in a hierarchical manner, which Fligstein and McAdam compare to the image of Russian nesting dolls. In other cases, fields are positioned in a different manner. The connections between different fields generally indicate conditions of interdependence or the potential to effect change in one another.

Strategic Action Fields have no clear formalized boundaries, making them broader and more fluid than other sociological approaches to organization. Actors and groups can move across and between different SAFs, positions and arrangements within and between SAFs can be created or altered, and through a range of processes, an SAF can be either stabilized or de-stabilized. Social actors and organizations place themselves within SAFs and act based on the influence of “power and culture.”²⁹

²⁷ Neil Fligstein and Doug McAdam, *A Theory of Fields* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012) p. 1.

²⁸ Ibid 2

²⁹ Neil Fligstein and Doug McAdam, "Toward a General Theory of Strategic Action Fields*," *Sociological Theory* 29, no. 1 (2011): 22

One of Fligstein and McAdam's central ideas is the concept of social skill, a "microtheory" or "microfoundation" that aids in the understanding of what actors do within fields. It is defined as "the ability to induce cooperation in others."³⁰ Through their social interaction with others, actors are seeking to "create a positive sense of self by engaging in producing meaning for themselves and others." A "skilled social actor" is an actor who is particularly good at producing meaning by tailoring their actions to the current state of the field. They create "stories" that appeal to the "identity and interests" of their audience, aiming to gain their cooperation. The same "stories" are also used to induce actions against their opponents.³¹ Identities are defined as "sets of meanings that actors have that define who they are and what they want in a particular situation."³² Skilled social actors are constantly seeking to maintain or improve their position within a field.

Strategic Action Fields are composed of incumbents and challengers. Incumbents are actors with a privileged place within the field, having claim to most of the material and status rewards. The rules within a field tend to favor the incumbents, and prevailing shared meanings tend to legitimate their higher position. In contrast, challengers are actors who have less influence over a field. As part of the field, the challengers recognize their position relative to the incumbents and while they recognize "the dominant logic of incumbent actors,

30 Neil Fligstein, "Social Skill and the Theory of Fields," *Sociological Theory* 19, no. 2 (2001): 105-25.

31 Neil Fligstein and Doug McAdam. "Toward a General Theory of Strategic Action Fields*," *Sociological Theory* 29, no. 1 (2011): 14

32 Ibid 15

they can usually articulate an alternative vision of the field in their position in it.”³³

Within a stable field, challengers are “awaiting new opportunities to challenge the structure and logic of the system.”³⁴

I will employ what Fligstein and McAdam call a “realist approach” to the study of Strategic Action Fields. That is to say, rather than conduct a “positivist” (theory testing) study that aims to test the theoretical propositions of the SAF framework, I will instead be using the concepts of SAF’s to illustrate and explain a particular phenomenon of interest. Using a SAF framework will produce “research that contains a kind of sociological history in which the goal is to use concepts to make sense of how a particular set of actors get organized, stay in power, or perhaps find themselves supplanted by other actors.”³⁵ Or, in other words, this is a dissertation with an empirical focus, which uses the concepts of SAF theory to make sense of a specific group of social actors and their activist campaigns.

While accepting the assertion that SAF’s represent underlying general structures of social, political, and economic life that exist across a broad range of social processes in different geographical places and historical periods, I take the position that the one must also consider the unique context of an event. When studying any example of collective action, including grassroots conservative activism in Japan, it is crucial to gain an understanding of the “historical and culturally contingent meanings” that inform the actions of different actors.

33 Neil Fligstein and Doug McAdam, *A Theory of Fields* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012) pp. 5-11

34 Ibid

35 Ibid

Without an examination of that unique context, one would have a very incomplete understanding of how and why a specific SAF functions. Thus, I will ground this dissertation in its historical context, while viewing that context as fields.

By viewing the activism of Japanese conservative groups as collective action that takes place within fields, empirical examination will be structured around the concepts of SAF theory. Events will be examined for the interaction and competition between social actors – some of them incumbents and some of them challengers within fields. The structural influences upon actors and the cultural and ideational influence of meaning-making will be considered. Empirical examination will describe the structural and non-structural factors within fields and what they mean in specific events.

Key steps in using SAF theory to conduct research are: 1) identifying and defining a field; 2) accounting for proximate fields that have an impact on the field; 3) identifying key actors, their levels of resources/power, their motivations, their place in the field, and their role in its formation; 4) observing and describing the evolution of the field through the examination of periods of stability or periods of crisis and rupture.

When it comes to methodological techniques, Fligstein and McAdam are open to a variety of qualitative and quantitative approaches. They “reject the idea that field theory favors any particular technique or a small subset of quantitative techniques.”³⁶

³⁶ Ibid

1.4 Methodology

This is a dissertation about activists who use online media and social networking technologies, with collective meaning-making and action occurring both online and offline. The greatest wealth of information about Channel Sakura and Ganbare Nippon could be found in online sources – particularly in its thousands of videos, the comment and discussion threads written by its viewers, and in accounts of protest activities on blogs and message boards. Therefore, a methodology that could make sense of such materials was needed. In selecting methodologies for this dissertation, I have drawn upon a mix of qualitative methods used in a variety of disciplines, including sociology, history, anthropology, and media/communications studies.

For understanding the background of Channel Sakura's emergence and the major events in certain episodes of contention, I employ qualitative historical analysis. Drawing upon newspaper articles, books, and other secondary sources, I map out a chronological description of events that led to episodes of contention (protest campaigns) and the actions of social actors within fields.

To analyze the meaning-making and solidarity building properties of Channel Sakura's online videos, I will make use of a qualitative methodology known as textual analysis. Textual analysis³⁷ is a form of qualitative analysis that is frequently used by scholars of culture who have an interest in the investigation of media content. I will employ McKee's approach to interpretive cultural textual analysis, which is "a data-gathering process for those researchers who want to

³⁷ In this methodology, a "text" can be more than written words. It can include television, film, images, etc. Fursch has noted that there are a variety of different terms that refer to this kind of analysis. It has also been referred to as text-based analysis, thematic analysis, critical discourse analysis, ideological analysis, genre analysis, and cultural analysis.

understand the ways in which members of various cultures and subcultures make sense of who they are and of how they fit into the world in which they live.”³⁸ Through textual analysis, scholars interpret a text and examine it to find the “sense” or meaning that an audience will get from reading or viewing it. This interpretation must be carried out in a manner that takes into account the unique cultural context of the text’s consumption. In this sense, it that can be applied to gain an understanding of the “culturally contingent meanings” that inform social actors within a Strategic Action Field. And, because textual analysis takes the perspective that people within different cultures and subcultures can make sense of reality in very different ways, it is well-suited for the study of texts produced by what mainstream society might consider an extremist media outlet.

To a Japanese person educated in a public education system that uses textbooks and supplementary materials that treat the Nanking Incident and other wartime atrocities as a real historical events, Channel Sakura videos that depict them as “lies” might seem outlandish or bizarre. The same might be said of their accusations that Japan’s public broadcasting network is producing “anti-Japanese” propaganda. However, when performing textual analysis that considers the consumption of the videos within the context of a certain subculture of Japanese society – a group of people who subscribe to a different “reality” – such a video has a different meaning. Rather than being seen as a strange conspiracy theory, members of that subculture will see it as an informative and credible text. When studying such a group, a researcher needs to consider that

³⁸ Alan McKee, *Textual Analysis: A Beginner’s Guide* (London: Sage Publications, 2003) p. 1

"the people who make sense of this differently from me are not just stupid, or ill-informed, or evil - they have their own informed and ethical reasons for making sense" of "the truth."³⁹

This methodology also considers the creators of texts. The influence of media texts are treated as a complicated matter, as "media texts, like the sense-making practices of individuals, have to work within the practices that already exist." A media text creator can try to deliberately present information in a way that tries to alter the way viewers think, but needs to "draw upon existing ways of making sense in the world." Thus, "media producers deliberately try to produce texts that will fit in with the sense-making practices of audiences." This view is in harmony with the Strategic Action Field theory's concept of skilled social actors who help fellow participants and followers make sense of situations.

When carrying out a textual analysis, many interpretations are possible for the same text. It is necessary to "understand the variety of possible interpretations and the likely ones for various communities and not just repeat our own interpretation (description) of the text."⁴⁰ It is a methodology that aims to interpret and analyze the meaning found within a specific cultural context. In order to determine if a particular interpretation is reasonable, it needs supporting evidence: "other texts that make it clear that other people might have made such an interpretation....Doing textual analysis means making an educated guess at some of the most likely interpretations that might be made of a text."⁴¹ When

39 Ibid 53

40 Ibid 66

41 Ibid 70

studying YouTube videos, evidence to support particular interpretations are readily available in the form of viewer comments. Third party videos of protests, online bulletin board posts, and blog posts were also consulted. In addition, I have consulted a variety of secondary sources to provide a cultural and historical context under which a certain subsection of conservative Japanese people would consume and get meaning from Channel Sakura's videos.

In order to understand the online community of Channel Sakura viewers, I also gathered data through non-participant observation of Channel Sakura's website, its web forums, and the comment threads of its YouTube videos. I did not engage with users on these sites or participate directly in their online activities. Popularly known as "lurking" on the internet, this approach to gathering data is used by anthropologists who conduct unobtrusive ethnographies of virtual communities (netnography). It is considered a useful method to "gain an in-depth understanding of people's thoughts, opinions, and beliefs relating to a myriad of issues, such as health, travel, politics, wars, and so on."⁴²

I spent several years immersing myself in the online community that existed around Channel Sakura. In 2008, I registered a YouTube account, and became a subscriber to Channel Sakura's YouTube feed. My daily routine included watching Channel Sakura's latest programs, and marking the more interesting ones as "favorites" to be watched later. I would read some of the comments on videos, particularly the most popular comments. I bought books

⁴² Lisa M. Given, "Unobtrusive Research," in *The Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods* (Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications, 2008)

recommended by videos and watched films that were introduced on their programs. I was a “lurker” within their cyber community. While I did not participate directly in comment threads or make use of voting buttons to rate comments and videos, I became very familiar with the viewpoints expressed by users. I would take notes on the videos I watched, much like an anthropologist taking field notes in a journal. This dissertation will not take the form of an anthropological ethnography, but my textual analysis of videos and comments will be informed by my non-participant observation. *(The use of interviews with activists was also attempted, but my e-mails and calls to certain key individuals were either rejected or received no replies. If it can be arranged in the future, I plan to conduct further research that involves interviews. However, some of the YouTube videos referenced do contain activists interviewing each other and discussing their motivations and use of certain tactics.)*

The use of these methods will be guided by the concepts of Strategic Action Field Theory. In the episodes of contention studied, the sense-making and meaning-making properties of texts will be analyzed with regards to their contribution to group cohesion. In my analysis of Channel Sakura’s videos, I will examine how social skill is deployed in narratives and “stories” that create meaning for actors, their followers, and their allies.

1.5 Notes on Methods & Terminology

Many of the sources used for this dissertation were originally in the Japanese language. Unless stated otherwise, quotations from Channel Sakura

and from YouTube comment threads have been translated from their original Japanese into English. In certain cases where I would like to emphasize the Japanese words used, I have romanized them and placed them in parenthesis behind the English translation.

Japanese names are written throughout this dissertation in the traditional Japanese order: with the family name first. So, for example, the current Prime Minister's name is written as "Abe Shinzo" and not "Shinzo Abe." In the case of people of Japanese ancestry who have Japanese names but are not Japanese citizens, such as Japanese-American scholar Nobutaka Ike, names are written in the opposite order.

Although the social actors studied in this dissertation are often referred to as "right-wing" in English language news reports and in some academic papers, I prefer to use terms such as "conservative," or "member of the right." When reading about the world view of these groups, some may question why they are not simply referred to as "right-wing." As I explain in the coming chapters, the term "right-wing" (*uyoku*) has a special meaning in the Japanese language. It is associated with a specific form of extreme right-wing activism, involving intimidation, sound trucks, and often ties to the criminal underworld. Many of the right-leaning activist groups that rose out of post-1990's Japan are very different, so I use the terms "conservative," "member of the right," or "assertive conservative right" to avoid confusion with the more extreme forms of right-wing activism found in Japan.

It should also be noted that the political “right” and political “left” in Japan have their own unique aspects. Readers from countries outside of Japan may find it helpful to set aside the way that such terms are interpreted within the domestic politics of their own nations. For example, some issues – such as whether it is proper to have schoolchildren sing the national anthem and honor the national flag, might seem like a non-political issue to American readers, yet it is something that divides the left and right in Japan. Most of this dissertation’s focus is on the Japanese right’s activism concerning historical and foreign policy issues. Other issues, such as fiscal and social policies, are beyond the scope of this dissertation.

It should also be noted that this dissertation is not aimed at measuring the accuracy or validity of the historical views held by members of the Japanese right. That is a job for historians of World War II and the early 20th century. When historical views are mentioned in this dissertation, they are mentioned as a means of explaining the world view of social actors and how they create meaning for themselves and their followers. In this context, the use of a historical view is more important than whether or not most historians endorse such views as truthful or fair. Thus, throughout this dissertation, I have avoided expressing judgments on the validity of activists’ viewpoints. The focus of this research is on understanding these activists, not condemning or praising them.

Chapter 2: The Landscape of Post-War Japanese Conservative Activism

This chapter will explore the landscape of post-war Japanese conservative activism. It will provide background on the historical developments that caused changes and shifts in this landscape. First, there will be a discussion of pre-1990's conservative activism. Then, I will move on to a discussion of the 1990's and the emergence of the assertive conservative right.

In order to understand the later chapters on the activism of Channel Sakura and Ganbare Nippon, it is necessary to explore the field of conservative activism in postwar Japan. This field includes a variety of actors – ranging from violent and extreme rightists who devote their lives to full-time activism, to grassroots groups that rely on the participation of large numbers of volunteers in their campaigns.

2.1 The Pre-1990 Period

Prior to the 1990's there was a distinct lack of grassroots conservative activism in Japan. Throughout the Cold War period, Japan was governed by the conservative Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). Economic growth and cooperation with the United States took precedence over historical debates and territorial disputes with neighboring countries. Japanese foreign policy during this period

followed the idea of “separating business from politics” [*seikei bunri*] when dealing with other Asian nations.

The conservative and right-wing activist organizations that existed during this period can be divided into three categories: traditional uyoku organizations, anti-leftist student groups, and the new right.

2.1.1 Traditional Uyoku Organizations

The traditional radical right-wing (uyoku) of Japan dates back to immediate postwar years. During the American Occupation of Japan, over 200 radical right-wing groups were banned from participation in politics and many politicians and businessmen who were associated with pre-war militarism were purged from their positions.⁴³ In that same period, organized crime – Japan’s yakuza gangs – grew in power, and at the fringes of society many began to form links with the radical right.

When confronted with the Cold War communist threat, the rise of left-wing organizations, and increasing labor union activism, Japan’s conservative politicians turned to yakuza-affiliated right-wing groups to provide muscle and security on behalf of the status quo. Notable examples of this include the use of yakuza-affiliated right wing groups to break up strikes in the 1950’s.⁴⁴ When massive leftist demonstrations occurred in protest of the 1960 renewal of the

43 Masayuki Hayashi, “The Emperor’s Legions: A History of Japan’s Right Wing,” *AMPO Japan-Asia Quarterly Review* 23, no.2 (1988): 26-31

44 Alex Gibney, “How Burly Men With Missing Digits Influence Japanese Politics : Yakuza: Once Brotherhoods of Cast-offs Guided by Grisly Rituals, Japan’s Gangs Are Now Businessmen Looking for Market Share,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 27, 1992.
http://articles.latimes.com/1992-12-27/opinion/op-4908_1_japanese-politics.

U.S.-Japan security treaty, right-wing groups and members of yakuza gangs were mobilized at the request of the national government to provide security.⁴⁵

In more recent years, new laws cracking down on organized crime forced many uyoku organizations to close their doors.⁴⁶ Groups that heavily relied on money from extortion and gang activities found their old sources of income drying up. Only a few have managed to survive into the 21st century.

The most noteworthy of these groups is Nihon Seishensha (Japan Youth Association), founded as an anti-communist patriotic group in 1961 by Kobayashi Kusuo, a vice chairman of the Sumiyoshi-kai yakuza syndicate. Boasting over 2,000 members, it is one of the largest radical right wing groups in Japan. It gained fame in the 1970's for its attacks on ultra-leftist groups and its construction of lighthouses on the Senkaku Islands (which will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 7). It also helped fund anti-communist militants who were fighting against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in the 1980's.⁴⁷

There are similar uyoku groups that do not have visible connections to organized crime. An example is Dai Nippon Aikokuto (Great Japan Patriotic Party), founded in 1951 by pre-war politician Akao Satoshi (Akao Bin). Like other old uyoku organizations, it is anti-communist and pro-American in its political outlook. It is known for its association with one of postwar Japan's most infamous acts of right-wing violence- the 1960 assassination of Socialist party

45 Wolfgang Saxon, "YOSHIO KODAMA; WAS RIGHTIST," The New York Times, January 17, 1984.

46 Nathaniel Smith, "Facing the Nation: Sound, Fury, and Public Oratory among Japanese Right-Wing Groups." ed. Joseph D. Hankins and Carolyn S. Stevens, in *Sound, Space and Sociality in Modern Japan* (New York: Routledge, 2013)

47 Masayuki Hayashi, "The Emperor's Legions: A History of Japan's Right Wing," *AMPO Japan-Asia Quarterly Review* 23, no.2 (1988): 26-31.

leader Asanuma Inejiro. The assassin, 17-year-old Yamaguchi Otoy, had been a member of Dai Nippon Aikokuto, but had resigned his membership shortly before the attack. As a result of this and other acts of violent protest, Dai Nippon Aikokuto is currently considered "particularly radical and dangerous" by Japanese police.⁴⁸

The traditional uyoku have become a noticeable part of life in major cities such as Tokyo. They are known for driving menacing-looking trucks, buses, and vans emblazoned with nationalistic slogans, imperial chrysanthemums, and Japanese flags. Their vehicles are fitted with loudspeakers, which they use to shout slogans and denounce their enemies. They often use their sound trucks (*gaisensha*) to parade around the embassies of opposing countries such as Russia or China. Their history of sudden and violent acts of protest means that they often have police officers following them, ready to intervene when any radical actions take place.

2.1.2 Anti-Leftist Student Movements

The 1960's and 1970's witnessed very large left-wing movements in Japan. Thousands of Japanese students took part in demonstrations and strikes at campuses. Universities would often call in police to regain control of their campuses, resulting in violent clashes between students and police. In 1968, over 6,000 student protesters were arrested in Japan.⁴⁹

48 J. A. A. Stockwin, *Collected Writings of J.A.A. Stockwin* (London: Japan Library, 2004) p. 175

49 Patricia G. Steinhoff, "Student Protest in the 1960s," *Social Science Japan* 15 (1999): 3-6.

<http://newslet.iss.u-tokyo.ac.jp/ssj15/ssj15.pdf> - page=3

This period saw a conservative answer in the formation of “anti-radical” student organizations that “devoted themselves to normalizing the chaotic campuses or to countering left-wing activities.” The students in these organizations represented a wide political spectrum – from the center to the extreme right. When writing about Japan’s conservative student movements in 1972, Karl Dixon noted that the groups sought to distance themselves from pre-war nationalist ideologies and the traditional *uyoku*:

*“..it is not entirely correct to refer to them collectively as “rightists,” implying extremism, or even “nationalists” in the context of the prewar kokka shugi. They have called themselves the mizoku-ha –students of the racist (Japanist) school or the nationalist faction. The minzoku-ha students themselves generally object to being identified with the prewar-type “rightists” and “nationalists” and maintain that the “genuine” rightist youths are usually not university students. Perhaps the most important differentiation in practical terms, however, is simply that they are strangers to the kind of fanaticism that characterized the prewar nationalist youths.”*⁵⁰

The largest of these student organizations was Nihon Gakusei Domei (Japan Student Alliance – hereafter referred to by its shortened name, Nichigakudo), which had somewhere between 300 and 1,500 activists in September 1971. Nichigakudo subscribed to an ideology that it called “neo-

⁵⁰ Karl Dixon, “Recent Shift in Japanese Right-Wing Student Movements: The “Minzoku-Ha” Students,” *Asian Survey* 12, no. 11 (1972): 953-59.

nationalism” (shin minzoku shugi). They rejected the expansionistic nationalism of pre-war Japan in favor of an “inward-looking” type of nationalism. Dixon argued that “this approach meshes well with public sentiment” in Japan and “their prospects for continued existence and growth following the post-university struggle slump as good if they can continue to eschew violence.”⁵¹

Another organization that recruited conservative students was the Tate no Kai (Shield Society), a private militia organized by novelist Mishima Yukio in 1968. Although they gained considerable attention because of their celebrity leader and visually impressive military uniforms, they never numbered more than 100 members. On November 25, 1970, Mishima and four Tate no Kai members seized control of the Tokyo headquarters of Japan’s Self-Defense Forces, took a general hostage, and tried to convince the SDF to carry out a coup d’état. When soldiers were forced to assemble before Mishima and listen to his speech, many openly mocked him. Mishima and a student leader of the Tate no Kai then committed ritual suicide, and the two other members were arrested. Tate no Kai was completely disbanded two years later. However, many surviving right-wing and conservative organizations honor the memory of Mishima, treating him as a national hero.⁵²

51 Karl Dixon, “Recent Shift in Japanese Right-Wing Student Movements: The “Minzoku-Ha” Students,” *Asian Survey* 12, no. 11 (1972): 953-59.

52 Ibid, and Nathaniel Michael Smith, “Right Wing Activism in Japan and the Politics of Futility,” PhD diss., Yale University (2011)

2.1.3 The New Right

The New Right-wing (*Shin Uyoku*: hereafter referred to as the New Right) emerged in the 1960's as a student response to the radical left-wing activism that was taking place across Japanese university campuses at that time. Unlike the traditional postwar right-wing, the New Right was extremely critical of Japan's alliance with the United States.

The most well-known New Right organization is Issuikai (First Wednesday Association – named after the day it originally held meetings), founded in 1972 by Suzuki Kunio. Suzuki and the other founders were members of the postwar generation, and had been involved in conservative campus activism. Issuikai's fiercely critical stance of American foreign policy and globalism, publishing of ideological literature, and willingness to acknowledge common ground with some left-wing groups has earned it a degree of respect from progressive media and intellectuals in Japan.⁵³ Issuikai's openness to interaction with the left⁵⁴ has made its leaders de facto spokesmen for nationalist issues in the Japanese and international media.⁵⁵

Issuikai also stands out for its international outlook. In 2010, Issuikai hosted an international congress of nationalist political groups in Tokyo, drawing leaders from Britain, Hungary, Belgium, Italy, France, Bulgaria, and Ukraine. The keynote address at the gathering was delivered by Marine Le Pen, leader of

53 "POINT OF VIEW/ Mitsuhiro Kimura: Mindless Patriotism Ravages Today's Japan," AJW by The Asahi Shimbun, August 9, 2013

<http://ajw.asahi.com/article/views/opinion/AJ201308090016>

54 "「今会いたい、今話しをしたい」 一水会の鈴木邦男さんと語る". FukushimaMizuho (2013 年 9 月 19 日).

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5kelhR_5Ycc

55 "Old Habits Die Hard," The Economist, May 19, 2007

<http://www.economist.com/node/9205495>

France's National Front party. The goal of the congress, according to Issuikai, was to discuss "how we can protect the national identity in our respective countries and co-operate to win the battle against globalization."⁵⁶ Prior to the American invasion of Iraq, Issuikai was supportive of the regime of Saddam Hussein, who they celebrated as a nationalist standing up against American imperialism. Its leadership made 20 visits to Iraq between the Gulf War and the invasion.⁵⁷ Thus, it can be said that Issuikai carries out trans-national forms of activism in support of what they see as protecting Japan's national identity.

New Right groups such as Issuikai tend to shun the sound truck parading tactics used by the traditional uyoku. Instead, loudspeakers are used for speechmaking in front of busy train stations.

2.1.4 Old Uyoku and New Uyoku - The "Politics of Futility"

Although there are considerable differences between the old, both are similar in their extreme tactics and seeming lack of concern about the Japanese public's reception to their activism. *In Right Wing Activism in Japan and the Politics of Futility*, anthropologist Nathaniel M. Smith has argued that the extreme actions of the traditional uyoku and the New Right are a form of empowerment, a way for them to feel connection to an idealized Japan.

⁵⁶ Katie Englehart, "The Rise of the Far Right in Europe - Macleans.ca," *Macleans.ca*, November 30, 2013.

<http://www.macleans.ca/news/world/rise-of-the-far-right-in-europe>

⁵⁷ Daiki Shibuichi, "The 'Uyoku Rōnin Dō': Assessing the Lifestyles and Values of Japan's Contemporary Right Wing Radical Activists," *Electronic Journal of Contemporary Japanese Studies*, 28 November, 2007.

*“Their alienating activism flies in the face of expectations of public life and comportment, thereby reasserting their status as outsiders. This quickly turns into a tricky recursive loop, since it is their very status as “outsiders” that lets them recognize the failings of contemporary society and that motivates them to act. Their attempt to chastise society embodies an intrusive, disruptive form. But the intrusive and disruptive are understood as a way to properly express alarm and offer redress as a committed patriot to a nation gone astray.”*⁵⁸

Through radical acts of violence and other disruptive or threatening actions, they feel a connection to other heroes of Japan, such as Mishima Yukio, the Kamikaze pilots of World War II, Yamaguchi Otoyō, or other postwar rightists who died carrying out acts of patriotism. They see themselves as “bearers of an ethno-religious identity grounded in the figure of the Japanese emperor,” not as subjects of the postwar juridical state.⁵⁹ When they commit violent and illegal acts, these rightists are performing “acts of fealty” to “an imagined sovereign and the imagined purity of an ethnic nation.”⁶⁰

The *uyoku* create meaning for themselves and members of their organizations through their aggressive and disruptive acts. Their activism forms an “action-based conduit from a lived reality to an imagined totality.” Acts of violence may also be a means of proving one’s commitment to a group. Young

⁵⁸ Nathaniel Michael Smith, “Right Wing Activism in Japan and the Politics of Futility,” PhD diss., Yale University (2011) p. 20

⁵⁹ Ibid. 22

⁶⁰ Ibid. 23

members sometimes earn financial sponsorship after being arrested for illegal displays of patriotism.⁶¹ Many members of these groups are full-time activists, often living on a meager income from part-time work so they can devote as much time as possible to their organizations' activities.

Although Smith describes their view as "ethnic" nationalism, it is important to note that the groups he researched did not have a racial view of Japanese-ness. Their imagined Japan is one similar to the ideal of the pre-1945 multi-nation empire, in which imperial subjects could be of different ethnic and racial backgrounds.

Their lack of racism may also be influenced by the fact that uyoku groups tend to have a members who are ethnic Koreans or Burakumin. Since the early the postwar period, uyoku groups have existed on the margins of society, co-existing with other "outsiders" in Japan, whether they are Koreans, Burakumin, and/or gangsters.⁶²

2.2 The 1990's and the Assertive Conservative Right

The 1990's witnessed the emergence of a new type of conservative activism in Japan. This activism arose out of disputes over historical remembrance within Japan. The 50th anniversary of World War II, together with a combination of various geopolitical and cultural factors, had set the stage for a re-examination of the past. The Emperor Hirohito, who had sat on the throne of Japan throughout the war and continued to reign into the postwar period, died in

⁶¹ Ibid

⁶² Ibid. Page 238

1989, triggering a wave of recollection about war responsibility. Political changes occurred outside of Japan as well, with South Korea becoming more democratic, the Berlin Wall coming down, and the Soviet Union collapsing soon afterwards. The end of the Cold War brought about a huge shift in the geopolitical and military landscape of Asia and the world. The Cold War made cooperation against Soviet communism a top priority, delaying regional discussion of Japan's wartime conduct. With the Cold War at an end, it was becoming fair game, and topics such as the Nanking Massacre and the so-called "comfort women" were raised as major issues by Japan's Asian neighbors. Japan's role in the world and the value of its pacifist constitution also came into question as Japanese participation was sought in the Gulf War and in UN peacekeeping missions. Whereas the Cold War period had brought with it a stable order in which Japan had a relatively clear role and could experience prosperous economic growth, the post-Cold War period brought political and economic uncertainty. It led to what Nozaki refers to as a "confused sense of anxiety" among the Japanese people.⁶³

Economic globalization also resulted in conditions which, according to Iwasaki, helped create feelings of insecurity and a sense of crisis. The end of the Cold War and the bursting of Japan's bubble economy marked the beginning of a new era, one in which Japanese society would continue to undergo a "structural lull" in both an economic and societal sense.

So-called readjustment and structural reform policies began to threaten the corporate, school, and family systems that were important

⁶³ Yoshiko Nozaki, *War Memory, Nationalism, and Education in Postwar Japan, 1945-2007: The Japanese History Textbook Controversy and Ienaga Saburo's Court Challenges* (London: Routledge, 2009) p. 137

*pillars of Japan's postwar community as well as the material basis of middle-class consciousness in its support of welfare-society and livelihood guarantees. Together with the neoliberal reorganization of society, efforts were made to operate these systems on the basis of completely different principles. The problems accompanying an aging society, along with the changes that emerged through the direct linking of the domestic labor market with the international labor market, confronted people daily with a truly material reality. Added to this were the legal and illegal flows of international labor, as well as the loss of Japanese industries caused by their relocation to countries able to produce cheaper products. One by one, these problems heightened the confused sense of anxiety among people.*⁶⁴

When people are faced with such a crisis, "existing assumptions and interpretive models become the object of skepticism."⁶⁵ Thus, Japanese society was poised for new disputes over how to make sense of the past.

At this time of uncertainty, there were major changes to Japan's political leadership. For most of the postwar period, the political power in Japan had been in the hands of the conservative Liberal Democratic Party. Official stances on history took a generally conservative viewpoint, with relatively few reflections on Japan's history of imperialism. However, Japanese society's views on history were not uniformly in favor of a single dominant historical narrative. From the

⁶⁴ M. Iwasaki and S. Richter, "The Topology of Post-1990s Historical Revisionism," *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique* 16, no. 3 (2008): 525-526
⁶⁵ Ibid

1970's onwards, published accounts of war atrocities and the liberal perspective of the Japan Teacher's Union helped turn the tide of Japanese public opinion towards the view that Japan had engaged in an aggressive war and should express remorse for its imperialist past. The political situation in the early 1990's reflected this trend.⁶⁶

The LDP lost the 1993 election, leading to the first non-LDP Prime Minister since 1955. The new Prime Minister, Hosokawa Morihiro, made statements describing Japan as an "aggressor" in World War II, and expressed "profound remorse and apologies for the fact that past Japanese actions, including aggression and colonial rule, caused unbearable suffering and sorrow for so many people."⁶⁷ The next Prime Minister, socialist Murayama Tomiichi, used the 50th anniversary of the war's end to issue an official Cabinet-approved apology statement. Murayama also treated Japan as an aggressor:

"During a certain period in the not too distant past, Japan, following a mistaken national policy, advanced along the road to war, only to ensnare the Japanese people in a fateful crisis, and, through its colonial rule and aggression, caused tremendous damage and suffering to the people of many countries, particularly to those of Asian nations. In the hope that no such mistake be made in the future, I regard, in a spirit of humility, these irrefutable facts of history, and express here once again my

66 Philip A. Seaton, *Japan's Contested War Memories: The 'memory Rifts' in Historical Consciousness of World War II* (London: Routledge, 2007) pp. 44-50.

22. Harvey Stockwin, "Hosokawa in Strongest Apology for Role in War," *South China Morning Post*, August 23, 1993. <http://www.scmp.com/article/41551/hosokawa-strongest-apology-role-war>

*feelings of deep remorse and state my heartfelt apology. Allow me also to express my feelings of profound mourning for all victims, both at home and abroad, of that history.*⁶⁸

During the same period the issue of “comfort women” gained international attention. The Japanese government responded by issuing the Kono Statement, an official apology stating that the Japanese military authorities had been directly involved in coercing Asian women against their will into working as prostitutes for the Imperial Japanese military.⁶⁹

Public opinion polls showed that a sizable majority of the Japanese people were in favor of the apology statements at the time.⁷⁰ According to McCormack, there existed a “national consensus in favor of apology, admission of the aggressive and colonial character of the war, and compensation to the victims.”⁷¹ Although the LDP later returned to power, as of 2014, all subsequent Prime Ministers had officially endorsed the Murayama Statement.

2.3 The Assertive Conservative Right

However, not all Japanese were pleased by these developments. Since the 1980's, conservative groups within Japan had been working to resist what

68 "Statement by Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama "On the Occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the War's End" (15 August 1995)." MOFA. <http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/press/pm/murayama/9508.html>

69 "Statement by the Chief Cabinet Secretary Yohei Kono on the Result of the Study on the Issue of "comfort Women"" MOFA. <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/women/fund/state9308.html>

70 Jane W. Yamazaki, *Japanese Apologies for World War II: A Rhetorical Study* (London: Routledge, 2006) p. 84.

71 Gavan McCormack, "The Japanese Movement to 'Correct' History," *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* 30, no. 2 (1998): 16.

they saw as left-wing and foreign attempts to spread a distorted view of history. Following the protests about textbook content from Korea and China in the 1980's and the Japanese apologies of the 1990's, descriptions of wartime atrocities were on the rise in public school history textbooks. Dissatisfaction with the new atmosphere of apology led to the growth of a new nationwide conservative movement.

In 2010, former Japanese diplomatic Togo Kazuhiko coined a term for this movement: the **assertive conservative right**. Togo defines the assertive conservative right as having three major characteristics:

First, the breadth and depth of the assertive conservative right's justification for prewar activities creates an impression that they believe virtually everything Japan did before the war was just. If this statement goes too far for some, they will at least concede that though Japan's actions were not perfect, Japan committed the same mistakes as other major imperial powers, so there is nothing especially egregious in Japan's wartime conduct. Others argue that Japan's past apologies are sufficient for whatever wrong it has done, and that there is no need to apologize.

Second, the assertive conservative right spares no words in lambasting those Japanese whom they consider to be dishonoring prewar Japan. The assertive conservative right severely criticizes those who view the majority verdict of the Tokyo Trials as a "judgment of civilization," support the Kono Statement of 1993 on "comfort women," support the

1995 Murayama apology, or other events that the assertive conservative right refers to as the Asahi Shimbun culture of remaining remorseful for prewar wrongdoings.

Third, they spare no words against foreign countries they perceive as criminalizing prewar Japan. They assertive conservative right's anger is usually directed at China and Korea, or at Chinese or Koreans who continue to assert that prewar Japan was a criminal country, and claim that Japan has yet to sufficiently apologize.⁷²

In advancing the concept of an assertive conservative right, Togo has chosen “assertive” instead of “extreme” because the later term could cause readers to confuse the assertive conservative right as similar to “those fanatic rightwing activists who go around with loudspeakers and who might be inspired to commit violence as a manifestation of their political beliefs.” This means that the assertive conservative right is completely different from the uyoku groups discussed earlier in this chapter. Although both might hold similar beliefs about prewar history and foreign policy, the assertive conservative right differs from uyoku in their “the way they manifest their views:” they are non-violent in nature, do not rely on sound truck parades, and generally do not commit illegal acts.⁷³

The following sections will describe major organizations that constitute the assertive conservative right and what scholars have written about the motivations

⁷² Kazuhiko Togo, "The Assertive Conservative Right in Japan: Their Formation and Perspective," *SAIS Review* 30, no. 1 (2010): 77-89.

⁷³ Ibid

behind their supporters. As we will see in the next chapter, several of these organizations played an important role in the founding of Channel Sakura.

2.3.1 Conservative Politicians

In 1993, LDP politicians, who were at that time an opposition party, founded the History Review Committee (*Rekishi Kento linkai*). Steered by the some of the most conservative members of the LDP, it organized sessions at which conservative historians spoke and questioned the official view that was found in textbooks and the Hosokawa apology. It disbanded in 1995 after reaching conclusions about history, which it published in a book stating that Imperial Japan had not engaged in “aggressive” wars and that that famous war atrocities such as the Nanking Massacre were fabrications.⁷⁴ The committee included future Prime Ministers Hashimoto Ryutaro, Mori Yoshiro, and Abe Shinzo.

Another notable group was the Diet Member's Council of the 50th Anniversary of the War (*Shusen Gojushunen Giin Renmei*), which was founded in 1994 and worked to oppose the plan to pass an apology resolution through the Diet on the 50th anniversary of the war's end. It could not block the resolution, but did succeed in having its wording toned down to remove a reference to an “aggressive” war. Abe Shinzo served as a Deputy Secretary General for the council.

⁷⁴ Xiaohua Ma, "Constructing a National Memory of the War: War Museums in China, Japan, and the United States," ed. Marc S. Gallicchio, in *The Unpredictability of the Past: Memories of the Asia-Pacific War in U.S./East Asian Relations* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007) pp.171-72.

When the LDP returned to power, Hashimoto and Mori ended up endorsing the Murayama Apology. It marked a “consolidation of the conservative center with the left” that was a shock to some of the more conservative politicians in the party.⁷⁵

The Young Diet Member's Committee to Consider the Future of Japan and History Education (*Nihon no Zento to Rekishi Kyoiku wo Kangaeru Wakate Giin no Kai*) was founded in 1997. Its most famous members were Abe Shinzo and Nakagawa Shoichi but it also included LDP lawmakers Hagiuda Koichi, Nishikawa Kyoko, Nakayama Nariaki, and Eto Seiichi. The committee held study sessions and worked to support grassroots campaigns to reform history education in Japan. These campaigns were led by Tsukurukai, a private activist organization (see below).⁷⁶

Politicians have also formed groups in support of the Yasukuni Shrine. The largest is the Association of Diet Members Who Visit Yasukuni Shrine (*Minna de Yasukuni Jinja ni Sanpai Suru Kokka Giin no Kai*), which in 2014 had members from six different parties. Notable members include: Abe Shinzo (LDP), Inada Tomomi (LDP), Aisawa Ichiro (LDP), Inoue Shinji (LDP), and Hiranuma Takeo (Japan Restoration Party).

Under Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro (2001-2006), history disputes became a major domestic and international issue. Koizumi's visits to the Yasukuni Shrine caused anger in China and Korea, despite his public statements

75 Kazuhiko Togo, "The Assertive Conservative Right in Japan: Their Formation and Perspective," *SAIS Review* 30, no. 1 (2010) 81

76 Muneo Narusawa, "Abe Shinzo: Japan's New Prime Minister a Far-Right Denier of History," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 11, Issue 1, no. 1 (2013)

that repeated Murayama-esque historical views.⁷⁷ There were also controversies regarding a new history textbook that had been approved by the Japanese government (see Tsukurukai section below). Koizumi may not have held views that matched those of the assertive conservative right, but the events during his tenure helped the assertive conservative right gain attention. It has been argued that Koizumi's use of nationalist issues was part of a populist political strategy to gain public support for his economic reforms, rather than nationalism as a goal in itself.⁷⁸ In Koizumi's last cabinet, Abe Shinzo was appointed Chief Cabinet Secretary. Abe became Prime Minister when Koizumi retired in 2006.

As Togo notes, the assertive conservative right had high hopes in Abe's leadership, but his term as Prime Minister ended as a disappointment.⁷⁹ Abe moderated his views on history, taking a cautious stance that included acknowledging the Murayama and Kono statements. After only one year, Abe resigned, citing poor health. It seemed like the end of the assertive conservative right's aspirations for national political leadership.

However, during the LDP's years as an opposition party from 2009 to 2012, Abe made a comeback. In those years, he continued to take an active role within the assertive conservative right.⁸⁰ Aided by improved health and heightened tensions with China, Abe regained the leadership of his party. In the 2012 election, the LDP won by a landslide. The election campaign had much to

⁷⁷ Ibid Togo 83

⁷⁸ Stephen R. Nagy. "Nationalism, Domestic Politics and the Japan Economic Rejuvenation," *East Asia*. Volume 31. Issue 1. Pp 5-21.

⁷⁹ Ibid Togo 85

⁸⁰ Jonathan Soble, "Shinzo Abe's Nationalistic Streak under Scrutiny - FT.com," *Financial Times*, April 28, 2013.

<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/b65cb4aa-afe5-11e2-acf9-00144feabdc0.html>

do with public dissatisfaction with the DPJ government's perceived inability to live up to expectations, and the historical views of the assertive conservative right were not a major campaign issue for Abe. Riding a new wave of support for the LDP, Abe became Prime Minister again.

As of early 2015, Abe remained a relatively popular Prime Minister. While the assertive conservative right may have been disappointed in his first term, during his second term as Prime Minister he has made some minor advances on the historical front. Unlike Koizumi, it could be argued that Abe utilized nationalism for the political and social goals of the assertive conservative right, rather than as a means of mobilizing support for economic policies.⁸¹ He carried out an official visit to Yasukuni in 2013,⁸² appointed conservatives to the board of NHK,⁸³ has taken a strong stance on the Senkaku Islands dispute, and successfully pushed through a re-interpretation of Japan's pacifist constitution.⁸⁴ However, those achievements are just a fraction of the policy changes that are sought by the assertive conservative right. Abe still supported the official apologies of the 1990's (with some reservations about the details of the Kono Statement), and has not yet made any major policy changes regarding education. At the time of this dissertation's final submission, it was being reported that Abe would issue an official statement on Japan's past in August 2015. It remains to be seen how much Abe's new statement will deviate from previous Japanese

⁸¹ Ibid Nagy.

⁸² "Japan PM Visits Yasukuni Shrine." BBC News. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-25517205>

⁸³ AP. "NHK Governors Back Abe Agenda, Minutes Reveal," Japan Times, February 9, 2014.

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2014/02/09/national/politics-diplomacy/nhk-governors-back-abe-agenda-minutes-reveal/>

⁸⁴ Mari Yamaguchi, "Japan Approves Larger Military Role in Major Reinterpretation of Constitution," The Globe and Mail, July 1, 2014. <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/japan-approves-larger-military-role-in-major-reinterpretation-of-constitution/article19402001/>

government statements, and it is possible that Abe could implement further policy changes in his remaining time as Prime Minister.

2.3.2 Tsukurukai

The Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform (*Rekishi Kyokasho wo Tsukurukai*, hereafter referred to as Tsukurukai) was founded in 1996 with the aim of producing a history textbook for Japanese junior high school students. Its founders were a collection of conservative scholars who believed that the existing textbooks used in Japanese history classes taught a "distorted and masochistic" version of history.⁸⁵

In the early 1990's, academics who favored a conservative view of history would regularly appear before study sessions (*benkyokai*) organized by conservative lawmaker groups such as the History Review Committee. According to the research of Yoojin Koo, these meetings served as a venue in which like-minded scholars and politicians came together and formed a network with the goal of influencing history education in Japan. The participants from those meetings went on to found and support Tsukurukai.⁸⁶

Tsukurukai's founders include Fujioka Nobukatsu of Tokyo University, Nishio Kanji of the University of Electro-Communications, Takahashi Shiro of Meisei University, and popular comic strip writer Kobayashi Yoshinori. Fujioka is a professor of education who founded the conservative Association for the

⁸⁵ An example of this perspective can be found at: <http://www.jiyuushikan.org/e/education.html>

⁸⁶ Yoojin Koo, "The Tsukurukai's Networking with Politicians: Conservative Diet Members Groups in Japanese Interest Group Politics," *Journal of East Asian Studies*, Yamaguchi University 12 (2014): 21-42.

Advancement of the Liberalist View of History (Jiyushugi Shikan Kenkyukai) in 1995 and authored several bestselling books criticizing Japanese public school history education. Kobayashi is the author of many extremely popular comic books that tackle historical issues from a conservative perspective.

The Ministry of Education certified Tsukurukai's first textbook in 2001. Although it had undergone numerous government-ordered revisions that softened much of its ideological stance, it nonetheless ignited protests within Japan, China, and Korea. The anti-Tsukurukai campaign proved to be a success, and only a tiny percentage of Japanese schools adopted the textbook. The controversy did, however, increase public interest in the textbook's contents and a version of it sold relatively well at bookstores.

The motivations of people who participated in Tsukurukai's campaigns have been investigated by sociologists Oguma Eiji and Uno Yoko in their book *Iyashi no Nashonarizumu* (Nationalism of Healing).⁸⁷ Through detailed interviews with attendees of Tsukurukai meetings, they found it to be a genuine grassroots movement containing many people with no past experience of political activism. Some, such as a 23-year-old woman, were introduced to the issue of textbooks through the comics of Kobayashi Yoshinori. Others, such as a 76-year-old man, were already members of conservative organizations such as Nippon Kaigi. While most of the people are interested in Tsukurukai's political issues, a major motivation for continued participation in the movement was the sense of community and solidarity that it generated. For people living in an era of

⁸⁷ Eiji Oguma and Yoko Uno, *Iyashi no Nashonarizumu: Kusa no Ne Hoshu Undô no Jisshô Kenkyû* (Tôkyô: Keiô Gijuku Daigaku Shuppankai, 2003)

globalism in which traditional societal bonds had weakened, participation in a grassroots movement such as Tsukurukai allowed them to experience a comforting sense of community while feeling like patriotic citizens.

In the early 2000's, ideological disagreements within Tsukurukai caused two of its founders – Nishio Kanji and Kobayashi Yoshinori – to leave the organization. Nishio and Kobayashi were dissatisfied with what they saw as a pro-American view of history. The splintering of the organization led to a decline in its membership.⁸⁸

2.3.4 Kobayashi Yoshinori

Comic book author Kobayashi Yoshinori has been widely credited as a major influence on the growth of the assertive conservative right in the 1990's. Comics (manga) form a major portion of book sales for adults in Japan, and Kobayashi Yoshinori is one of Japan's most well-known authors of political manga.

Kobayashi's first book-length manga on the Pacific War, *Sensoron*, sold over 420,000 copies in its first few months of sales in 1998.⁸⁹ He has since released more manga books, covering a wide range of conservative viewpoints on history and Japan's relations with its neighbors. The popularity of Kobayashi's works has inspired numerous copycats who have sought to capitalize on the market that Kobayashi seems to have created.

88 Tsuyoshi Hasegawa and Kazuhiko Tôgô, *East Asia's Haunted Present: Historical Memories and the Resurgence of Nationalism* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2008) p. 87

89 Rebecca Clifford, "Cleansing History, Cleansing Japan: Kobayashi Yoshinori's Analects of War and Japan's Revisionist Revival," *Nissan Occasional Paper Series* 35 (2004).

Kobayashi's works introduce readers to the idea that Japan's education system unfairly teaches a "masochistic" view of history that only informs young people that their nation has done horrible things. This has caused modern Japanese people to be unable to take pride in their country, and the entire country has lost its way as a result.

According to Kushner, Kobayashi's work appeals to a meaning-hungry segment of the Japanese population who feel that Japan has lost its sense of mission in the world:

*"Kobayashi's strain of nationalist identity, which he claims was shaped during Japan's imperial era, imparts the sense of belonging that contemporary Japanese fear has been lost: his works tie that absence to the longing for a time when Japan's power reached its zenith and had a clear purpose in empire building...The consumption of manga dealing with history and identity results from the perception within Japan that the nation, having lost an empire, has yet to define an alternative role. Japanese read Kobayashi because he offers them a nostalgic, affirmative identity that they, as a community, can adopt."*⁹⁰

In other words, his comics helped create meaning for readers who were seeking out a shared sense of identity in an uncertain nation.

⁹⁰ Barak Kushner, "Nationality and Nostalgia: The Manipulation of Memory in Japan, Taiwan, and China since 1990," *The International History Review* 29, no. 4 (2007): 793-820

The Chinese, Korean, and American versions of historical memory that challenge the nostalgic view of Japanese empire building are a threat to version of history that Kobayashi preaches.

As a founding member of Tsukurukai, Kobayashi helped attract younger followers to its campaigns. However, following ideological disagreements within the organization, Kobayashi left Tsukurukai in 2002.⁹¹ He has continued to write nationalist comic books, but does so outside of a formal activist organization.

2.3.5 Nippon Kaigi

Nippon Kaigi (Japan Conference) is Japan's most influential conservative organization.⁹² Its membership includes political, business, and religious elites, giving it considerable financial resources and connections to the highest levels of Japanese government. It also has thousands of members who are "not traditional right-wing types, but are workers, housewives, and students, many of whom are members of religious groups that range from mainstream Shinto and Buddhist sects to new religions."⁹³

Nippon Kaigi was formed in 1997 after the merging of two other conservative organizations, Nihon wo Mamoru Kokumin Kaigi (National Conference to Defend Japan) and the Nihon wo Mamoru Kai (Society to Protect

91 Yangmo Ku, "Japan's Postwar Historical Narrative and Textbook Policy: Diplomatic Pressure, Transnational Activism, and Conservative Reaction " Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association Annual Conference "Global Governance: Political Authority in Transition", Le Centre Sheraton Montreal Hotel, MONTREAL, QUEBEC, CANADA, Mar 16, 2011

92 Okumura, Jun. "Most of You Have Not Heard of Nippon Kaigi," GlobalTalk 21 Blog, January 02, 2008, Accessed December 10, 2010. <http://son-of-gadfly-on-the-wall.blogspot.com/2008/01/most-of-you-have-not-heard-of-nippon.html>

93 Jennifer Ellen Robertson, *Politics and Pitfalls of Japan Ethnography: Reflexivity, Responsibility, and Anthropological Ethics* (London: Routledge, 2009) p. 66

Japan). Nihon wo Mamoru Kokumin Kaigi was an organization of politicians, intellectuals, and former military officers that was established in 1981.⁹⁴ Nippon wo Mamoru Kai was an organization that mainly consisted of conservative religious groups, such as the Shinto Shrine Association and Seicho no Ie.

According to Takayama, "The organization aims to generate grassroots movements (*kokumin undo*) for the "renationalization" of the Constitution and of the Fundamental Law of Education (FLE), the national unity centered on the imperial family, the elimination of 'masochistic' history teaching and textbooks and gender-free education, more patriotic and moral teaching, and a hard diplomatic stance on territorial disputes with South Korea and on North Korean abduction issues."⁹⁵

Among the grassroots movements launched by Nippon Kaigi was a protest group founded in 1997 that successfully advocated for the removal of references to Japanese wartime atrocities from the Peace Osaka museum.⁹⁶ Nippon Kaigi has also been credited with the campaign that led to a 1999 law officially recognizing the Hinomaru flag and national anthem as state symbols.⁹⁷

Nippon Kaigi's predecessor organization, Nihon wo Mamoru Kai, led a project to create a conservative history textbook in the early 1980's. Due to South Korean and Chinese protests, the book was heavily censored by the

94 Nozaki p 138

95 Keita Takayama, *Right Turn in Japan's Third Great Education Reform: A Critical, Globalization Approach to the Studies of Japanese Education* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI, 2007) p. 141

96 Akihiro Ogawa, "Peace, a Contested Identity: Japan's Constitutional Revision and Grassroots Peace Movements," *Peace & Change* 36, no. 3 (2011): 373-99

97 Annie Nakao, "BATTLE FOR HISTORY / Nationalist Voices / Growing Trend in Japan: No Apology for WWII / Neo-conservative Fringe Gains Ground by Denying or Rationalizing War Crimes," *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 28, 2002. <http://www.sfgate.com/news/article/BATTLE-FOR-HISTORY-Nationalist-Voices-Growing-2845239.php>

Education Ministry in 1987. The approved version of their textbook did not sell well.⁹⁸ Nippon Kaigi has since abandoned its own independent efforts and become a backer of Tsukurukai's textbook campaigns.

Nippon Kaigi has local chapters across Japan and special chapters for lawmakers. As of August 2014, some 289 members of Japan's National Diet were members of Nippon Kaigi. Notable figures include Prime Minister Abe Shinzo (LDP), former Prime Minister Aso Taro (LDP), Justice Minister Tanigaki Sadakazu (LDP), LDP Secretary General Ishiba Shigeru, Hiranuma Takeo (The Party for Future Generations), Inoue Shinji (LDP), former Defense Minister Koike Yuriko (LDP), former Education Minister Nakayama Nariaki (The Party for Future Generations), Nishimura Shingo (no party), Inada Tomomi (LDP), and Aisawa Ichiro (LDP).⁹⁹

2.3.6 Tamogami Toshio

In 2008, real estate and construction company APA Group sponsored an essay contest calling for contestants to write about "The True Outlook for Modern and Contemporary History." Motoya Toshio, the president of APA Group, was a well-known conservative, so it could be expected that the winner of the contest would be an essay reflecting the assertive conservative right's historical outlook. What was unexpected, however, was the contestant who won the prize:

⁹⁸ Yoshiko Nozaki and Mark Selden, "Japanese Textbook Controversies, Nationalism, and Historical Memory: Intra- and Inter-national Conflicts," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 24-5-09 (2009).

⁹⁹ Names can be found on the Nippon Kaigi homepage: <http://www.nippon-kaigi.org> and also Wikipedia: <http://ja.wikipedia.org/wiki/日本会議>

General Tamogami Toshio, Chief of Staff of the Japanese Air Self-Defense Forces.

In “*Nihon wa Shinryaku Kokka de Atta no ka?*” (Was Japan an Aggressor Nation?), Tamogami stated argued that it was “certainly a false accusation to say that our country was an aggressor nation” in World War II. He advocated a complete departure from the official Japanese government stance on historical responsibility:

*“Japan is a wonderful country that has a long history and exceptional traditions. We, as Japanese people, must take pride in our country’s history. Unless they are influenced by some particular ideology, people will naturally love the hometown and the country where they were born. But in Japan’s case, if you look assiduously at the historical facts, you will understand that what this country has done is wonderful. There is absolutely no need for lies and fabrications. If you look at individual events, there were probably some that would be called misdeeds. That is the same as saying that there is violence and murder occurring today even in advanced nations. We must take back the glorious history of Japan. A nation that denies its own history is destined to pursue a path of decline.”*¹⁰⁰

100 A copy of the paper can be found at: http://www.apa.co.jp/book_report/images/2008jyusyou_saiyuusyu_english.pdf

Because Tamogami's viewpoint depicted the 1990's apologies as based on "lies and fabrications," he was directly challenging the policies that his civilian superiors had stated they would uphold. He was described in the media as a "dangerous" man for what many saw as insubordination.¹⁰¹ Tamogami was dismissed from his post, but the Aso administration allowed him to keep his pension. He quickly began a new post-military career as a leading personality within Japan's assertive conservative right.

Tamogami achieved semi-celebrity status in Japan. He has appeared on mainstream television channels to debate politics and defense policy. According to Hiroko Willcock, Tamogami has contributed to an increased questioning of the orthodox pro-apology view of history:

*"...the Tamogami dissent has sharpened the ideological divide between conservative nationalists and skeptical zealous critics. His campaign for the nationalist cause has stimulated a surge of the former as the heterodoxy challenging the latter's dominance. In countering the social dominance of the Interpretation of history by the existing orthodoxy it augmented awareness of epistemological disputes. Thus, it reinvigorated the public reevaluation of an uncritical embrace of national history."*¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ Jun Hongo, "Tamogami out of ASDF, Not out of Range," Japan Times, January 29, 2009.

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2009/01/28/national/tamogami-out-of-asdf-not-out-of-range/> - U-CZJPmSzB0

¹⁰² Hiroko Willcock, "The Political Dissent of a Senior General: Tamogami Toshio's Nationalist Thought and a History Controversy," *Asian Politics & Policy* 3, no. 1 (2011): 29-47.

Tamogami's leadership of Ganbare Nippon and his role in the Senkaku Islands activist campaign will be discussed in later chapters of this dissertation.

2.3.7 New Conservative Hate Groups

The middle 2000's witnessed the emergence of a new category of conservative groups - extreme xenophobic groups that recruit members via the internet. The largest and most well-known of these groups is the Citizens against the Special Privileges of the Zainichi (*Zainichi Tokken wo Yurusanai Shimin no Kai*: hereafter referred to as Zaitokukai). Founded in 2007 by Sakurai Makoto, it aims to bring attention to and abolish what its members consider the "special privileges" enjoyed by Japan's special permanent resident visa holders.

While the arguments laid out on the organizations website would suggest a peaceful and calm approach to activism, Zaitokukai's offline events have taken on an entirely different character. Demonstrations organized by Zaitokukai have stood out for the extreme nature of the signs and words expressed by participants. For example, here is a description of a Zaitokukai-sponsored protest, quoted from a 2014 report on racism compiled by the Korean Residents Union in Japan (Mindan):

During the actual protest, a group hoisting both the Japanese flag and the Rising Sun ensign are flanked on all sides by riot police as they march. They parade around the Korean residential area with over 100 participants as they yell remarks like the following: 'Leave Japan!' 'Stop

running Pachinko parlors!' 'Shoot Koreans!' 'Turn Seoul into a sea of fire!' 'Pursue the lawless Koreans to death!' 'Send the Koreans to the gas chamber!' 'Koreans aren't even human!' 'Cockroaches!' 'Calling them cockroaches is an insult to cockroaches!' 'They stink!' 'Die!' 'Get out!' 'Knock them out!' 'Perverts!' 'Criminals!' 'Construct gas chambers for them!' 'Burn them alive!' 'Don't breathe the same air as us!' 'Crawl on your bellies!' Among the protest crowd, there have been some confirmed to be carrying placards inscribed with, 'Fuck Korea' 'Kill the anti-Japanese' 'Good or Bad Koreans, it doesn't matter, kill them all!' In addition, they would also jeer at passerbys, whether they be Korean or Japanese, "Do you like Korea? We don't need Japanese like that. Leave!"

There have also been many cases where minors have been accompanied by their racist parents to participate in these xenophobic demonstrations and street protests. On February 24th, 2014, in Tsuruhashi, Osaka, an area with Korean residents, a female junior high school student was observed participating in a street protest and saying the following into a megaphone: "Hello kook scum living in Tsuruhashi. Hello my fellow Japanese. How many of the Japanese here just can't stand these kooks?" "If they keep up their arrogant act, forget the Nanjing Massacre, we'll carry out a Tsuruhashi Massacre! You better go back to your own country before that happens! This is Japan! This isn't the Korean peninsula! Just go back to your own country!" "You're all just so pathetic, I

just want to put you all out of misery. Let's carry out the Tsuruhashi Massacre."¹⁰³

The use of racist and threatening language has led to a debate on freedom of expression in Japan, with some calling for laws restricting the use of so-called "hate speech."

In 2013, a North Korea-affiliated school in Kyoto filed a lawsuit against Zaitokukai members who had been staging loud anti-Korean demonstrations next to the school. The Kyoto District Court ruled in October 2013 that Zaitokukai's demonstrations were in violation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ratified by Japan in 1995), and ordered 8 members to pay 12,260,000 yen in compensation to the school.¹⁰⁴ The case was appealed and the ruling was confirmed by the Osaka High Court in July 2014.¹⁰⁵ While this has prevented further demonstrations within close proximity of the school, Zaitokukai continues to hold similar demonstrations in other areas of Japan.

Journalist Yasuda Koichi's 2012 book *Netto to Aikoku* (The Internet and Nationalism) is the best-known Japanese book about this phenomenon, and won the 2012 Kodansha Non-Fiction Prize and Japan Congress of Journalists Prize.

103 "Report on the Issue of Racism and Hate Speech in Japan," The Korean Residents Union in Japan, July 18, 2014. [http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CERD/Shared Documents/JPN/INT_CERD_NGO_JPN_17699_E.pdf](http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CERD/Shared%20Documents/JPN/INT_CERD_NGO_JPN_17699_E.pdf).

104 Martin Fackler, "Japanese Court Fines Rightist Group Over Protests at a School in Kyoto," The New York Times, October 07, 2013. <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/08/world/asia/japanese-court-fines-rightist-group-in-elementary-school-protest.html>.

105 "Japanese High Court Upholds Ruling against Anti-Korean Activists' Hate Speech," Japan Times / Kyodo, July 8, 2014. <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2014/07/08/national/crime-legal/japanese-high-court-upholds-ruling-anti-korean-activists-hate-speech/> - .U-AVs_mSzB0.

In his book, Yasuda portrays Zaitokukai as a product of feelings of economic uncertainty among the working classes of Japanese society. They feel socially and economically isolated, and they can feel positive emotions by channeling their ill feelings into hatred of Koreans.¹⁰⁶

Sociologist Higuchi Naoto has come to a very different conclusion. Based on extensive interviews with members of Zaitokukai, he found little evidence to indicate that economic uncertainty was a motivational factor. Instead, “geopolitical conditions underlie the emergence of new far right movements.” He observes that hatred for neighboring countries, brought about by concern about political issues such as historical disputes and the abduction issue, has led to hatred of foreigners in Japan who come from those specific countries (Korea & China). Higuchi contrasts the Japanese situation with far right movements in Europe, which scholars have linked to feelings of economic uncertainty and the presence of migrant laborers who are seen as an economic threat to the native working class. In fact, Higuchi’s research found that the attitudes of Zaitokukai towards immigrants from countries such as the Philippines and Brazil, which tend to have a lower socioeconomic status than Korean and Chinese immigrants, were not particularly negative.¹⁰⁷

Yasuda’s book identifies the online bulletin board 2channel (2ch.net) as a major source of support for Zaitokukai.

¹⁰⁶ Kôichi Yasuda, *Netto to Aikoku: Zaitokukai No "yami" O Oikakete* (Tôkyô: Kôdansha, 2012)

¹⁰⁷ Naoto Higuchi, "Japan's Far Right in East Asian Geopolitics: The Anatomy of New Xenophobic Movements," *University of Tokushima, Social Sciences Research* 28 (2014).

2.3.8 The Net Uyoku

Support for groups like Zaitokukai is said to come from Japan's so-called "netto uyoku" (internet right-wingers: hereafter referred to as net uyoko). In the popular imagination, they are isolated, frustrated young men who use the anonymity of the internet to post hateful and xenophobic messages on the internet.

Attempts have been made to study this segment of the Japanese population. However, it is an exceedingly difficult task to measure the size of any online group. This task is especially difficult in Japan, where the most popular bulletin board website is 2channel, a place where all users can post anonymously. When studying posts on 2channel, it is impossible to know how many different individuals are actually participating in the discussion. What could appear to be a conversation between two or three individuals could in fact be just one person fooling around (something called "sock puppetry" in English internet slang). Moreover, anonymous internet forums are a fertile ground for "trolling," a practice through which users entertain themselves by posting socially disruptive and offensive messages.¹⁰⁸ Researchers who read un-moderated anonymous websites and treat offensive postings as serious expressions of ideology run the risk of making skewed observations.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸ Whitney Phillips, "This Is Why We Can't Have Nice Things: The Origins, Evolution and Cultural Embeddedness of Online Trolling," PhD dissertation. University of Oregon. 2012.

¹⁰⁹ A similar criticism could be leveled at my own analysis of YouTube comments in later chapters. However, unlike 2channel, YouTube allows channel owners to moderate comment threads on videos, removing "troll" comments and other undesirable postings. YouTube users must post messages under their usernames, making it more difficult for a single person to "sockpuppet" in a discussion thread.

Nonetheless, some scholars have tried. Studying 7,000 postings on a 2channel thread about Koreans in Tsushima, Sakamoto Rumi concluded that net uyoku nationalism is "aggressive and shrill, but fragmentary." She argues that the nature of the internet has influenced the development of their ideas:

"...certain Internet-specific elements (such as anonymity, speedy information exchange, easy monitoring of global news) have contributed to the particular style of online neonationalism. Netto-uyo nationalism is not the archetypal unifying ideology of the nation-state that is reproduced through a different channel and challenges us to rethink our understanding of nationalism in the age of global electronic media."

The 2channel users in Sakamoto's study distrust the national news media and tend to get their news from many different online sources. When users posted about offline protest events, they were usually ignored or insulted. The bulletin board users' views about politics and history were fragmented, and their "coherence mainly comes from the symbol of the 'Koreans' as Japan's detested Other."¹¹⁰

However, due to the methodological problems listed above, there is really no way to know how many people were participating in the discussion thread, nor is it possible to clearly define who in the thread is a net uyoku, and who is not.

¹¹⁰ Rumi Sakamoto, "'Koreans, Go Home!' Internet Nationalism in Contemporary Japan as a Digitally Mediated Subculture," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 9, Issue 10 no. 2 (2011)

Tsuji Daisuke of Osaka University has attempted to measure the number of Japanese internet users with “net uyoku” viewpoints.¹¹¹ He surveyed 998 internet users between the ages of 20 and 44. He defined net uyoku people as meeting the following three conditions that match right-wing views of major foreign policy and historical issues :

- a) provided answers of "not much" or "not at all" to the two questions: 1) Do you feel friendship towards China? 2) Do you feel friendship towards Korea?

- b) provided answers of "agree" or "slightly agree" to all five questions asking if the person supported 1) Prime Minister visiting the Yasukuni Shrine, 2) Constitutional revision to remove the ban on participating in war, 3) Constitutional revision to allow for a military, 4) Singing of the national anthem and displaying the national flag in elementary and junior high schools, and 5) Introducing patriotic education in elementary and junior high schools

- c) In the past year, the person either wrote a political/societal opinion on any of the following: one's own website, another person's blog, an electronic bulletin board, or an e-mail list

¹¹¹ 辻大介(2008)「インターネットにおける「右傾化」現象に関する実証研究」『辻大介の研究室』(2009年9月10)
大阪大学大学院 <http://d-tsuji.com/paper/r04/index.htm>

Only 1.3% of the surveyed users met conditions a, b, and c. Because the survey sample included many heavy internet users who spend more time online than the average person, Tsuji has argued that the number of net uyoku among Japanese internet users is probably less than one percent.

According to 2012 statistics provided by the Japanese government, there are 96.52 million internet users in Japan.¹¹² If one were to accept Tsuji's estimate of less than 1%, it would mean that there could be hundreds of thousands of net uyoku on the Japanese internet. Although they only make up a small percentage of overall internet use in Japan, they constitute a large enough number to be capable of making many visible online postings.

Even allowing for significant levels of ideological fragmentation, tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands of net uyoku constitute a sizable niche market.

2.4 Closing Thoughts

This chapter explored conservative activism in post-war Japan. I demonstrated how a new type of activism emerged in the 1990's, distinctly different from the uyoku groups of earlier years. This new type of activism centered on a segment of Japanese society known as the assertive conservative right, which has formed a network of organizations that cooperate on many issues.

It also explained the grassroots character of support for the campaigns of the assertive conservative right, and the motivations that drive people to

¹¹² "Statistical Handbook of Japan 2013." Statistics Bureau Home Page/. 2013.
<http://www.stat.go.jp/english/data/handbook/c0117.htm>.

participate. Post-Cold War Japan has been widely considered a period in which Japan as a nation confronted a new and uncertain world order and underwent economic and societal changes that created insecurity for many people. Amid this uncertainty, some found meaning in the conservative world view. It was a message that blamed feelings of aimlessness on leftist and foreign forces that pushed a “masochistic” view of history upon the Japanese people. By reclaiming history education in the name of “truth” and “patriotism” grassroots activists could create meaning for themselves and others. Skilled social actors, such as Kobayashi Yoshinori, drew people into the movement through comic books and literature that spread the view that their country needed to be saved. And in a Japan where traditional societal bonds had weakened, participation in grassroots campaigns helped some people reclaim a sense of community and belonging that had been lost.

The next chapter will tell describe how skilled social actors from different parts of the assertive conservative right joined together and created Channel Sakura, a broadcaster aimed at spreading conservative viewpoints and supporting grassroots protest campaigns.

Chapter 3: The Birth of Channel Sakura

This chapter explores the birth of Nihon Bunka Channel Sakura. It was an organization that came about through the cooperation of various social actors within the field of Japan's right, particularly members of the assertive conservative right.

In addition to information on the founding of Channel Sakura, this chapter will provide some general background information on the channel. This includes a discussion of its methods of funding, the types of programs it creates, how programs are distributed and consumed, and the popularity of its programs. There will also be an examination of how Channel Sakura has presented itself as an inclusive organization – building grassroots campaigns that avoid the alienating tactics of lawbreaking and hate speech. Allied organizations are offered a chance to use Channel Sakura's platform for spreading their messages, networking with other conservative organizations, and promoting the sale of conservative literature.

The story of Channel Sakura's creation cannot be told without first telling the story of its three key founding leaders: Tagata Takeo, Matsuura Yoshiko, and Mizushima Satoru. Their life experiences, their connections to other members of

the assertive conservative right, and the circumstances under which they first met are important for understanding Channel Sakura. Each was a skilled social actor bringing important resources together and filling a niche within the assertive conservative right.

3.1 Tagata Takeo – Kamikaze Pilot Activist

Tagata Takeo was a fighter pilot in the Imperial Japanese Army Air Service during World War II. He served from 1935 to 1945, flying and fighting over China, Burma, and Formosa. The defining experience of his military career began in 1944, when he became a flight instructor for young pilots who were to serve in the Special Attack Units (known as “Tokko” in Japanese or “Kamikaze” in English). The pilots’ “special attack” involved turning their airplanes into human-piloted missiles and flying into enemy ships, dying in the process. Over half of his students went on to die carrying out missions against the American naval forces near Okinawa.¹¹³

Eventually it became Tagata’s turn to be called upon for participation in a “special attack.” On August 14, 1945, Tagata, then 29-years-old and married with children, was asked to volunteer for an upcoming kamikaze mission. The inexperienced young kamikaze pilots required veterans to lead them in their attacks. Tagata agreed to sacrifice his life carrying out that role. However, the attack never took place. His life was spared when a radio broadcast on the

¹¹³ Takeo Tagata, “Tokkotai and Me,” Kamikaze, July 21, 2003.
http://www.geocities.jp/kamikazes_site_e/tokkotaiandMe.html.

following day announced that Japan had surrendered and the war had come to an end.

In the early postwar years, Tagata became a leader of a right-wing group known as the Nihon Kakumei Kikuhata Doshikai (The Japan Revolutionary Chrysanthemum Flag Association: hereafter referred to as Kikuhata Doshikai). Founded in 1947, it was one of Japan's largest right-wing organizations in the late 1940's, having an estimated 6,000 members in 1949.¹¹⁴

Writing in 1950, Nobutaka Ike of Stanford University described the Kikuhata Doshikai as the "National Socialists" of Japan, a fiercely anti-communist organization following an ideology that closely resembled the views of German Nazism. However, there were significant differences from older forms of such ideologies. Ike described how the shock of defeat in the war had changed the right in Japan, and "Kikuhata-ism" had developed traits that set it apart from Japan's pre-war right:

1. *Renunciation of force: In view of the long tradition of militarism and violence in politics, this is striking. It may be a reflection of the current unpopularity of militarism and militarists*
2. *Use of democratic symbols: This underscores the tremendous appeal of democratic ideals in contemporary Japan. It stands in sharp contrast to the open rejection of democracy by prewar Rightists*

¹¹⁴ Ray Falk, "Seed of Dragons," Pathfinder 56, Issue 25 (1949): 24.

3. *Appeal for mass support: Before the war Japanese Right-wing groups carefully avoided enlisting mass support. This was one of the distinguishing features of Japanese "fascism".*

The Kikuhata Doshikai's literature set a 300 year timetable for revolution. It would require an initial period of several decades to peacefully overtake Japan through election victories, and then would move on to spread its ideology around the world.¹¹⁵

Like other right-wing groups in the 1940's and 1950's, the Kikuhata Doshikai was employed to oppose left-wing labor demonstrations.¹¹⁶ This kind of activity was viewed as a contribution to the struggle against communism.¹¹⁷

Tagata participated in strike-breaking activities at coal mines in Kyushu.

In 1960, Ivan Morris described the Kikuhata Doshikai as an organization that often used democratic slogans, but was "determined to pursue nationalist objectives by forceful means."¹¹⁸

Tagata also became involved in postwar veteran's organizations that sought to promote a positive remembrance of the kamikaze pilots who died in the war. Tagata wanted the pilots to be remembered as brave heroes instead of tragic victims、 he told the Association for Retention of the Great Memorial of the Greater East Asian Holy War (*Dai Toa Seisen Taihi*) in 2003:

115 Nobutaka Ike, "'National Socialism' in Japan," *Pacific Affairs* 23, no. 3 (1950): 311-14.

116 "秋ふかき 隣はなにを……"(2009年9月).<http://www.ch-sakura.jp/mizushima/1296.html>

117 Robert P. Martin, "Japanese Ultra-Nationalists Reorganizing Forces," *The Gazette and Daily* (York, PA), June 22, 1950, p. 19.

118 Ivan I. Morris, *Nationalism and the Right Wing in Japan; a Study of Postwar Trends* (London: Oxford University Press, 1960)

*"After the war, many people say ridiculous things such as kamikaze pilots were victim of militarism, or kamikaze pilots died tragically. Kamikaze pilots died bravely for their beloved homeland and their family as true Japanese. We shouldn't forget to be thankful to those kamikaze pilots."*¹¹⁹

Further evidence of Tagata's historical views can be found in *Kamikaze: Japan's Suicide Gods*, a 2002 English language book by British author Albert Axell and Japanese conservative Kase Hideaki. Kase and Axell devoted an entire chapter to Tagata's tale. His account emphasized how the pilots, himself included, thought of their families and their country before their flights. Kamikaze tactics were depicted as a legitimate act of warfare that was not the same as suicide. Describing his own decision to volunteer, he said it "came naturally" from his sense of duty to his nation. It was not something that was forced upon the pilots:

"I believe that no Kamikaze pilot thought he himself was committing an act of suicide. For them it was not a case of suicide at all. A sortie that would end in self-destruction was looked upon as a noble, a calculated act. Actually, in battle, you are often asked to sacrifice your life voluntarily. Such a norm is not restricted to the Japanese..... We pilots were allowed

¹¹⁹ Takeo Tagata, "Tokkotai and Me," *Kamikaze*, July 21, 2003.
http://www.geocities.jp/kamikazes_site_e/tokkotaiandMe.html.

*to choose our own fate. A Special Attack pilot heads towards his last moment by himself, of his own free will. However dire the situation faced by the nation, it was the pilot's decision to end his life in order to help the nation.*¹²⁰

According to Tagata, the pilots died heroic deaths, and should be remembered as heroes.

Back in 1946, militant communist labor organizers had taken over Toho Studios in Tokyo. During the labor dispute, the Kikunohata Doshikai was called in to fight against the workers. It is likely through this incident that Tagata became acquainted with Watanabe Kunio, an anti-communist film director at Toho.¹²¹ Tagata developed the idea of making a film to commemorate the kamikaze pilots, and Watanabe was open to the idea. He asked Tagata to prepare a script. However, Tagata lacked experience as a screenwriter, and when Watanabe passed away in 1981, the project had not advanced beyond the initial planning stages.

3.2 Matsuura Yoshiko – A Student of Mishima and Japan's New Right

Matsuura Yoshiko was born in Tokyo in 1948, growing up in postwar Japan. Her involvement in conservative politics began in the late 1960's during

¹²⁰ Albert Axell and Hideaki Kase, *Kamikaze: Japan's Suicide Gods* (Harlow,: Longman, 2002) p. 214

¹²¹ Stuart Galbraith, *The Toho Studios Story: A History and Complete Filmography* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2008) p. x.

her years as a student at Tokyo Kasei Gakuin Junior College. At the time, Japanese universities were a hotbed of left-wing activism. Matsuura was active in right-wing anti-revolutionary groups that aimed to promote conservative ideals and protect Japan from communist forces.

Matsuura was a member of a student association of Seicho no Ie believers. Seicho no Ie ("House of Growth) is a Shinto-influenced monotheistic spiritual movement with beliefs that are a mix of Japanese spiritualism and American New Thought. Founded in 1930, it supported the Japanese government during the war and has become known in the postwar period for its involvement in conservative politics.¹²²

From a 1970 study of Japanese religions by anthropologist Edward Norbeck, we can observe how Seicho no Ie was viewed around the time that Matsuura became formally involved in its political activities.¹²³ Norbeck describes it as a "once super-nationalistic" religion that had shifted "with the tides of national and even international sentiment" to reflect "prevailing currents of thought and accordingly espouses religious universalism, world peace, and the brotherhood of man." Norbeck termed the organization as formerly "super-nationalistic" because of its teachings prior to and during World War II, which gave prominence to "nationalism centered on emperor worship." He argues that changing to a "doctrinal garb that omitted nationalism but otherwise retained the ideas and ideals of prewar Japan," the religion was able to recover and grow in

¹²² Nathaniel Smith, "Facing the Nation: Sound, Fury, and Public Oratory among Japanese Right-Wing Groups." ed. Joseph D. Hankins and Carolyn S. Stevens, in *Sound, Space and Sociality in Modern Japan* (New York: Routledge, 2013), p. 43

¹²³ Edward Norbeck, *Religion and Society in Modern Japan*. (William Marsh Rice University: 1970).

the postwar years. Seicho no Ie is described as a religion stood out among Japan's new sects for its appeal to a predominantly middle and upper class audience, including college graduates and intellectuals. Based on newsletter subscription statistics, its Japanese membership in 1965 was estimated at about 2 million, significantly higher than the 651,000 Japanese members it had in 2010.¹²⁴

Post 1990's scholarship on the postwar activities of Seicho no Ie tends to describe it as a nationalist or right-wing organization. Ugo Dessi has referred to it as a group "often associated with ultra-nationalism,"¹²⁵ while Peter B. Clarke describes it as a movement that "supported government policies during WWII" and "continues to be identified with right wing causes."¹²⁶ Likewise, Shigematsu Setsu has called it a "right-wing nationalist religious group," noting its support for conservative LDP politicians since the 1960's.¹²⁷ Gavan McCormack identifies Seicho no Ie as one of the "nationalist" and "rightist" organization that has helped support politicians promoting a right-leaning "correct" view of history.¹²⁸

Seicho no Ie maintained a highly organized system of youth and student organizations. Its student organizations in that period included other future leaders of the Japanese right, such as Suzuki Kunio, who would go on to found the New Right organization Issaikai in 1972.

¹²⁴ Ibid

¹²⁵ Ugo Dessi, *Japanese Religions and Globalization* (London: Routledge, 2013) p. 133.

¹²⁶ Peter B. Clarke, *Bibliography of Japanese New Religions* (Richmond: Curzon, 1999) p. 219.

¹²⁷ Setsu Shigematsu, *Scream from the Shadows: The Women's Liberation Movement in Japan* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012) pp. 87-88.

¹²⁸ Gavan McCormack, "The Japanese Movement to 'Correct' History," ed. Laura Elizabeth. Hein and Mark Selden, in *Censoring History: Citizenship and Memory in Japan, Germany, and the United States* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2000), 56.

Matsuura was also a secretary for Tate no Kai, a private nationalist militia founded by author Mishima Yukio.¹²⁹ Her fiancé (and future husband) was Mochimaru Hiroshi, a student leader of Tate no Kai.¹³⁰ Mochimaru was an “instrumental” figure in the founding of militia, but both he and Matsuura left the organization one year before Mishima’s dramatic death.¹³¹ Despite their organizational split with Mishima’s organization, the couple remained admirers of Mishima and until Mochimaru’s death in 2013 they conducted speaking events honoring Mishima and co-wrote a book praising Mishima’s patriotism.¹³²

Matsuura successfully ran for local office in 2003 as an independent candidate became an assemblywoman for Tokyo’s Suginami ward. Her campaigning and her political activities have focused on promoting “patriotic” history education. She supported Suginami ward’s 2005 decision to adopt Tsukurukai’s history textbook in its junior high schools¹³³, an event that has been described as Tsukurukai’s “most notable success.”¹³⁴ As of 2014, Matsuura has been reelected several times and has changed her party affiliation to the Liberal Democratic Party. Her website profile lists Matsuura as a leader of the Tokyo branch of Nippon Kaigi, an organizer of the Association of Regional Lawmakers

129 Only a handful of its 90 members were informed of Mishima’s coup plan.

130 "【持丸博】「楯の会」初代学生長が語る在りし日の三島由紀夫[桜 H22/11/20]". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2010 年 11 月 20 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uzh2CEhHmwo> and John Nathan, *Mishima: A Biography* (Tokio: Tuttle, 1981) p. 225

131 Yoshiko Sakurai, "A Thought on True Patriotism and Japan's Search for Strategic Direction," Yoshiko Sakurai Official Web Site, December 21, 2010. Accessed <http://en.yoshiko-sakurai.jp/2010/12/21/2264>.

132 Yoshiko Matsuura, *Ima Yomigaeru Mishima Yukio: Jiketsu Yori Yonjūnen*. (Tōkyō: Takagi Shobō, 2010)

133 "Suginami Adopts Contentious History Text," Japan Times, August 13, 2005. Accessed August 09, 2014. http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2005/08/13/national/suginami-adopts-contentious-history-text/- .U73qo_mSzB0.

134 Philip A. Seaton, *Japan's Contested War Memories: The 'memory Rifts' in Historical Consciousness of World War II* (London: Routledge, 2007) p. 52 and Yoko Watanabe, "Behind the Adoption of Tsukurukai Textbook" <http://www.geocities.jp/lumokurago/english.htm>.

Who Visit Yasukuni Shrine (*Yasukuni Jinja ni Sanpai Suru Zenkoku Chiho Giin no Kai*), an organizer of the Association of Regional Lawmakers Opposing the Installation of Comfort Women Statues (*Ianfu Zou Secchi ni Kougi Suru Zenkoku Chiho Giin no kai*), and as the president of the Association of Local Lawmakers Who Protect Tsushima (*Tsushima wo Mamoru Zenkoku Chiho Giin no Kai*)).¹³⁵

Matsuura and Tagata Takeo met for the first time in 2000 at an event sponsored by constitutional scholar Mitsuma Shingo, at which Tagata was a guest speaker.¹³⁶ After the lecture, she was invited to join Tagata for tea at the home of another Suginami ward politician. There they talked at length about politics, religion, and history. Tagata told her about his wish to make a film preserving the history of kamikaze pilots in order to teach younger generations about their sacrifice. He asked for her help in putting the project together, and she agreed.¹³⁷

Despite decades of experience within conservative politics, in YouTube videos that feature her retelling the story of her meeting with Tagata, Matsuura portrays herself as a member of the ignorant postwar generation. She claims that she didn't really know much about kamikaze pilots, other than the negative things she had learned growing up. According to her story, Tagata taught her about the pure patriotism of the pilots. Given Matsuura's past, it is hard to believe that during all those years of activism she had not been well-acquainted

135 A longer list of organizational affiliations can be found at: <http://www.matsuura-yoshiko.com/profile.html>

136 Kenneth J. Ruoff, *The People's Emperor: Democracy and the Japanese Monarchy, 1945-1995* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2001) p. 78.

137 “地方議員の出番です” 日本会議地方議員連盟/松浦芳子 (2007年1月1日). <http://prideofjapan.blog10.fc2.com/blog-entry-608.html>

with the conservative view of the kamikaze pilots. Nonetheless, her story places her in a position that would likely be familiar to potential viewers. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the people who joined the post-1990's grassroots movements consisted of many "ordinary" individuals with no experience in previous forms of conservative political activism.¹³⁸

Lacking the necessary skills to make such a film, they searched for a director. Yamamoto Takuma (President of Kaikosha and Vice Chairman of Nippon Kaigi) and Kase Hideaki (Society for the Dissemination of Historical Fact) introduced them to Mizushima Satoru, an experienced director and screenwriter. Their first meeting took place at Kase's office.¹³⁹

3.3 Satoru Mizushima

In a freelance career that spanned several decades, Mizushima was involved in the production of over 300 television dramas, documentaries, and films.¹⁴⁰ Many of the productions were unrelated to political or historical issues. For example, Mizushima wrote and directed "Haru-chan: Machikutabireta Onna" (Haru, the Woman Who Was Tired of Waiting) in 1987 and "Koimachi" (Waiting for Love) in 1999, two romance drama series that aired on Fuji TV, a network that

138 "【追悼】田形竹尾先生を偲んで【桜 H24/3/27】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2012年3月27日).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kpGp-WbF-ug>

139 "【水島総】田形竹尾先生を偲んで【桜 H25/3/7】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2013年3月7日).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D4FqXBZHBbU>

140 Jun Hongo, "JAPAN: Filmmaker to Paint Nanjing Slaughter as Just Myth," Japan Times, January 25, 2007.

<http://www1.international.ucla.edu/article.asp?parentid=62073>.

would later become a target of Channel Sakura's activism.¹⁴¹ However, among his directing credits are some works that reflect conservative views of history, such the 1995 film "Minami No Shima Ni Yuki Ga Furu" (Snow in the South Seas), which depicts Japanese soldiers bravely fighting and dying for their country in World War II.¹⁴² He had also founded a financially successful satellite TV channel that broadcasted Philippines television programs for the Filipino community in Japan.

A committee was formed to support the creation of the kamikaze film. It included a panel of advisors consisting mainly of conservative academics, activists, war veterans, and business leaders. Notable members were: Takahashi Shiro (co-founder of Tsukurukai), Umezawa Shigeo (president of the Japan Aviation Academy), Nakamura Akira (co-founder of the Friends of Lee Teng-Hui Japan), Uematsu Kazuko (local law maker from Shizuoka prefecture), and Momochi Akira (Nippon Kaigi member).¹⁴³ The film was paid for through a fundraising campaign aimed at war veterans.¹⁴⁴

Matsuura, Tagata, and Mizushima traveled with a film crew to the Philippines to capture footage of the areas where Japanese kamikaze pilots lost their lives. They successfully completed a documentary film in 2001 (*Tokko Shougen Shu: Kuni Yaburetemo Kuni ha Horobizu* - "Kamikaze Testimony: Even

141 A list can be found on the Japanese equivalent of IMDB: <http://www.tvdrama-db.com/name/p/type-ENSHUTSU=keyex-%E6%B0%B4%E5%B3%B6%E3%80%80%E3%80%80%E7%B7%8F>

142 "【特別公開】映画「南の島に雪が降る」【桜 H25/8/10】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2013年8月10日).
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O2_izEaxxVw

143 "【追悼】田形竹尾先生を偲んで【桜 H24/3/27】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2012年3月27日).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kpGp-WbF-ug>

144 "1-2 【松浦芳子】 & 【植松和子】 チャンネル桜の原点を語る". seityannkoina1(2011年12月22日).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZqH3Q-Whaql>

if the Country is Ruined, It Shall Not Perish ”). It aired late at night on Fuji TV on August 16, 2001.¹⁴⁵



[Figure 1 Matsuura, Mizushima, and Tagata in 2004]¹⁴⁶

From this successful collaboration they formed the idea of creating a conservative television channel. The committee formed for their kamikaze documentary had shown that Matsuura and Tagata had access to a network of conservative activist groups. Through the documentary project, they had met Mizushima, who had the “know how” to make their idea a reality.¹⁴⁷ In April of 2002, Matsuura created a formal plan for the organization. Takahashi Shiro, Uematsu Kazuko, and Umezawa Shigeo joined them as leaders of the project.¹⁴⁸

145 “誇りある日本をつくる会” 松浦芳子 (2003年11月18日). <http://www.matsuura-yoshiko.com/nippon.html>

146 Image from Somo organization home page: <http://www.soumou.info/category/activity/h16>

147 "1-2 【松浦芳子】 & 【植松和子】 チャンネル桜の原点を語る".seityannkoina1(2011年12月22日).<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZqH3Q-WhaqI>

148 " 【追悼】 田形竹尾先生を偲んで【桜 H24/3/27】".日本文化チャンネル桜(2012年3月27日).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kpGp-WbF-ug>

Uematsu and Mizushima visited business executives throughout Shizuoka prefecture to raise funds for the establishment of the channel. Uematsu also raised money from her own family. Mizushima sold his Philippine satellite channel and contributed most of the proceeds to the project.¹⁴⁹ Eventually, 100 million yen was raised, allowing for the establishment of Channel Sakura as a corporation.

Channel Sakura was officially launched on August 15, 2004 with Mizushima Satoru as its president. As the anniversary of Japan's defeat in World War II, it was a symbolic date. A flier announcing its creation declared that post-war Japan would change (*sengo nihon ga kawaru*). The flier's description of programming introduced a collective experience in which viewers, together with Channel Sakura, would work to preserve and promote traditional culture. Programs would also look back on the history of "our country" and help "us" rediscover the true spirit of Japan. It was a project to come together and find meaning.

Channel Sakura's website lists 87 key supporters of their organization. I have translated them below. Online searches were conducted for each name to determine the organizational affiliations of each individual.

1. **Ishibashi Keiichi** (Chairman of the Board, The Japan Society of Calligraphic Education)
2. **Ijiri Kazuo** (professor emeritus of Japanese culture at Takushoku University, member of Tsukurukai, board member of Nippon Kaigi)

149 "映画「南京の真実（仮題）」製作と日本文化チャンネル桜の放送形態変更について".(2007 年 3 月).<http://www.nankinnoshinjitsu.com/blog/2007/03/>

3. **Itagaki Tadashi** (former National Diet lawmaker [LDP], head secretary of Japan War-Bereaved Families Association, board member of Nippon Kaigi)
4. **Ito Tetsuo** (policy board director for Nippon Kaigi, a standing director of the Friends of Lee Teng-Hui Association in Japan)
5. **Inoue Kazuhiko** (Military journalist)
6. **Imai Masayuki** (Actor, known for writing/starring in the kamikaze stage play and film "The Winds of God")
7. **Imamura Osamu** (Chairman of the Abe Maria Group)
8. **Irie Takanori** (Professor emeritus of comparative culture at Meiji University, board member of Nippon Kaigi, member of Tsukurukai)
9. **Ueda Norihiko** (Member of the Association for Thinking About Japan's History, Culture, and Education)
10. **Ushio Masato** (Military journalist)
11. **Endo Tomeji**(President of Nisshin Houdou publishing company)
12. **Endo Mikio** (former President of Toyama corporation, current mayor of Zama City in Kanagawa prefecture)
13. **Ohara Yasuo** (Professor emeritus of religious studies at Kokugakuin University, board member of Nippon Kaigi)
14. **Okazaki Hisahiko** (Head of the Okazaki Institute, member of Tsukurukai)
15. **Okayama Fumiaki** (Medical Doctor, Director of Sakura Iin Hospital)
16. **Odamura Shiro** (former President of Takushoku University, president of the Friends of Lee Teng-Hui Association in Japan, vice-president of Nippon Kaigi)
17. **Onoda Hiroo** (former Officer of the Imperial Japanese Army who did not surrender in 1945 and stayed in the jungles of the Philippines until 1974)
18. **Oyama Kazunobu** (Professor of economics at Kanagawa University)
19. **Kashiwara Yasuhisa** (Director of Suisei Club)
20. **Kase Hideaki** (Board member of Nippon Kaigi, board member of Society for Dissemination of Historical Fact, supporter of Tsukurukai)
21. **Kato Kenjiro** (Military journalist)
22. **Katsuoka Kanji** (Professor of history at Meisei University, former member of Tsukurukai)
23. **Kabajima Yuzo** (Secretary General of Nippon Kaigi)
24. **Kameoka Mitsuhisa** (Representative of Art Force M&K Co.)
25. **Kawaguchi Masaaki** (Professor of history at University of Human Environments)
26. **Kawasoe Keiko** (Columnist for Sankei Shimbun, author of books about China)
27. **Kinoshita Koji** (CEO of M&K Corporation)
28. **Kubota Nobuyuki** (former Professor of philosophy of education at Gakushuin Women's College, director of Friends of Lee Teng-Hui Association in Japan)
29. **Takako Klein** (Germany-based author of books about Japanese politics)
30. **Kurahashi Kazuo**(Secretary General of the Association to Respond to the Heroic War Dead) ※deceased

31. **Kuroda Yasuhiro** (Representative of the Taiwan-Japan Union Association)
32. **Ko Bunyu** (Professor of Japanese culture at Takushoku University, standing director of Friends of Lee Teng-Hui Association in Japan)
33. **Kobayashi Sachiko** (Chairman of the Ninomiya Hotokukai)
34. **Kobori Keiichiro** (Professor emeritus of Germany literature at Tokyo University and Meisei University, vice-president of Nippon Kaigi)
35. **Komura Naoki** (Former professor of economics and world civilizations at Tokyo Institute of Technology)
36. **Cai Kuncan** (Chairman of the Friends of Lee Teng-Hui Association in Taipei)
37. **Sakiyama Shigeko** (Representative of the funk music band Flying Kids)
38. **Sato Kazuo** (Professor emeritus of law at Aoyama Gakuin University, board member of Nippon Kaigi)
39. **Sato Kinko** (Former professor of law at Shumei University, campaigner for Tsukurukai)
40. **Sato Kenji** (Member of Taiwan Research Forum)
41. **Sato Shiun** (Japanese calligrapher)
42. **Sato Shiyo** (Japanese calligrapher)
43. **Sato Masahiro** (Defense analyst)
44. **Sato Mamoru** (Retired General, ASDF)
45. **Sawa Ryu** (Chairman of Sawazu Co.)
46. **Xie Yamei** (Taiwanese essayist)
47. **Shinozawa Hideo** (Professor emeritus of French literature at Gakushuin University, member of Nippon Kyoiku Saisei Kiko [Japan Education Rebirth Institute])
48. **Suzuki Akio** (Retired General & Chief of Staff of ASDF, board member of Kawasaki Heavy Industries)
49. **Suzuki Yoshikatsu** (Retired commander of the GSDF Metabaru Base)
50. **Takashiro Hajime** (CEO of Kojinsha publishing company)
51. **Takamori Akinori** (Vice-Chairman of Tsukurukai)
52. **Taguchi Yoshimasa** (CEO of Taguchi Communication Industry Inc.)
53. **Takubo Tadae** (Professor emeritus of international politics at Kyorin University, board member of Nippon Kaigi, member of Tsukurukai)
54. **Tashiro Akihiro** (Member of the Taiwan Overseas Community Affairs Council) ※deceased
55. **Tanaka Hidemichi** (Professor emeritus of art at Tohoku University, president of Tsukurukai from 2001-2006, current member of Nippon Kyoiku Saisei Kiko)
56. **Tsubaki Kuniji** (CEO of Tsubaki Building Design Co.)
57. **Nakajima Fumio** (CEO of Resco House Shizuoka Construction Co.)
58. **Nakanishi Terumasa** (Professor emeritus of history at Kyoto University, member of Yasukuni Shrine Reverence Association)

59. **Nakamura Akira** (Professor of English literature at Dokkyo University, Showa History Research Institute, official advisor of Friends of Lee Teng-Hui Association in Japan) ※deceased
60. **Nagoshi Futaranosuke** (former Professor of history at Takachiho University) ※deceased
61. **Nishio Kanji** (Founder of Tsukurukai)
62. **Haga Yuko** (Television presenter)
63. **Hatano Kenji** (Member of Miyagawa Association, Secretary General of Zhangjiakou National Elementary School Alumni Association)
64. **Hattori Hoshu** (Instructor at Toyogi Juku)
65. **Hatori Shoji** (Mokkei Co.)
66. **Hayakawa Haruo** (lawyer)
67. **Hayashi Hidetomi** (Matsushita Institute of Government and Management / Seikei Juku)
68. **Hara Mamoru** (CEO of Tokura Industrial Transport Company)
69. **Hinoshita Togo** (former Professor of economics at Aoyama Gakuin University)
70. **Fukazawa Naoyuki** (Teacher at Shizuoka Prefectural Numazu Commercial High School)
71. **Fujii Genki** (Instructor at National Police Academy, CEO of Cambridge Forecast Group Japan)
72. **Fujioka Tomo** (Professor emeritus of engineering at Tokai University)
73. **Fujioka Nobukatsu** (Professor of education at Tokyo University, founder of Tsukurukai)
74. **Tokichi Shigeru** (Lawyer)
75. **Fuchigami Takato** – (CEO, Fukuoka Community Broadcast Inc.)
76. **Maeno Toru** – (Chairman, Asia Enterpriser Conference) ※deceased
77. **Matsushima Yuusuke** – (Retired General, Ground Self-Defense Forces)
78. **Matsumura Toshiaki** – (Executive Director, Nippon Kaigi)
79. **Matsumoto Junichiro** – (Executive Vice President of NTT Comware)
80. **Miwa Kazuo** – (Member of Nippon Kaigi, Sukuukai, Nippon Seiron no Kai)
81. **Momochi Akira** – (Board member of Nippon Kaigi)
82. **Yamaguchi Munetoshi** – (Yasukuni Shrine Reverence Association)
83. **Yamaguchi Hidenori** – (Kokumin Bunka Kenkyukai)
84. **Yamanaka Norio** – (Kitsuke expert, Founder and chairman of Sodo Kimono Academy)
85. **Yuhara Masataka** - (Friends of Lee Teng-Hui Association in Japan)
86. **Yoshinaga Hikari** –(Singer) ※deceased
87. **Watanabe Shoichi** – (Professor at Sophia University)

It is an impressive list of intellectuals, activists, and business figures, representing a cross section of the assertive conservative right. Fourteen of the

people on the list hold leadership positions within Nippon Kaigi. Eleven are or were members of Tsukurukai. Seven are members of the Lee Teng-Hui Association in Japan, a conservative Japanese organization that supports Taiwanese independence. One can also see the regional starting point of Channel Sakura's initial fundraising campaign through the presence of businessmen from the Tokyo and Shizuoka areas. Channel Sakura's promotion of traditional Japanese culture is reflected through the support of several professional calligraphers. Because Channel Sakura can draw on the social and financial connections of these individuals, it has very impressive resources at its disposal.

3.4 Funding Channel Sakura

Channel Sakura is a private corporation. However, since its foundation, it has faced financial difficulties. Ultimately, it embraced a unique, risky, but successful business model based on voluntary contributions.

The original funding plan for the network was not very different from many other satellite television channels. Subscribers to Sky Perfect satellite dish services would need to pay an 880 yen monthly fee to watch Channel Sakura on their television sets. Channel Sakura started by airing programs for 24 hours a day on Sky Perfect channel 767. By April 2007, funds were running low and Channel Sakura had to cut back its programming to only a few hours a week. Then, in October 2008, it was forced to temporarily stop satellite broadcasting. It returned to satellite television a month later by renting time on a satellite channel

owned by another company. As of August 2014, Channel Sakura only broadcasts programs from 8:00PM to 10:00PM Monday through Saturday.

In May of 2006 Channel Sakura began distributing programs on the internet. It started with an on-demand system in which users could purchase and then watch individual programs. A year later, it changed to a new system through the launch of the subscription-based So-TV website. A subscription to So-TV costs 3,150 yen a month and includes access to live broadcasts and high quality copies of Channel Sakura's entire archive of programming.

On March 21, 2008, Channel Sakura began to offer content for free by uploading some of its programs to the video sharing site YouTube.com. The programs are available to view at no cost for anyone with a broadband internet connection. However, access to the entire archive and access to live broadcasts requires a subscription to So-TV.

Amid financial difficulties Channel Sakura developed an unorthodox means funding. On September 10, 2008, Mizushima and Matsuura established the 2,000 Member Committee. Its goal was to recruit 2,000 members, all of whom would pledge to donate 10,000 yen a month. Membership included free access to the So-TV website, a subscription to a printed newsletter, and the autograph from any of Channel Sakura's newscasters.¹⁵⁰ They compared this system to the subscription fees that every television owner in Japan must pay to support public broadcasting (NHK). However, Channel Sakura's system is not mandatory. Viewers can see most of its new programs for free on YouTube, so

¹⁵⁰ "【草莽崛起】チャンネル桜二千人委員会へのご加入のお願い【桜H25/8/6】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2013年8月6日). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JJH9IZf_FYg

there is no absolute need to pay anything if one wants to view Channel Sakura. By basing their network's survival on voluntary donations, they were taking a significant risk.

Within one month, they had recruited 819 members. The number of people in the 2,000 Member Committee gradually increased, reaching a peak of 1,863 in September 2009. Between September 2009 and September of 2010, the number fluctuated between 1,600 and 1,800.¹⁵¹ Channel Sakura stopped reporting the number of members after September 2010, citing problems with getting an accurate count of membership. People who joined the 2,000 Member Committee were expected to pay on a voluntary basis, payment schedules were irregular, and many members had difficulty keeping up with pledged payments.¹⁵²

Because 10,000 yen is quite a large sum for the average person, Channel Sakura also established lesser levels of membership. Membership in the Friends of Channel Sakura (*Tomo no Kai*) costs 2,000 yen a month and provides members with an original Channel Sakura mobile phone strap and special DVD's twice a year.¹⁵³ Channel Sakura also accepts one-time donations.¹⁵⁴

On the 9th anniversary of Channel Sakura's founding Mizushima commented on the original funding structure of the organization. From his experience with his Filipino channel he had believed that a conservative satellite

¹⁵¹Data is available at:

<http://www.wdic.org/w/WDIC/%E6%97%A5%E6%9C%AC%E6%96%87%E5%8C%96%E3%83%81%E3%83%A3%E3%83%B3%E3%83%8D%E3%83%AB%E6%A1%9C%E4%BA%8C%E5%8D%83%E4%BA%BA%E5%A7%94%E5%93%A1%E4%BC%9A>

¹⁵²"【水島総】 二千人委員会、感謝とご報告[桜 H24/7/19]". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2012 年 7 月 19 日).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=czXiXp6ZaOg>

¹⁵³ More information is available at <http://www.ch-sakura.jp/579.html>

¹⁵⁴ The form for donations can be found at: http://www.ch-sakura.jp/sakura/twothousand_application.pdf

channel based on the same kind of monthly subscription payments would be sustainable. However, it soon became apparent that it “was a total failure” (*migoto ni shippai shita*). It was only thanks to the internet that they were able to save Channel Sakura from financial ruin. By reaching out to viewers through YouTube and Nico Nico Douga, they greatly increased the size of their viewership. More people joined their 2,000 member committee and other forms of contribution increased. With each year, he began to see more and more people watching Channel Sakura videos and joining offline events.¹⁵⁵

Although Channel Sakura will sometimes make announcements about funds raised from viewers on certain days, it does not make its financial records fully available to the public. Because Channel Sakura is a privately held company, it operates outside of the transparency requirements that are placed upon NPO's in Japan.¹⁵⁶ It is possible that some sources are donating far more than 10,000 yen a month.

This naturally gives rise to speculation about Channel Sakura's backers. Does Channel Sakura maintain itself mainly through relatively small donations? Could it be similar to the American “Tea Party” movement, which has portrayed itself as a grassroots movement, while in reality sustaining itself through massive financial contributions from very wealthy persons? Given Channel Sakura's relatively small size and its inability to financially maintain 24-hour satellite broadcasting, it would be difficult to argue that it receives a great deal of

¹⁵⁵ “【感謝】10回目の開局記念日、「言志13」メルマガ化など[桜H25/8/15]”. 日本文化チャンネル桜(2013年8月15日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sa343wYahms>

¹⁵⁶ Robert Pekkanen, "Japan's New Politics: The Case of the NPO Law," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 26, no. 1 (January 01, 2000)

monetary support from very wealthy donors. As of the completion of this dissertation, Channel Sakura and Ganbare Nippon's activism appeared to be on a scale that could be reasonably supported by about 2,000 people donating 10,000 yen a month.

3.5 Channel Sakura's Programming

Channel Sakura's programs focus on a variety of issues that would interest a conservative audience. Some are about political or historical disputes, while others are celebrations of Japanese identity and Japanese culture.

The following is a list of the programs that regularly air on Channel Sakura, as of June 2014.¹⁵⁷

- **桜プロジェクト (Sakura Project)** – This is a general news program. Unlike the other programs, this one airs several times each week. It covers major news topics of that week. It is hosted by Mizushima, Oyama Kazunobu, or Miwa Kazuo, with a female co-anchor (Takahashi Mizuyuko Asano Kumi, Sanami Yuuko).
- **防人の道 今日の自衛隊 (The Soldier's Path - Today's SDF)** – This is 30 minute program about military and defense issues. Its main host is journalist Inoue Kazuhiko. Other hosts include Takazawa Kazumoto, Katsuragi Nami, and Hamaguchi Kazuhisa.

¹⁵⁷ The latest information can be found at: <http://www.ch-sakura.jp/programs.html>

- 報道ワイド日本 **Weekend (Report Wide Japan Weekend)** - A weekly round-up news program that airs on Friday nights. Hosted by Oyama Kazunobu, Jonen Tsukasa, Tomioka Koichiro, Nishimura Koyu, or Mitsuhashi Takaaki.
- 青山繁晴が答えて、答えて、答える！ (**Aoyama Shigeharu Answers!**) This weekly program features Aoyama Shigeharu answering questions submitted by viewers. Aoyama worked a journalist for Kyodo News, as a security expert at the Mitsubishi Research Institute think-tank, and now has his own think-tank, Japan's Independent Institute.
- 田母神塾 (**Tamogami Juku**) – This is a weekly program hosted by former General Tamogami and co-anchored by singer Saya. It can take a format in which guests appear and discuss current events or history with Tamogami, but there are also programs in which Tamogami lectures about his world view.
- アジア・アップデート (**Asia Update**) This program focuses on "Asian" news - that is to say, news that is not specifically about Japan. It airs twice a month and is hosted by Niwa Fumio, a political analyst and instructor at Takushoku University.
- 国を想う国会議員ビデオレター (**Video Letters from Diet Members Who Think About the Nation**) - An irregular program, it features video messages submitted by national lawmakers. Frequent contributors have included Yamatani Eriko (LDP), Nishida

Shoji (LDP), Uto Takashi (LDP), Akaike Masaaki (LDP), Kihara Minoru (LDP), Sonoura Kentaro (LDP), and Nishimura Shingo (former member of the Japan Restoration Party).

- 渡部昇一の「大道無門」 (**Watanabe Shoichi's Daido Mumon**) – This program is hosted by conservative opinion leader Watanabe Shoichi of Sophia University. It follows a format in which Watanabe interviews and discusses historical issues with a guest, usually another university professor. It airs twice a month.
- 日いつる国より (**From the Land of the Rising Sun**) - This weekly program is hosted by Nakayama Kyoko, a lawmaker of the Party for Future Generations (PFG), which splintered off the Japan Restoration Party in 2014. Her co-host is Sugiyama Koichi, the 83-year-old composer known for creating the music for the "Dragon Quest" series of video game. Slower paced and more relaxing than Channel Sakura's other programs, it usually features a single guest who discusses a recent book or political issue.
- G H Q 焚書図書開封 (**Unsealing Documents Censored by GHQ**) - Hosted by historian Nishio Kanji, a leading figure of the 1990's-2000's textbook reform movement, this program introduces books and articles that were censored by authorities during the American occupation period.
- 拉致問題アワー (**The Abduction Issue Hour**) - A program devoted to discussion of Japanese citizens who were abducted by

North Korea and are still unaccounted for. Hosted by Matsumoto Teruaki, secretary general of the Japanese Association of the Families of Victims Kidnapped by North Korea.

- 日本よ、今...「闘論！倒論！討論！」 (**Japan! It's time for debate!**)- This is a program in which a panel of guests discusses history, politics, and diplomacy. The guests are usually conservative academics, journalists, and authors. There is a considerable degree of diversity of opinion within conservative circles, so there is often lively debate. Sometimes there are also guests who represent non-conservative viewpoints. Mizushima acts as a moderator, guiding the discussion.

The programs are filmed in professional studios, with sets that resemble what one might see on a mainstream television channel. The studio used for Sakura Project features large screens in the background, which can be used for the display of video or images. Other programs, such as “From the Land of the Rising Sun” are filmed on a set resembling a talk show, with comfortable chairs and a coffee table.

3.6 Channel Sakura on YouTube

On YouTube.com, Channel Sakura uploads videos under the account name SakuraSoTV. As of August 2014, Channel Sakura had uploaded over 13,000 videos to its YouTube page. The total number of video views was about

164 million. This means that Channel Sakura videos received an average of about 12,500 views per video.

There are many videos that have considerably more than twelve thousand views, and some that have much less. The six most-viewed videos of all time are (View stats from August 9, 2014):

1. 1/5 【報道特番】 パチンコで壊れる日本[桜 H23/2/12] (*Special Report: Japan is being destroyed by Pachinko*) February 12, 2009 - 649,142 views - A video exploring the pachinko industry's financial links to North Korea.
2. 【井上和彦】 韓国軍の実力を徹底分析！[桜 H22/6/24] (*Inoue Kazuhiko - Thorough Analysis of South Korea's Real Military Power!*) June 24, 2010 - 549,557 views – A critical evaluation of South Korea's military strength
3. 【黄文雄】 日本人とはこんなに違う中国人と韓国人[桜 H24/10/19] (*Ko Bunyu – Japanese People Are Really Different From Chinese and Koreans*) October 19, 2012 - 422,719 views - A video in which the reasonable Japanese people are compared to irrational and rude Chinese and Koreans

4. 1/3 【8.6 田母神講演会】 ヒロシマの平和を疑う！完全版[桜 H21/8/12]
(8/6 *Tamogami Speech – Doubting Hiroshima’s Peace! Full Version*)
August 11, 2009 - 411,577 views - A speech by Tamogami Toshio held in Hiroshima on the anniversary of the atomic bombing. He attacks pacifists are a threat to the peace of Japan, and calls for a nuclear-armed Japan.
5. 【村田春樹】 これでも謝罪しますか？韓国反日記念館の実態[桜 H22/8/31]
(*Murata Haruki – Should this be apologized for too? The Truth About South Korea’s Anti-Japanese Museums*) August 31, 2010 - 334,352 views
- Murata Haruki speaks about "anti-Japanese" museums in South Korea as an example of “brainwashing” towards the Korean population
6. さくらじ#50 大人気！宮脇淳子講座、韓国に挑む！？(*Sakuraji #50 – Very Popular! Mitawaki Junko Lectures: Challenge Korea?!*) September 12, 2012 - 368,203 views - Mitawaki Junko of the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies discusses how the mainstream media, China, and Korea are not telling the "truth" about numerous issues

Each of the above videos is over 20 minutes in length. Longer videos tend to receive more views, especially if they have a topic that is not specific to a single short-term news story. Each of these five videos is arguably as relevant in 2014 as they were a few years earlier. Channel Sakura has uploaded many shorter

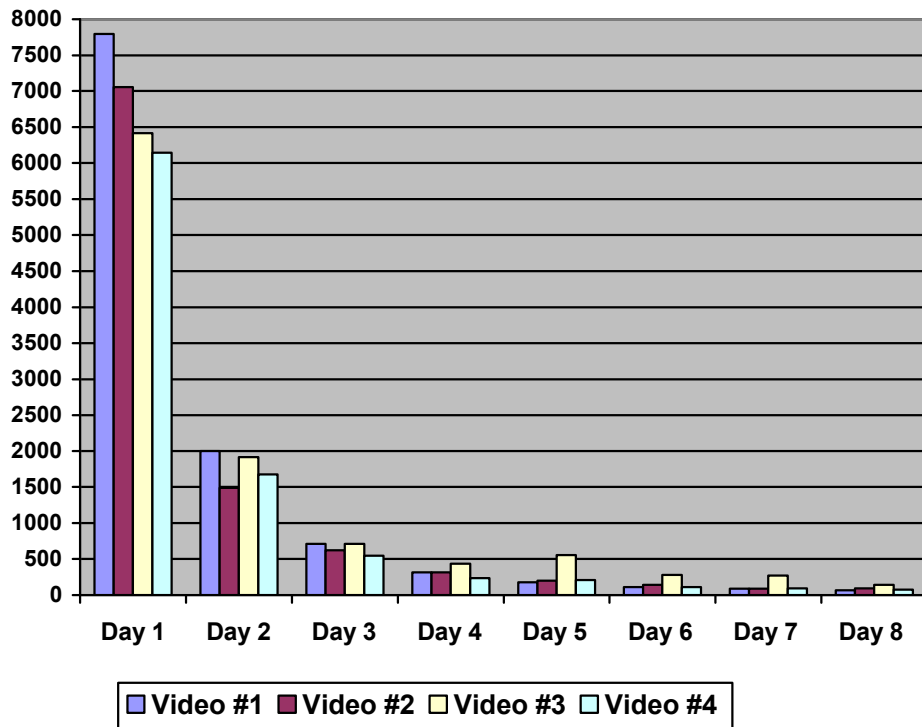
videos, and many videos that are specific to a single short-term news event. Such videos tend to receive less than 10,000 views.

How large is Channel Sakura's actual viewership, and how are their programs consumed? A quick look at YouTube view statistics can provide a partial answer to this question.

Using July 2014 data from YouTube's public view records, I produced several graphs. They are divided into three types of videos: short news update videos uploaded in July 2014, longer discussion panel videos uploaded in July 2014, and Channel Sakura's most popular videos of all time, uploaded between 2009 and 2012. Due to restrictions on access to long-term view data, information is limited to short period in July 2014.

A detailed and comprehensive data analysis of thousands of videos is beyond the practical scope of this dissertation. These graphs amount to only a quick glance at Channel Sakura's YouTube data. Nonetheless, the data reveals what appear to be consistent patterns of consumption.

Graph 1: View Count for News Videos



This is an example of 30-day video view statistics for four news update videos.¹⁵⁸ These types of videos are generally less than 15 minutes in length and feature one or two Channel Sakura newscasters introducing information from newspapers or magazines. Video #1 is a July 8, 2014 video that features Channel Sakura newscasters reading articles from major newspapers about a dispute over the “comfort women” issue in California.¹⁵⁹ The second video, also from July 8, is a discussion of newspaper articles about Abe Shinzo’s visit to

¹⁵⁸ Figure created by author, using data available from YouTube.com

¹⁵⁹ "【超限戦】 グレンデール市慰安婦像撤去訴訟[桜 H26/7/8]". 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2014 年 7 月 8 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W5qm1UiP-K8>

Australia and the economic threat posed by China.¹⁶⁰ Video #3 is a July 16, 2014 news report introducing newspaper articles about the debate over collective self-defense.¹⁶¹ Video #4 is a program in which one of Channel Sakura's newscasters comments on a newspaper article and stresses the need to stop a "comfort women" museum exhibit in Canada.¹⁶²

As the above figure shows, videos of this type receive almost all of their views within the first three days of being uploaded. The total for the first three days comes out to be around 10,000 views. On subsequent days, the views drop to less than 200 per day, reaching below 150 on the eighth day.

¹⁶⁰ "【中国脅威論】下品で危険な中国、日本はオーストラリアと連携強化[桜 H26/7/8]". 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2014 年 7 月 8 日).

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e3_zBewUV6I

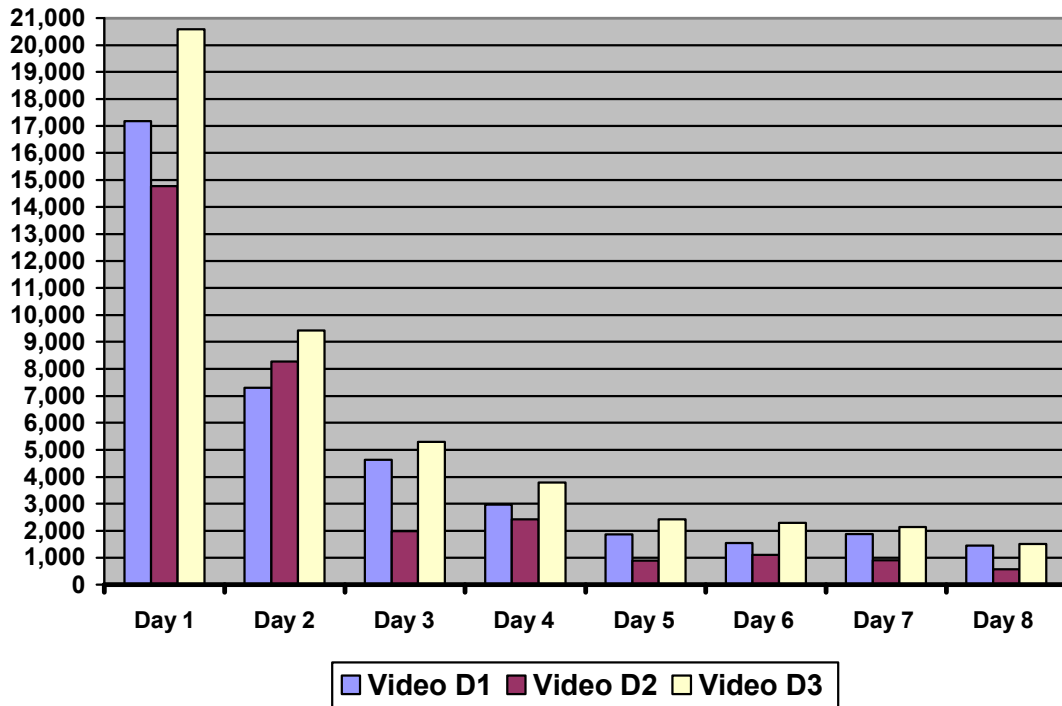
¹⁶¹ "【集団的自衛権】本当に怖いのは、マスコミと政治家の見識の低さ[桜 H26/7/16]". 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2014 年 7 月 16 日).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2osOuA8k7i4>

¹⁶² "【魔都見聞録】カナダの人権博物館・捏造慰安婦展示を阻止しよう！[桜 H26/7/7]". 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2014 年 7 月 7 日).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dYGIKDCb1gA>

Graph 2: View Count for Discussion Videos



The graph above shows data for three discussion panel programs, each of which are about one hour in length and feature several guests debating and discussing general issues.¹⁶³ The first (Video D1) is a July 12, 2014 program in which panelists discuss the state of Japanese culture.¹⁶⁴ Video D2 is a July 26 panel discussion about the Japanese citizens who have been abducted by North Korea.¹⁶⁵ And Video D3 is a debate and discussion about the economic policies of the Abe administration.¹⁶⁶ All of the videos received over 20,000 views. In

¹⁶³ Figure created by author, using data from YouTube.com

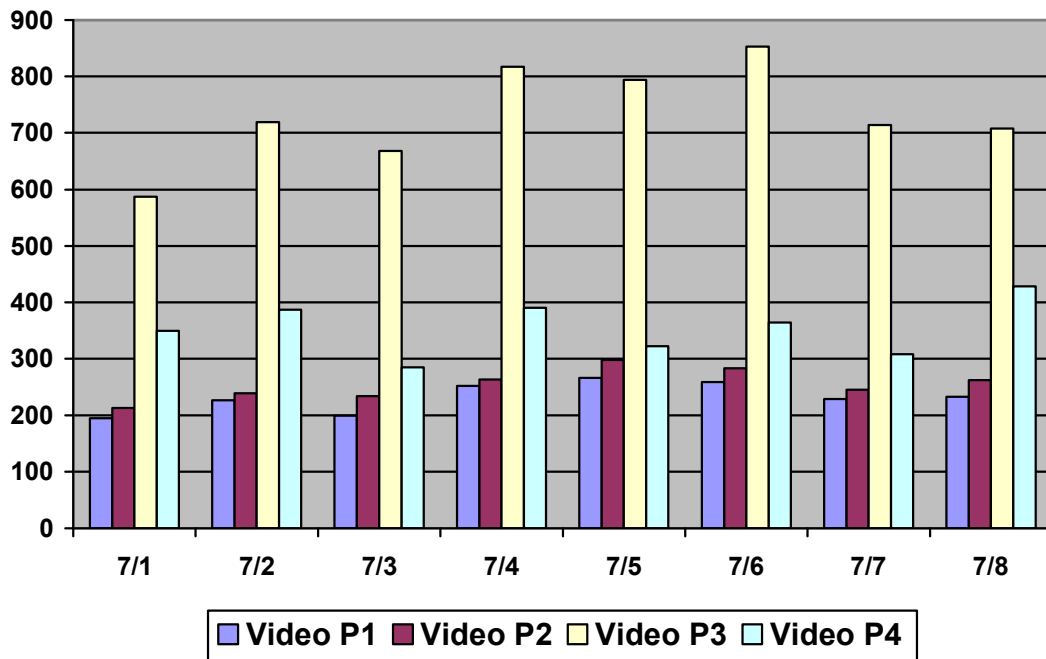
¹⁶⁴ "1/3 【討論！】 異変？日本文化の現在[桜 H26/7/12]". 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2014 年 7 月 12 日). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_MSPYNDibxQ

¹⁶⁵ "1/3 【討論！】 拉致問題から見えるアジア外交戦争[桜 H26/7/26]". 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2014 年 7 月 26 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X7aSGHabuQg>

¹⁶⁶

contrast, programs that involve panel discussions are more popular and continue to receive a considerable number of views after a week has passed.

Graph 3: View Count for Most Popular Videos



The above shows the view statistics for July 1 to July 8, 2014 for Channel Sakura's four most-viewed videos on YouTube.¹⁶⁷ The first is a February 2011 video about North Korean involvement in the pachinko industry.¹⁶⁸ The second is a June 2010 video about the state of the South Korean military.¹⁶⁹ The third is an

¹⁶⁷ "1/3 【討論！】これでいいのか！？安倍政権の経済政策[桜 H26/7/5]". 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2014 年 7 月 5 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JsOuurZTxI0>

¹⁶⁸ Figure created by author, using data available from YouTube.com

¹⁶⁸ "1/5 【報道特番】パチンコで壊れる日本[桜 H23/2/12]". 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2011 年 2 月 12 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4jxsb5DVA0>

¹⁶⁹

"井上和彦】韓国軍の実力を徹底分析！[桜 H22/6/24]". 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009 年 6 月 24 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tSyG0amF6Xk>

interview with author Ko Bunyu.¹⁷⁰ And the forth is an August 2009 speech by Tamogami Toshio.¹⁷¹ Despite having been uploaded more than two years previously, each of the videos is still receiving several hundred views each day.

Although this is only basic data on a few videos, it possible to make a few observations about what appear to be patterns in the consumption of Channel Sakura's internet videos. First of all, the data from news videos indicates that there are probably several thousand people who watch Channel Sakura every day and receive news updates. The data from discussion videos suggests that there are a larger number of more casual viewers who view programs that are not tied to daily news updates. And lastly, the data for popular videos indicates a non-linear pattern of consumption, with a considerable number of people watching videos produced and uploaded several years previously. Due to Google's search algorithms, which favor long videos that have been viewed many times in search results, it is likely that many non-subscribers to Channel Sakura are finding and viewing popular old videos via YouTube or Google's search engine.¹⁷²

As of August 2014, over 164,000 YouTube accounts were subscribed to the Channel Sakura page. This means that users will receive daily updates on the latest Channel Sakura videos when they log in to their YouTube account. As

¹⁷⁰ "【黄文雄】日本人とはこんなに違う中国人と韓国人[桜 H24/10/19]". 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2012 年 10 月 19 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=elLWWzaQJFk>

¹⁷¹ "1/3 【8.6 田母神講演会】ヒロシマの平和を疑う！完全版[桜 H21/8/12]". 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009 年 8 月 12 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l9rdS0x8kRU>

¹⁷² More information on Google's search algorithm can be found at: <http://techcrunch.com/2012/10/12/youtube-changes-its-search-ranking-algorithm-to-focus-on-engagement-not-just-clicks/>

the video view counts show, however, most of the user accounts are not watching every video. YouTube does not limit one account per person, nor does it automatically delete dormant or inactive accounts. Therefore, it is likely that many of the accounts subscribed to SakuraSoTV have not been regularly used to watch videos.

3.7 Tamogami Toshio

Tagata Takeo passed away in March of 2008. Recalling the day of his funeral, Matsuura Yoshiko said she noticed a set of flowers donated by General Tamogami Toshio. At the time, the name did not particularly ring a bell in her head.¹⁷³ It would not be until later that year that Tamogami's controversial history essay would propel him into the world of conservative activism.

Tamogami joined Channel Sakura in May 2009 as the host of his own weekly program, "Tamogami Juku" (Tamogami's Cram School). On the program, Tamogami has discussed issues related to defense policy and Japanese history.

Tamogami had several prior connections to Channel Sakura. The main judge of the 2008 essay contest that made Tamogami famous, Motoya Toshio, is a friend of Channel Sakura co-founder Umezawa Shigeo.¹⁷⁴ In addition, Journalist Hanaoka Nobuaki, another judge in the 2008 essay contest, had been a supporter of Channel Sakura since its beginning and regularly appeared on Channel Sakura until he passed away in 2011.¹⁷⁵

173 "【追悼】田形竹尾先生を偲んで【桜 H24/3/27】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2012年3月27日).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kpGp-WbF-ug>

174 Toshio Motoya, "By Becoming a Country of Freedom and Responsibility, Japan Will Regain Its Spirit," APA Group Big Talk 229, 2010. http://www.apa.co.jp/appletown/bigtalk/bt1008/bt1008_english.html.

175 "【訃報】花岡信昭氏ご逝去【桜H23/5/16】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2011年5月16日).

3.8 Ganbare Nippon

Ganbare Nippon Zenkoku Kodo linkai (Let's Go Japan- National Action Committee: hereafter referred to as Ganbare Nippon) is an organization founded in 2010 to oppose the policies of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) administration that was in power at that time. It also had the general goal of supporting conservative causes. Mizushima Satoru was the prime mover behind the organization, and asked Tamogami Toshio to serve as its leader.¹⁷⁶

Ganbare Nippon's Leadership consists of some Channel Sakura regulars and conservative politicians:

- Chairman - Tamogami Toshio
- Managing Director - Mizushima Satoru
- Secretary General - Uematsu Kazuko (Shizuoka local lawmaker, co-founder of Channel Sakura)
- Cultural Committee Chairman - Ijiri Kazuo (Tsukurukai, Nippon Kaigi, Channel Sakura Newscaster)
- Osaka Branch Counselor - Nishimura Shingo (independent conservative lawmaker, House of Representatives)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AgfR_-A1BUI

¹⁷⁶ "【直言極言】頑張れ日本！全国行動委員会結成大会&全国総決起集会のご案内[桜H22/1/22]". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2010年1月22日).<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DazqFsn1nZM>

- Osaka Branch Representative - Miyake Hiroshi (Japan Restoration Party lawmaker, House of Representatives)

The DPJ government in power at that time, under Hatoyama Yukio and Ozawa Ichiro, was seen as a corrupt and pro-China regime. The Ganbare Nippon organization was created to bring together conservatives across Japan to fight against policies that they saw as threatening the integrity of the Japanese nation.

The first meeting of the organization was held on February 2, 2010. In the weeks leading up to its founding meeting, Channel Sakura and conservative media such as the Sankei Shimbun had made reports that advertised the time and place of the event.¹⁷⁷ The meeting, which was held in the Tokyo Metropolitan Hibiya Public Hall, attracted over 2,600 participants. In addition to speeches by Mizushima and Tamogami, former (and future) Prime Minister Abe Shinzo delivered a speech to the assembled audience.¹⁷⁸

Mizushima envisioned it as a point at which conservative people, including members of various organizations and political parties, could come together to form a conservative alliance. Through grassroots power, he hoped that Ganbare Nippon would help bring a conservative government to power in the next general election.¹⁷⁹

177 "【お知らせ】頑張り日本！全国行動委員会結成大会& 全国総決起集会【桜H22/2/1】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2010年2月1日).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=euWCEYTsuRM>

178 "「頑張り日本！」安倍元総理の演説です！". YAMATOPRESS.COM(2010年2月20日).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XYtuCCog4BM>

179 "【直言極言】頑張り日本！全国行動委員会【桜H22/2/12】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2010年2月12

Initially it focused on demonstrations about immediate policy issues, particularly opposition to DPJ plans to extend voting rights to non-citizens. Ganbare Nippon has since moved on to carry out protests involving a variety of issues.

As a national organization, Ganbare Nippon has local chapters across Japan. Most of them are centered on regional assembly members and other local politicians, and carry out their own small scale local protests about conservative issues.

3.9 Channel Sakura's Vision of the Japanese People

Channel Sakura officially describes itself as a “grassroots TV channel of the Japanese people, by the Japanese people, and for the Japanese people” (*nippon kokumin no nippon kokumin ni yoru nippon kokumin no tame no sono terebi kyoku*). This phrase takes a famous line from Abraham Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address and modifies it into something reflecting a particular brand of Japanese nationalism.

As Kevin Doak has detailed, the Japanese language contains several words that can be used when describing nationalism and the people of a nation. Channel Sakura has chosen the word “kokumin” to describe the people of Japan, a term that reflects a civil and political conception instead of an ethnic (*minzoku*) conception of the Japanese nation and people.¹⁸⁰

日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0wG1dgqBIL0>

180 Kevin Michael Doak, *A History of Nationalism in Modern Japan: Placing the People* (Leiden: Brill, 2007)

Among recent Japanese Prime Ministers, the dominant term for referring to Japanese citizens has been “*kokumin*.”¹⁸¹ It appears that Channel Sakura has embraced the language of civic nationalism. Throughout Channel Sakura programs and its offline demonstrations, it refers to its movement as a “*kokumin undo*” (citizen’s movement, or grassroots movement). As mentioned in the previous chapter, this is the same term that Nippon Kaigi uses when referring to its plans for starting grassroots movements. Because Channel Sakura’s founders and regular guests include Nippon Kaigi members, it is not surprising that both organizations share the same terminology.

In his study of traditional rightist and New Right groups in modern Japan, Nathaniel Smith briefly mentions the emergence of “New Conservative” groups in the 1990’s and 2000’s. He characterizes these new groups, acting as public activists “from a position as a citizen (*kokumin*) of the postwar state....although their activism is classifiable as *shimin* in that it is organized outside the realm of the state, the baseline assumptions of the right and legality with which they frame their activist program is state-based.” This is in contrast to *uyoku* groups, which act based on “the definitional space of the *minzoku*,” which can justify illegal and disruptive acts by denying the legitimacy of the postwar legal state.¹⁸²

Mizushima has argued that Japanese conservatives have many different ideologies and opinions, which sometimes leads to a sense of disunity. As mentioned in the previous chapter, this kind of problem has led to the splintering

181 James Patrick Boyd, “States of the Nations : Nationalism, Narratives and Normative Change in Postwar Japan.” PhD diss., Massachusetts Institute of Technology (2012) p. 346.

182 Nathaniel Michael Smith, “Right Wing Activism in Japan and the Politics of Futility”, PhD diss., Yale University (2011) p. 207.

of organizations such as Tsukurukai. Mizushima makes a distinction between “shimin undo” (citizen’s groups or civic groups), which he sees as small and narrowly focused, and Channel Sakura’s kokumin undo, which is meant to be broad and inclusive. It is meant to bring together anyone who “loves Japan.”¹⁸³ This inclusiveness can be seen in Channel Sakura’s embrace of both the scholars who left Tsukurukai, and those who stayed with the organization. Channel Sakura’s debate programs allow for conservatives to disagree without being forced into supporting a narrowly-focused platform.

This inclusiveness includes a welcoming attitude to certain foreign-born people who have naturalized and become Japanese citizens. Several regular Channel Sakura guests fall into this category, such as Ilham Mahmut of Japan Uyghur Association (formerly a citizen of the PRC), Pema Gyalpo (formerly a citizen of the PRC), and Professor Oh Seon-hwa of Takushoku University (formerly a citizen of South Korea). They are considered Japanese when they appear on the show. For example, indignation at the mistreatment of “Japanese people” (*nihonjin*) was expressed in the aftermath South Korea’s refusal of an entry visa for Oh Seon-hwa.¹⁸⁴

Channel Sakura has also discussed Kevin Doak’s writings on nationalism and on Abe Shinzo’s concept of “kokumin.” This concept rejects the idea of Japanese-ness being based on ethnicity, and accepts people, such as soccer player Ruy Ramos, who became Japanese citizens because they love Japan and

183 "【直言極言】国民運動・保守の在り方[桜H22/12/24]". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2010年12月24日).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n0c42t4vyV4>

184 "【ファシスト国家】人権蹂躞！韓国の呉善花氏入国拒否問題[桜 H25/7/29]". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2013年7月29日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mgm7Wi9VQM8>

want to help the country. Abe's view of Japanese-ness and Doak's article on Abe's view were portrayed positively. Doak was praised as a person who understands Japan "100 times more than the average Japanese person."¹⁸⁵

Yet when discussing the issue of voting rights for non-citizens, doubt is often placed upon the loyalty of some naturalized citizens. In several videos Channel Sakura commentators have criticized Japan's naturalization laws because they make it too easy for foreigners to become Japanese citizens.¹⁸⁶ More specifically, Chinese have been depicted as naturalizing for selfish reasons like making money in Japan, and viewers have been told that trust in Japanese passports will be reduced worldwide if too many Chinese are allowed to become Japanese citizens.¹⁸⁷ Thousands of Chinese who have already naturalized and become Japanese citizens are subject to the speculation that they are disloyal to Japan and not really Japanese.¹⁸⁸ Mizushima and other Channel Sakura guests have argued that Japan can counter this problem if it follows America's example and includes an oath of loyalty in its naturalization process.¹⁸⁹

3.10 Channel Sakura & the Mainstream Media

Channel Sakura depicts itself as the grassroots media alternative to Japan's mainstream media. While it tells the "truth" to viewers, mainstream

185 "【感々学々】長崎の鐘と、ケヴィン・ドーク氏の日本論[桜H25/8/9]".日本文化チャンネル桜(2013年8月9日).https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z5xcezh_qLk

186 "【赤池誠章】今、国籍法を再び考える！[桜 H25/6/18]".日本文化チャンネル桜(2013年6月18日).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PQ3QthHyv0E>

187 "【魔都見聞録】問題だらけの移民関連法案、日本のパスポートを守れ！[桜H26/6/30]".日本文化チャンネル桜(2014年6月30日).
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D_gg9UwdE4M

188 "【村田春樹】外国人の「帰化・永住権」最新動向レポート[桜H22/12/27]".日本文化チャンネル桜(2010年12月27日).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VA8pQBqDEXQ>

189 "2/3【討論！】決定版！在日問題を考える[桜H25/11/16]".日本文化チャンネル桜(2013年11月16日).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PcbA77rSE1g>

media outlets are considered to be under the influence of harmful business, religious, or foreign influences.

Left-leaning media outlets such as the Asahi Shimbun are regularly denounced as “anti-Japanese” in their reporting. Channel Sakura and Ganbare Nippon regularly hold demonstrations in front of the Asahi Shimbun offices in Tokyo, announcing over loudspeakers that the newspaper is full of reporters who distort the truth and hate Japan.

Even mainstream conservative media outlets are targeted as “anti-Japanese” at times. Although the Yomiuri Shimbun is generally regarded as a conservative newspaper, Channel Sakura found its printing of articles favorable to female imperial succession to be worthy of protest. Demonstrations were held outside of Yomiuri’s Tokyo headquarters.¹⁹⁰ Among major newspapers, the Sankei Shimbun is viewed most favorably by Channel Sakura, and the feeling is sometimes returned through Sankei coverage of Ganbare Nippon activism. However, Sankei’s television channel, Fuji TV, has also been targeted for protest because of its alleged “anti-Japanese” obsession with South Korean popular culture.¹⁹¹

Channel Sakura’s world view, and the world view of many within the assertive conservative right, rests upon the idea that much of the mainstream media in Japan has a left-wing bias that distorts reporting on historical issues and foreign policy. It is because of this perception that the assertive conservative

¹⁹⁰ "【草莽崛起】皇統の断絶阻止！読売新聞糾弾！緊急国民行動[桜 H24/1/23]". 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2012 年 1 月 23 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PmZKD36h0Ow>

¹⁹¹ "【古谷経衡】「フジテレビデモに行ってみた！」に関しての声明[桜 H24/3/1]". 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2012 年 3 月 1 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pFOej-55tM0>

right supported the establishment of Channel Sakura. They felt that their views were not reflected in the mainstream media, and they wanted their own channel that could bypass the left-wing media and transmit their version of the news directly to viewers.¹⁹²

3.11 Non-Violence & Legal Protest

Channel Sakura's brand of grassroots activism is one that tries to respect the law and not commit acts of violence. Offline demonstration marches are organized in advance with the permission of authorities. During the protest marches, participants march in organized lines, taking care to follow the instructions of their police escorts. Larger demonstrations are split into segments to avoid the possibility of causing disruptions to traffic. Police officers, who are present at demonstrations for crowd and traffic control, are treated with respect.

This has made Channel Sakura and Ganbare Nippon demonstrations very different from the popular conception of "right-wing" protests –that is to say gatherings of loud, angry, and scary men. In some of the larger Channel Sakura demonstration marches, it was not rare to observe young female participants with small children and even baby carriages.

But offline events can be loud. Protests usually involve vans with loudspeakers and marchers with megaphones. And marchers often join in and shout slogans. However, other forms of disruptive behavior are usually frowned upon.

¹⁹² "【1/3【討論！】国防としての反日メディア解体[桜 H25/2/2]". 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2013 年 2 月 2 日). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_P5ilKmJbdI

A rare exception came in September 2011, when Channel Sakura and Ganbare Nippon were carrying out a demonstration against the Fuji TV network. The demonstrators noticed that the Japanese flag flying in front of the Fuji TV building was dirty and ragged in appearance. Mizushima, having brought many flags along with his demonstration, offered to give a clean new flag to Fuji TV, so that it could replace the disgracefully dirty flag. After some chanting from demonstrators, Fuji TV personnel agreed to change the flag, but said they did not need one of Mizushima's flags. Just as a fresh flag was brought to the scene, an order was received from higher-ups reversing the decision to replace the flag. This caused anger among the demonstrators, who forcefully took down the flag and replaced it with one of their flags.¹⁹³ Mizushima claimed that the act was justifiable because the national flag of Japan is not something that Fuji TV could own (*kokki ha fuji terebi dake no mono janai*). A scuffle broke out between protesters and security guards, with one protester allegedly tearing Fuji TV's flag. Mizushima denied that such a thing had happened, but a police investigation into the incident was launched a year later, and police sent documents to prosecutors about the involvement of one Ganbare Nippon member. However, the prosecutors took no action on the case.¹⁹⁴

Similarly, in 2012 Mizushima and several activists would land on the Senkaku Islands after their application to land had been rejected by Japanese authorities. He justified his actions on the basis of a higher authority – the need

193 "【草莽崛起】フジデモ書類送検の詳細と、反撃の抗議デモ[桜H24/9/12]". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2012年9月12日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2cJD0h4JN5Y>

194 "【水島総】1年前のフジテレビデモでの書類送検について[桜 H24/9/11]". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2012年9月11日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=43cBQJz4iFc>

to protect the islands when the government was failing to protect them. (The landing is covered in greater detail in Chapter 7).

It is notable that both of these exceptions did not involve acts meant to harm other human beings. In this respect, one can see a major difference from the lawbreaking activism of the traditional *uyoku*, which includes dangerous acts such as arson and ramming vehicles into barricades.

Mizushima has said that it is of crucial importance to produce programs and carry out activism that “one would not be embarrassed to carry out in the presence of the Japanese emperor” (*Tenno heika no mae de hazukashikunai undo*).¹⁹⁵ These ideals do not just dictate acceptable forms of action. They are also applied to speech.

3.12 Hate Speech

In keeping with the image of a non-extremist grassroots movement, Mizushima has taken efforts to prevent the use of racist “hate speech” in Channel Sakura and Ganbare Nippon events.

When asked about his organization’s view on groups like Zaitokukai, Mizushima said that he was absolutely opposed to the use of “hate speech” and racist language. At events organized by Ganbare Nippon, participants are told they must carry out protests that any Japanese person can be proud of, rather than using base and crude language.

¹⁹⁵ “【感謝】10回目の開局記念日、「言志13」メルマガ化など[桜H25/8/15]”. 日本文化チャンネル桜(2013年8月15日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sa343wYahms>

If members of groups such as Zaitokukai want to participate in protest events organized by Channel Sakura and Ganbare Nippon, they can do so as individuals, following the rules set by Mizushima. However, he refuses to formally cooperate with Zaitokukai. Working together with sound truck uyoku (*gaisen uyoku*) groups is also out of the question.

There are also restrictions on flags at demonstrations. Mizushima says that the national flag of Japan is allowed, but the rising sun flag is not permitted. Although some people associate the rising sun flag with militarism and pre-war Japan, Mizushima does not prevent its use on those grounds. Instead, he sees it as a flag of the Japanese military, so its use in political demonstrations is disrespectful to the military.¹⁹⁶

Channel Sakura has also engaged in discussion of hate speech with its ideological opponents. For example, in November of 2013, Channel Sakura aired a 3-hour program in which Mizushima and a panel of four conservatives discussed and debated with Noma Yasumichi of Counter-Racist Action Collective and three representatives of the Zainichi Korean community. The discussion was civil and generally polite, with both sides sharing a dislike for hate speech, but generally disagreeing about numerous other issues.¹⁹⁷

While he is against the use of hate speech, Mizushima does not support new laws to restrict the freedom of expression. Following the October 2013 court decision that ordered Zaitokukai to pay 12,260,000 yen in damages,

196 "8.28チャンネル桜水島総社長記者会見（主催：自由報道協会）".kuukonuko(2012年8月29日).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AVbBQc8Cd64>

197 "1/3【討論！】決定版！在日問題を考える【桜 H25/11/16】".日本文化チャンネル桜(2013年11月16日).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TwA4Ph2mQVQ>

Mizushima made a program declaring it to be an unjust political decision. Mizushima would have accepted the idea of a minor fine of around 50,000 yen as punishment for the language used by Zaitokukai, but was shocked by the severity of the decision. The bigger injustice, he argued, was how the Japanese justice system had ignored the problem that had made Zaitokukai hold a demonstration at the school. The pro-Pyongyang school was allegedly treating a public park as its own property, and authorities were doing nothing about it. That's what had attracted Zaitokukai to their school in the first place. The names of the leaders of the organization Hate Speech to Racism wo Norikoeru Kokusai Network (International Network to Overcome Hate Speech and Racism)¹⁹⁸ were listed on the screen and denounced as "anti-Japanese."¹⁹⁹ Among the names on the list was that of Suzuki Kunio, founder of the New Right group Issuikai.

A denunciation of hate speech does not mean that Channel Sakura is a calm and "quiet" (*odayaka*) group. Mizushima reserves the right to take loud or unorthodox action when he deems it necessary for the sake of Japan.²⁰⁰

3.13 Cooperation with Allied Organizations

As noted earlier in this chapter, Channel Sakura's founders were individuals who held leadership positions in several important activist

198 "Activists Form Group in Tokyo to Counter Hatemongers," AJW by The Asahi Shimbun, September 25, 2013. http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201309250068, and "共同代表." のりこえねっと. <http://www.norikoenet.org/representative.html>.

199 "【ヘイトスピーチ】 京都地裁の政治判決、頭をもたげる人権擁護法案【桜H25/10/10】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2013年10月10日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9jfQ5NgqQdM>

200 "8.28 チャンネル桜水島総社長記者会見 (主催: 自由報道協会)". *kuukonuko*(2012年8月29日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AVbBQc8Cd64>

organizations within the assertive conservative right. Many of its programs draw upon Tsukurukai, Nippon Kaigi, and other conservative groups for expert guests and panelists.

3.13.1 The Pro-Taiwan Independence Organizations in Japan

Pro-Taiwan Independence Organizations in Japan are a key ally of Channel Sakura. This may seem strange at first glance, but the Taiwanese political left benefits from cooperation with Japan's assertive conservative right. Taiwanese independence activists want to assert that Taiwan has a separate identity from China, and thus should be treated as an entirely different country. To achieve this, they look back on Taiwan's history as a colony of Japan. They advance the view that Japan liberated Taiwan from oppressive colonial Chinese domination and helped nurture Taiwan's uniquely non-Chinese society. The postwar acts of oppression committed by Nationalist Chinese authorities against the population of Taiwan are contrasted with the supposedly less oppressive colonization by Japan.

Former Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui is a leader of the pro-independence movement and a dear friend of Japan's assertive conservative right. Lee grew up and was educated during the period of Japanese colonial rule, attending Kyoto University in the 1940's. His older brother served in the Japanese Imperial Navy and died in the war. During and after serving as President, Lee has made statements that take a favorable view of Japan's

colonial rule of Taiwan. This can be seen as part of his support for a distinct non-Chinese Taiwan:

*"Promoters of Taiwan's independence, including Lee and the business tycoon Xu Wenlong, welcome Japan's nationalist rhetoric because they, too, deny Taiwan's Chinese identity. They emphasize Taiwan's colonial inheritance to promote the idea that it does not belong to China, that it does not share a history with China, and that it should be considered a sovereign state."*²⁰¹

Kobayashi Yoshinori and Lee collaborated in 2001 to release *On Taiwan*, a popular bilingual manga that depicted Japanese colonialism as positive for Taiwan and demonized mainland China.²⁰² After his presidency, Lee made a controversial visit to the Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo, offering prayers to his brother's spirit and earning the admiration of Japanese conservatives. Lee has also spoken out in favor of Japan's territorial claim to the Senkaku Islands.²⁰³ This can be interpreted as another denial of Taiwan's Chinese identity, because the territorial claims are linked to the idea that Taiwan is the Republic of China, and thus can legitimately claim territories that belong to China.

201 Barak Kushner, "Nationality and Nostalgia: The Manipulation of Memory in Japan, Taiwan, and China since 1990," *The International History Review* 29, no. 4 (2007): 793-820. p. 794.

202 Hayata Takefumi, "Japanese Must Look beyond Lee Teng-hui," Taipei Times, May 28, 2001. <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/editorials/archives/2001/05/28/0000087621>.

203 "Taiwan Ex-leader Lee Draws Fire over Islands," AFP News - Yahoo Singapore, September 13, 2012. <https://sg.news.yahoo.com/taiwan-ex-leader-lee-draws-fire-over-islands-143320937.html>.

The Friends of Lee Teng-Hui Association in Japan began in 2002 as an organization to promote Japan-Taiwan friendship. It was founded by conservative Japanese figures, and most of its 1000+ members are Japanese. It claims to have 21 branches in Japan, one in Los Angeles, and one in Taipei. It has cooperated with Channel Sakura since the channel's launch in 2004.

Key members of the Friends of Lee Teng-Hui Association in Japan include:

- Odamura Shiro (Chairman) – Vice Chairman of Nippon Kaigi
- Kase Hideaki (Vice Chairman) - founder of the Society for the Dissemination of Historical Fact
- Takubo Tadae (Vice Chairman) - A representative of Nippon Kaigi
- Nakanishi Terumasa (Vice Chairman) - member of the board of directors of Tsukurukai and a member of Yasukuni Shrine Reverence Association
- Akazaki Hisahiko (Vice Chairman) - a Tsukurukai member

Among the board members of the Lee Teng-Hui Association in Japan is Nagayama Hideki. Nagayama runs his own organization, called the Taiwan Research Forum (Taiwan Kenkyu Forum), which aims to promote good relations with Taiwan and spread awareness about counterpoints to Chinese viewpoints.²⁰⁴ Nagayama has been an active member of Channel Sakura's newscaster team since 2004, as well as a board member of the Ganbare Nippon organization since 2010. Starting in 2013, he has hosted his own "Taiwan Channel" weekly

²⁰⁴ The organization uses facebook as its official site: <https://www.facebook.com/taiwankenkokubanzai/info>

program on Channel Sakura. It is a bilingual program aimed at Japanese and Taiwanese viewers, featuring a Taiwanese co-anchor who translates Nagayama's statements about Japan-Taiwan issues.²⁰⁵

3.13.2 Benefits for Allied Organizations

What do activists from other organizations gain through cooperation with Channel Sakura? A specific example can be found in the Yu-Wen Chen's research on the Uyghur Lobby.²⁰⁶ Chen follows the case of Ilham Mahmut, founder of the Japan Uygur Association (JUA).

Shortly after founding the JUA in 2008, Mahmut met Nagayama Hideki at a Falun Gong event in Tokyo. He came to know that Nagayama was a host of Channel Sakura television programs and an activist involved in pro-Taiwan organizations such as the Friends of Lee Teng-Hui.

Through Nagayama, Mahmut was introduced to Channel Sakura and its allies within the assertive conservative right. Chen's analysis of communications found that the JUA developed a relatively intimate relationship with Ganbare Nippon. Thanks to Nagayama, the JUA was connected to a network of pro-Taiwan independence groups, Free Tibet groups, and other anti-China groups. Connections were also formed to Nippon Kaigi. In addition, Nagayama helped introduce Mahmut to pro-Taiwan independence groups in Taiwan.

205 "【新節目】台湾チャンネル 日台交流頻道【桜 H25/10/10】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2013 年 10 月 10 日).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H7pvCrI7prM>

206 Youwen Chen, *The Uyghur Lobby: Global Networks, Coalitions and Strategies of the World Uyghur Congress* (New York: Routledge, 2014) pp. 94-100

Ilham Mahmut is a regular guest on Channel Sakura programs – having appeared over 40 times since 2009. His appearances include programs that spread awareness about the situation of Uyghur people in China, as well as programs on entirely different topics. In programs that attack China, Mahmut can be relied upon to deliver negative statements about the Chinese government.

Mahmut's claims about human rights abuse and Chinese "massacres" of Uyghurs are used for two purposes: one that directly benefits Mahmut, and another that benefits the historical views of the Japanese assertive conservative right. By painting a picture of a China that has committed and is still committing atrocities against the Uyghur people, Mahmut brings awareness to what he sees as the suffering of his people at the hands of a foreign occupier. Yet, at the same time, this view of China aids Japanese conservatives who seek to deny or downplay Chinese claims of atrocities committed by the Japanese in World War II. China is depicted as an immensely dishonest state: one that denies ongoing atrocities against the Uyghurs while telling the world "false" stories about Japanese atrocities that took place in the 1930's and 1940's. Mahmut's views on China are supportive of the world view advanced by Japan's assertive conservative right.

Examples of his appearances on Channel Sakura include:

- **June 16, 2009** – During the height of Channel Sakura's anti-NHK campaign, Mahmut appeared on a program to denounce NHK's coverage of the Uyghur issue. Agreeing with Channel Sakura's claim that NHK is pro-China, Mahmut argues that Japan's public broadcaster is deliberately

choosing to not report about the atrocities committed against the Uyghur people in China.²⁰⁷

- **July 8, 2009** – Channel Sakura devotes a program to the unrest in the Uyghur populated areas of China, with Mahmut providing most of the explanation. The Chinese government is blamed for causing the trouble through its “discriminatory” policies and the international media is criticized for failing to blame China for the “massacre” of Uyghur people.²⁰⁸
- **November 9, 2010** – As a participant in the anti-Chinese demonstrations that took place after the Senkaku Island boat collision incident, Mahmut praises the many Japanese who came out to support the marches. He ties the Senkaku issue to China’s own “aggression” against his own homeland.²⁰⁹
- **August 18, 2011** – A video report highlights a UAJ demonstration held in Hiroshima on the anniversary of the atomic bombing of that city. Mahmut is drawing awareness to the thousands of Uyghurs who allegedly died because of Chinese nuclear testing, and denouncing China for failing to recognize and take responsibility for its crimes.²¹⁰

²⁰⁷ "【イリハム・マハムティ】NHK報道とウイグル問題[桜 H21/6/16]". 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009 年 6 月 16 日). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RC_IZFAO8p0

²⁰⁸ "1/3 【イリハム・マハムティ】今、ウイグルで何が起きているか[H21/7/8]". 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009 年 7 月 8 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wv0eFBjKSWM>

²⁰⁹ "【イリハム・マハムティ】尖閣、ウイグル問題を APEC に問う[桜 H22/11/10]". 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2010 年 11 月 9 日).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n3FxmhbEE>

²¹⁰ "【原爆忌】ヒロシマは、ウイグルの被爆にも目を向けて[桜 H23/8/19]". 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2012 年 8 月 19 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mT0nJBWZZjo>

- **April 9, 2012** – In a special program on the “Free Uyghur” issue, Mahmut is joined by Dolkun Isa, secretary general of the World Uyghur Congress. They speak about the importance of the World Uyghur Congress meeting that will be held in Tokyo the next month.²¹¹ Mahmut serves as an interpreter for Isa, who cannot speak Japanese. (Channel Sakura devoted additional programs to covering the WUC meeting and the speeches delivered there.)
- **June 10, 2013** – A special episode of “Sakura Project” is devoted to the “cruelty” of modern China. Mahmut is one of the six guests on the show. The other guests are mainly members of pro-Taiwan independence groups. The discussion criticizes China for many issues (territorial aggression, economic dishonesty, corruption, militarism). Mahmut is given roughly 10 minutes of the one-hour program to speak, using about two-thirds of it to criticize Japanese and American diplomacy towards China, and one-third to highlight the discrimination against Uyghur people in China.²¹²

Within three years, Mahmut had formed his own relationships with various conservative organizations and conservative politicians, and had the confidence

²¹¹ "【Free Uyghur】 拡大するアジアの人権危機、ウイグルから日本へ[桜 H24/4/9]". 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2012 年 4 月 9 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pzjePYj3G-w>

²¹² "1/2 【桜プロジェクト SP】 中国の行っている残酷な現実[桜 H25/6/10]". 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2013 年 6 月 10 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RPSo4ct2-Co>

to act independently: "Now that they know me, I can phone the offices of Diet members without Nagayama's help."²¹³

Despite having only 30 members in his organization, Mahmut formed connections that allowed him to have twice-monthly meetings with national lawmakers. Cooperating with Nagayama and Channel Sakura had clear benefits for the JUA.

Cooperation with Channel Sakura can also be profitable for activists and intellectuals who are seeking to promote books. Many of Channel Sakura's programs follow a format in which a guest or a panel of guests is invited to discuss a certain historical or political issue. At the beginning of the program, there is usually an introduction of recent or upcoming books written by the guests. Throughout the program, the books are prominently displayed. In this respect, Channel Sakura can serve as an important part of a promotional tour for a new book, especially when it happens to appeal to a niche market of conservative readers.

3.14 Thoughts on Channel Sakura's Foundation

Channel Sakura was born through the efforts of highly-motivated and skilled social actors within Japan's assertive conservative right. Tagata Takeo, an old-school rightist who had built ties to both veteran's groups and post-1990's conservative organizations, was able to draw upon those networks to support the Kamikaze film project and the project to establish Channel Sakura. Matsuura

²¹³ Ibid.

Yoshiko brought ties to a variety of old and new conservative groups. Uemura Kazuko was a skilled fundraiser. Mizushima Satoru had the know-how to run a television channel, write scripts, create sets, and direct television programs. Technical skills, social connections, and a willingness to embrace unorthodox forms of funding have helped Channel Sakura maintain itself for over ten years.

The plan to launch an alternative media outlet did not threaten the influence of already-existing groups within the assertive conservative right. Its co-founders included members of two of the largest organizations in the assertive conservative right: Nippon Kaigi and Tsukurukai. A grassroots television network that encouraged grassroots conservative protests fit snugly into Nippon Kaigi's own goals for creating such movements. For Tsukurukai, Channel Sakura provided an outlet for its members to lecture viewers on conservative history and encourage activism in support of Tsukurukai's goals. Other conservative groups, such as pro-Taiwan independence organizations and the UAJ have also cooperated.

The skilled social actors among Channel Sakura and its allies helped create an inclusive gathering of conservatives. By stipulating acceptable tactics and forms of protest, they have kept their activism free of "hate speech," violence, and criminal acts. They have avoided connections to Japan's old *uyoku* and its new hate groups, cultivating a non-extremist identity that is meant to make their grassroots campaigns attractive to normal people. These supporters included the same kind of people who joined post-1990's grassroots groups discussed in the previous chapter.

Chapter 4: Channel Sakura's Meaning-Making

Before he became the head of Channel Sakura Mizushima Satoru had decades of experience as a film director, a screen writer, and a set designer. It would be fair to say that he is a professional storyteller and a professional at using symbols and images in film and television.

In this chapter, I will explore how Channel Sakura uses symbols and stories to create meaning for its viewers. As discussed in the theory chapter, skilled social actors keep movements and organizations going by building solidarity through the creation of meaning for themselves and their followers. For Channel Sakura, this meaning can come in the form of references to familiar heroes, the use of patriotism-inspiring images, the participation in ritual performances of identity, or through comparing one's current situation to well-known historical events.

4.1 Patriotic Heroes

In his research on Japanese uyoku groups, Nathaniel M. Smith described a style of activism in which participants carry out actions that alienate them from the general public. For the uyoku, committing acts that place them on the fringes of society actually help them feel empowered. They see themselves as modern day equivalents of famous Japanese patriot heroes, awakened to the truth and

surrounded by masses of people who haven't achieved such a state. Even if their deeds prove futile, they are living the life of a pure patriot.²¹⁴

It would be fair to say that Channel Sakura's use of historical heroes plays a similar role. Indeed, some, such as Mishima Yukio, are the same heroes that are worshipped by the *uyoku*. However, when Mizushima and his fellow Channel Sakura hosts talk about historical heroes, they do so in a way relates them to grassroots activism. They link their ongoing activist campaigns to the long struggles faced by patriotic heroes. Channel Sakura's message is not one of futility; it is a message of making small steps towards eventual victory.

4.1.1 Yoshida Shoin

On almost every Channel Sakura program and in almost every Channel Sakura and Ganbare Nippon street demonstration, one can see banners containing the words "Somo Kukki" (草莽崛起).²¹⁵ This can be roughly translated to "grassroots uprising." It is most commonly associated with the writings of Yoshida Shoin, a 19th century samurai intellectual who helped spark the movement that overthrew the Tokugawa Shogunate and brought Japan into the modern world. Yoshida was executed by Tokugawa authorities before his dream could be realized, and has since been considered a patriotic martyr.²¹⁶

²¹⁴ Nathaniel Michael Smith, "Right Wing Activism in Japan and the Politics of Futility," PhD diss., Yale University (2011)

95-96

²¹⁵ The slogan can be found on the Channel Sakura homepage: <http://www.ch-sakura.jp/578.html>

²¹⁶ Marius B. Jansen, *The Cambridge History of Japan Volume 5, The Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1989) p. 336



Figure 2: Ganbare Nippon protesters carry a banner bearing Yoshida Shoin's famous “grassroots uprising” slogan (October 16, 2010)²¹⁷

In his writings, Yoshida stood as "a link between the old samurai ideals of frugality and self-sacrificing service:"

"Nowadays everyone lives selfishly and seeks only the leisure in which to indulge his own desires. They look on all the beauties of nature-the rivers and mountains, the breeze and the moon-as their own to enjoy, forgetting

²¹⁷ More photos can be found in a supporter's blog entry: <http://ameblo.jp/sreggar/entry-10679167709.html>

what the shrine of the Sun Goddess stands for. The common man thinks of his life as his own and refuses to perform his duty to his lord. The samurai regards his household as his own private possession and refuses to sacrifice his life for his state. The feudal lords regard their domains as their own and refuse to serve King and Country. Unwilling to serve King and Country, at home they cherish only the objects of desire and abroad they willingly yield to the foreign barbarian, inviting defeat and destruction. Thus the scenic beauties they enjoy will not long remain in their possession."

*"As things stand now the feudal lords are content to look on while the shogunate carries on in a highhanded manner. Neither the lords nor the shogun can be depended upon, and so our only hope lies in grass-roots heroes."*²¹⁸

Yoshida's lifetime was considered a period of crisis for Japan, with corrupt and foolish elites failing to recognize and act on foreign threats to the nation. From an idealized perspective, the middle and low-ranking samurai who played a major role in the movement to overthrow the Tokugawa Shogunate were "grassroots heroes" who placed their loyalty to the nation above all other

²¹⁸ William Theodore De Bary, Carol Gluck, Arthur E. Tiedemann, Willem Boot, William M. Bodiford, Andrew E. Barshay, and Yōngho Chōe, *Sources of Japanese Tradition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006) p. 555.

things.²¹⁹ In borrowing Yoshida's term for a grassroots uprising, Channel Sakura is linking its situation to the situation that faced Japan in the 1850's. Like Yoshida, they have recognized a state of danger that the rest of the country has yet to realize, and they are trying to push their country into action.²²⁰ Under the banners bearing Yoshida's slogan, Channel Sakura's supporters are offered a chance to feel as if they are the modern equivalent of Yoshida's samurai followers.

4.1.2 Saigo Takamori

Channel Sakura's second official slogan is 敬天愛人 (Keiten Aijin - "Revere heaven, love mankind"). It was the favorite motto of Saigo Takamori, another great samurai hero of the 19th century. Like Yoshida, Saigo helped bring down the Tokugawa Shogunate and replace it with an Imperial government. And, also like Yoshida, Saigo was treated as a heroic martyr after his death.

Saigo had a reputation of being liked by almost everyone he met, and his dedicated patriotism and respectable personality helped bring different groups together to fight for the Emperor. This aspect of Saigo has been used as a lesson on how members of Ganbare Nippon should work together to protect Japan.²²¹ Just as Saigo had to deal with patriotic samurai who had many differences of opinion, Channel Sakura sees itself as dealing with a diverse

219 “【倉山満】吉田松陰に学ぶ平成国防論【桜 H22/10/27】”日本文化チャンネル桜 (2010 年 10 月 28 日).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TWX4wJgFEoo>

220 “【御礼】視聴者の方からの贈り物と吉田松陰の箴言【桜 H24/5/24】”日本文化チャンネル桜 (2012 年 5 月 24 日).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fol8zuCUHEo>

221 “【藤井厳喜】保守運動・出よ、平成の西郷隆盛【桜 H22/4/7】”日本文化チャンネル桜 (2010 年 4 月 7 日).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-icUpJdvBQ>

group of 21st century Japanese patriots. In both cases, there is a need to put aside minor differences and band together in the fight to save Japan from danger.

4.1.3 Mishima Yukio

Several of Channel Sakura's founders can trace their roots back to the 1970's student reactionary movement, so it should be no surprise that its programs treat Mishima Yukio as a heroic figure. Every November Channel Sakura has produced programs to commemorate the anniversary of Mishima's death. These include the filming and broadcasting of anniversary ceremonies held by third party groups²²², as well as programs in which Channel Sakura panelists discuss their views of Mishima.²²³

Mizushima has also devoted editorial programs to Mishima. In October 2010, shortly after forming Ganbare Nippon, Mizushima shared his recollections of the day Mishima died. He was a third year university student, and hearing about the SDF soldiers laughing at Mishima's speech and seeing Mishima's ultimate failure, Mishima was moved to think about the state of postwar Japan. He was also influenced by Mishima's novels. When launching the Ganbare Nippon movement 40 years after Mishima's death, Mizushima claims he was deeply influenced by the author. However, in contrast to the Tate no Kai,

222 “【三島由紀夫】没後 41 年、憂国忌・野分祭・四十一年祭[桜 H23/11/28]”日本文化チャンネル桜 (2011 年 11 月 28 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UE4i6Bfmpy4> and “【松浦光修】三島由紀夫・森田必勝両烈士 42 年祭[桜 H24/11/28]”日本文化チャンネル桜 (2012 年 11 月 28 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VYZrziJDZdc>

223 “【野分祭】三島・森田両烈士の遺した憂国の情[桜 H22/11/25]”日本文化チャンネル桜 (2010 年 11 月 25 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hcG6h8AzZ-0>

Mizushima sees his own movement as more like the patriotism of “rural samurai” – acting at a grassroots level.²²⁴

On numerous occasions Mizushima has commented on his memory of watching Mishima on television as the sound of news helicopters made it impossible for people to hear Mishima’s speech. For Mizushima, it is like an analogy of postwar Japan, in which the masses aren’t exposed to the patriotic truth because of the mainstream media.²²⁵

In its videos Channel Sakura portrays its movement as a successor to the patriotic spirit of Mishima. Like Mishima, they are deeply concerned about the state of postwar Japan and worried that their country faces a dangerous future. Although they do not support a military coup, they appreciate Mishima’s ideology. They see themselves as trying to save the Japan for which Mishima had given his life.

4.1.4 Practical Heroes

The above-mentioned patriotic heroes are known for sticking to their ideals and dying as a result. While they are often used to inspire activists, Channel Sakura has also used more practical examples of conduct.

224 “【直言極言】「憂国忌」と「草莽崛起」【桜 H22/10/29】”日本文化チャンネル桜 (2010 年 10 月 29 日).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z-6uXd7k1Lc>

225 “【直言極言】三島由紀夫の自決に思う【桜 H23/11/25】”日本文化チャンネル桜 (2011 年 11 月 24 日).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EVVGAmSC06M>

The figures used in such stories are not the typical heroes of the Japanese right. For example, in March of 2012, Mizushima used the stories of two historical figures –Komura Jutaro and Michael Collins.²²⁶

Komura Jutaro was a Japanese statesman and diplomat who served as Foreign Minister during the Russo-Japanese War. As leader of the Japanese delegation at the Portsmouth Peace Conference of 1905, Komura was responsible for negotiating the treaty that ended the war. When the treaty was announced in Japan, public anger about the terms of the treaty led to city-wide rioting in Tokyo. According to Mizushima, Komura was a patriotic man with strongly held ideals, but he was faced with the reality that Japan's military and financial resources were nearly exhausted. Komura needed to agree to a settlement, and was unfairly condemned as a traitor because of it. Japanese who condemned him had expectations that did not fit with reality.

Mizushima used a non-Japanese example for his second story. Having recently watched the 1996 film Michael Collins, he saw a parallel to Komura's situation in the life of the famous Irish independence fighter. Recalling the later part of the film, when Collins helped bring about negotiations with the British, Mizushima saw an example of another patriotic idealist who had to face reality. Despite being a "terrorist" who had taken extreme acts for the sake of his country, at the negotiations of the 1921 Anglo-Irish treaty, Collins accepted terms that granted Ireland independence, but made the new Irish state a member of the British Commonwealth. In Collins, Mizushima saw a man who history had later

226 “【直言極言】国民運動、原理主義と現実主義の狭間で[桜 H24/3/2]” 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2012年3月2日).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LEMeGeljnO4>

judged as a hero, even though he was condemned at the time as a “traitor” who had compromised his ideals.

The two stories are used by Mizushima to explain the importance of realistic expectations. In their grassroots movement, they must expect to achieve change by “small steps” (*ippo ippo*), and that requires that they face the gap between the ideal and the realistic. That is how things really work in the “grown-up world” (*honto na otona no sekai*).

4.2 Symbols on the Set

Mizushima’s years of experience as a set designer have translated into a visually-pleasing newsroom for Channel Sakura. Set decorations often include symbols and images tied to Channel Sakura’s protest campaigns.

Channel Sakura’s main slogan (*somo kukki*) is often prominently displayed on the set. While programs discuss a grassroots revolution, one sees the visual representation of such an idea in the background.



Figure 3 - Studio Set for a Discussion Program²²⁷

For example, the above figure showing a discussion panel program, dramatically large banners bearing the slogan are on the wall behind the guests. The screen behind Mizushima is displaying scenes of beautiful Japanese nature, such as momiji leaves over a stream. The screen also displays the text of writings by Kusaka Genzui, a famous samurai who followed Yoshida Shoin's teachings.

²²⁷ “2/3 【討論！】 中国・韓国経済の実態[桜 H25/2/16]” 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2013 年 2 月 16 日).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SBNnb-lxWsA>



Figure 4 - A News Program²²⁸

On normal news programs, two or three people will sit in front of a large screen. After Channel Sakura began its boat activism around the Senkaku Islands (discussed in a later chapter), it became common to display footage of the Senkakus during every news program, regardless of whether the Senkaku Islands were being discussed. In the above photo, one can observe a picture of Uotsuri Island, the largest of the Senkaku Islands. In front of the island is Channel Sakura's fishing boat, the Daiichi Sakura Maru. And, in the upper corner of the screen is Yoshida Shoin's "grassroots revolution" slogan. Desks are often decorated with Japanese traditional seasonal decorations.

²²⁸ “【緊急告知】総理の靖国参拝に応え、明日官邸前で「ありがとう！」を【桜 H25/12/26】” 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2013 年 12 月 26 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tXdFrCbn9s>



Figure 5 - Presents from viewers²²⁹

When viewers send presents to Channel Sakura, special videos are created to showcase the presents and give thanks. It is a frequent occurrence, happening every week. The presents are usually food or drink – in the above screen capture, it is rice and sake, sent as a gift of appreciation to Channel Sakura because of their Senkaku activism. There are many videos of this kind, with such a wide variety of presents from viewers in different regions of Japan. Such videos reinforce the idea that there is a grassroots community supporting Channel Sakura.

4.3 Rallying Around the Flag at Yasukuni

As mentioned in a previous chapter, offline demonstrations prohibit flags that are not the Japanese national flag. This rule serves a double purpose – it prevents potentially offensive flags and banners from appearing, and, perhaps

²²⁹ “【御礼】視聴者からの心づくしの贈り物【桜 H24/6/14】” 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2012 年 6 月 14 日).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GCcrwpHHou3k>

more importantly, it gives protest marches a strong visual impact. Hundreds of people marching down the street can create a sea of Japanese flags – a striking display of unity.

Perhaps the most memorable of these flag parades is the annual Ganbare Nippon march held at the Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo. It is held on August 15th, the anniversary of Japan's surrender in the Pacific War, as well as the anniversary of Channel Sakura's launch. Mizushima organizes a gathering of hundreds of supporters who come to Yasukuni in the early afternoon, offer their prayers together at the shrine, and then assemble in a nearby park. The park is full of Japanese flags, which dozens of Ganbare Nippon volunteers have spent hours attaching to flagpoles. The park is used to gather and listen to speeches from Mizushima, who stresses the importance of their march, which will honor those who died for Japan. August 15th is the day when they "become one with the heroic war dead." The speeches also include references to the other activist campaigns taking place, such as the Senkaku Islands boat missions and the marches against mainstream media outlets.²³⁰

²³⁰ "【海ゆかば】英霊に感謝し、靖國神社を敬う国民行進[桜 H26/8/18]" 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2014 年 8 月 18 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nfAfOb1R5Ok>



Figure 6: Yasukuni flag march (August 15, 2013)²³¹

Their march begins after the speeches. Led by Mizushima, they head towards Yasukuni Shrine in a four-person wide line that stretches back for several blocks. A van with a loudspeaker precedes them, playing the instrumentals to “Umi Yukaba,” a patriotic song from 1937 that was popular during the war. Every 30 seconds or so, a recording announces that they are the members of Ganbare Nippon, and they are coming to Yasukuni to express their thanks to the heroic war dead.

The march to Yasukuni takes over ten minutes. As they near the gates of the shrine, they come into contact with people who have come to the shrine to offer prayers. It is a supportive crowd, and many of them applaud the marchers and wave flags at them as they pass.

²³¹ "平成 25 年 8 月 15 日 頑張れ日本「日の丸大行進」靖国神社" ytshi3des (2013 年 8 月 15 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n1qQ-lnejP4>

The marchers halt directly in front of the gigantic iron gate of the shrine, waiting until the end of their line reaches the end of its marching course. They are then led by Mizushima in a singing of Japan's national anthem. After the national anthem, they sing "Umi Yukaba." Many of the participants know the lyrics to the song:

Umi yukaba

Mizuku kabane

Yama yukaba

Kusa musu kabane

Okimi no he ni koso shiname

Kaerimi wa seji

If I go away to the sea,

I shall be a corpse washed up.

If I go away to the mountain,

I shall be a corpse in the grass

But if I die for the Emperor,

It will not be a regret.

It was a song that kamikaze pilots would sing before heading out on their suicide missions. Through the song, the marchers are both honoring and connecting themselves with the Japanese who sacrificed themselves for the Japanese Empire. They are in the physical place where many Japanese soldiers,

sailors, and airmen gathered to pray before going off to war, and it is also the place where the souls of those who never returned are enshrined. At the end of the song, they engage in another act that soldiers were known to perform, "banzai" cheers for the emperor. It is an act that connects them to the past. It reinforces their commitment to continue their activism on behalf of the country that they believe should honor those who died in the war and replicate their commitment to emperor and country.

John Breen has written that the Yasukuni Shrine is a place of social importance for living people both to honor the war dead and utilize their memory for modern meaning-making. Rites performed at Yasukuni generate "a sense of time collapsing: Japan is once more an Imperial Japan, a glorious empire, united in a spirit of loyalty and self-sacrifice." The organizations that worship there are working to help Yasukuni recreate an "idealized past" through the glorification of those who died in the war.²³² Ganbare Nippon's flag march is certainly an example of such a ritual.

²³² John Breen, "The Dead and the Living in the Land of Peace: A Sociology of the Yasukuni Shrine," *Mortality* 9, no. 1 (2004)



Figure 7: Singing at Yasukuni (August 15, 2013)

It is an emotionally powerful communal event, held at a symbolically important place on a symbolically important day. For those who cannot physically attend the event, Channel Sakura produces a video summary. Throughout the march, Channel Sakura cameramen are running back and forth, taking the best footage possible. When marchers sing, there are cameras on hand to get close-up shots. There is also a camera placed on top of the van leading the march, providing a sweeping view of the marchers as they turn around corners. In the post-production, Channel Sakura superimposes photos of kamikaze pilots over scenes of the march.

The viewer is given an audio visual experience in honoring the war dead, and Mizushima is sure to end the video by thanking the viewers themselves for their continued support for Channel Sakura and Ganbare Nippon. The online response by viewers is overwhelmingly positive. The 2013 video was viewed over 29,000 times and received 619 thumbs-up votes on YouTube (compared to

just 17 thumbs-down votes). Many user comments complimented the beauty of the flags and the songs.²³³

4.4 YouTube Comment Threads

The videos that Channel Sakura uploads to YouTube are open to comments from anyone with a Google account. Almost all comments posted on videos are positive, with many declaring their gratitude and support for Channel Sakura. It creates what seems like an atmosphere of energetic solidarity.

YouTube allows content owners to moderate comment threads under their videos. It is possible that Channel Sakura regularly deletes negative responses. However, thumbs up and thumbs down voting is also enabled on their videos, and it is quite common for a video to have dozens of thumbs up votes and zero down votes. The vote tallies cannot be censored, so such data suggests that most of the people who take the time to log in to YouTube and vote on a Channel Sakura video are supporters.

4.5 Meaning from Historical Comparisons

Sometimes, examples from history are used to help viewers feel proud of their community or feel anger towards enemies.

In the following section, I will explore how the Holocaust – an event that took place in Europe – is sometimes used by Channel Sakura in its historical campaigning. I have chosen the example of the Holocaust because there exists a misconception about the widespread anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial

²³³ "【海ゆかば】英霊に感謝し、靖國神社を敬う国民行進[桜 H25/8/16]" 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2013 年 8 月 16 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IdJxvbsjMo>

among the Japanese right. This misconception was evident in early 2014, when foreign media outlets ran stories implying that acts of anti-Jewish vandalism at Tokyo libraries were linked to Japan's right.

The response from Channel Sakura to that incident, and the other ways it has mentioned the Holocaust in its programs, shows how historical events with seemingly little relation to Japan can be employed as a meaning-making tool to reinforce views of the justness of one's country and the evil nature of one's enemies.

4.5.1 Meaning from the Holocaust

A common feature in many right-wing nationalist movements in the West is anti-Semitism. Some, such as Gamble and Watanabe (2004) have argued that a similar situation exists in Japan:

Fear and dislike of the outsider, or "other," has roots many centuries old in Japan. Even its more recent incarnation, epitomized in the Japanese conception of the Jew, goes back at least a century and a half. Moreover, throughout its modern history, Japanese xenophobia has been manipulated to galvanize national unity. In the Second World War, for example, it dominated the popular consciousness. Even though the Japanese militarists did not join their Nazi allies in implementing the "Final Solution" to annihilate the Jews, they certainly embraced and espoused anti-Semitic rhetoric in order to unify the nation's hatred against its "Anglo-

*American-Jewish enemy.”....This is the very same anti-Semitism that resurfaced so conspicuously in the last decades of the twentieth century, as part of a resurgence of Japanese nationalism.*²³⁴

As evidence of this, they point to a lack of condemnation towards Japanese publishing companies and weekly magazines that have printed “anti-Semitic” content, such as articles describing worldwide Jewish financial conspiracies and holocaust denial.

Channel Sakura’s programs have reflected some strains of this view. For example, in calling for resistance to a globalist world order that is under the control of powerful international financial organizations, Mizushima Satoru made reference to the many Jews at the center of such organizations.²³⁵

However, Channel Sakura programs treat the Holocaust as a real historical event that cannot be denied and downplay the idea that anti-Semitism exists in Japan. Examples from the Holocaust have been used to differentiate wartime Japan from Nazi Germany, to celebrate Japanese heroes, and to portray Japan as the victim of anti-Japanese propaganda and racism.

The truth of the Holocaust is often contrasted with the perceived lies and propaganda of anti-Japanese forces. This is evident in Channel Sakura commentary videos by Otaka Miki. In the first, from March 2012, she questions Chinese claims about the Nanking Massacre by likening it to popular perceptions

234 Adam Gamble, *A Public Betrayed: An inside Look at Japanese Media and Their Warnings to the West* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishers, 2004) p. 208.

235 “【直言極言】草莽運動 何のために、誰が、どうやって[桜 H25/5/31]”日本文化チャンネル桜 (2013 年 5 月 31 日).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mConU-s8XVU>

about a tendency for China to make cheap copies of better things that exist in other countries. She tells a story about visiting the Nanking Massacre Museum in China and realizing that it was a “crude imitation” (*pakuri*) of Israel’s Holocaust Museum. She says China makes imitations of everything: “just as it copied a Doraemon theme park and copied Japan’s bullet train, its Nanking Massacre Museum is an imitation” (*doraemon no yuenchi kara, shinkansen kara ne..nankin daigyakusatsu kinenkan made desu ne...pakutte bakari no chuugoku*). The massacre itself is argued to be a “fiction” used as a diplomatic “card” – a form of diplomacy that imitates Israel’s use of an actual historical tragedy.²³⁶

When American’s Holocaust Museum decided to host an exhibit about Comfort Women in 2013, Otaka once again contrasted the true event of the holocaust with the untrue version of history that Korean and Chinese lobbies are spreading in America.²³⁷

Channel Sakura has also made use of the Holocaust in stories that depict pre-1945 Japan as a friend to the Jewish people and an opponent to racism. The story of Sugihara Chiune, a wartime Japanese diplomat who issued transit visas to Jewish refugees in Lithuania, has been introduced on several occasions. In a 2010 program, Kanagawa University Professor Oyama Kazunobu shared his experience of visiting Lithuania, a pro-Japanese country (*shin-nichi no kuni*)

236 “【魔都見聞録】南京大虐殺はホロコーストのパクリだ【桜 H24/3/12】”日本文化チャンネル桜 (2013 年 3 月 12 日).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=38KQ123zgZA>

237 “【魔都見聞録】アメリカのホロコースト記念館に抗議活動を【桜 H25/4/1】”日本文化チャンネル桜 (2013 年 4 月 1 日).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DjPwVDs8sZQ>

where Sugihara is honored as a hero.²³⁸ In another program a book about Sugihara and other Japanese who had contributed to international society is recommended as helpful for Japanese people who are planning to travel abroad and speak with foreigners.²³⁹

In addition to Sugihara, Channel Sakura has also introduced several wartime Imperial Japanese Army officers: Higuchi Kiichiro, Yasue Norihiro, and Inuzuka Koreshige, as heroic figures who rescued Jews from the Holocaust.²⁴⁰ This fits with the Channel Sakura's overall view of history, in which many Japanese soldiers were not acting as criminals during World War II.

In March 2014, Otaka Miki lamented the current situation, in which Korean and Chinese lies about Japan's wartime conduct are treated as an "Asian Holocaust." Viewers were introduced to the notion that Japan was actually at the forefront of trying to prevent something like the Holocaust from occurring. She claimed that if the Great Power's had accepted Japan's 1919 Racial Equality Proposal, the Holocaust could have been prevented. Instead, Japan's plan for recognition of racial and national equality was rejected. A chance to stand against racism was lost, and a few decades later, Jewish people and Gypsies were sent to gas chambers because of racism in Europe. Otaka wanted Jewish

238 “【早い話が、．．】国家の存立、リトアニア帰朝報告[桜 H22/5/7]” 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2014 年 5 月 6 日).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TbvJTo95Qog>

239 “【感々学々】史実が語る日本の魂・ユダヤ人救出物語[桜 H22/8/27]” 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2010 年 8 月 27 日).
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_TJw48y9nkc

240 “【感々学々】史実が語る日本の魂・ユダヤ人救出物語その 2[桜 H22/9/3]” 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2010 年 9 月 3 日).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qqYxEoAWzf0> and Randolph L. Braham, *Contemporary Views on the Holocaust* (Boston: Kluwer-Nijhoff, 1983) pp. 82-84.

people who have been cooperating with Korean and Chinese interest groups to know that Japan has historically tried to protect the Jewish people.²⁴¹

In 2014, former Israeli Ambassador to Japan Eli-Eliyahu Cohen appeared on Channel Sakura for an interview with Otaka Miki. Cohen introduced the Japanese addition of a book he wrote about a Zionist war hero, comparing his desire to fight and die for his country to that of the Japanese samurai.²⁴² In a second interview with Cohen, Otaka asked him for his view on Koreans who call Japan's wartime conduct an "Asian Holocaust." Cohen said that Koreans are being "wrong" and "shameful" because the Holocaust stands alone in history as a uniquely terrible event, and it is wrong to compare anything to it. While claiming that he doesn't know enough about the issue to comment on the historical details of Japan's wartime conduct, he criticized the American Holocaust Museum's hosting of a comfort women exhibit because it makes the Holocaust Museum a place for "many people to blame each other."²⁴³ His statements, while not showing open agreement for Channel Sakura's view of Japanese history, were nonetheless presented in a context that gives support to their world view.

Channel Sakura has also used Holocaust stories to reinforce a sense of Japanese victimization. In one program, uploaded in March 2014, newscaster

241 "【魔都見聞録】日本の提案が受け入れられていたならば、ホロコーストは起こらなかったかもしれない【桜 H26/3/17】"日本文化チャンネル桜 (2014 年 3 月 17 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tL2vlpwJUNA>

242 "【魔都見聞録】日本とユダヤの不思議な相関【桜 H26/4/21】"日本文化チャンネル桜 (2014 年 4 月 21 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ldiv1Hhw-wk>

243 "Holocaust≠Comfort Women 【Eli Eliyahu Cohen】"日本文化チャンネル桜 (2014 年 3 月 20 日). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yPP_SKXoZI4

Suzuki Kuniko introduced books by German authors Gudrun Pausewang²⁴⁴ and Hans Peter Richter²⁴⁵. The books tell stories of the everyday lives of Jewish children prior and during the Holocaust, so it will help Japanese readers understand that Jews in Europe faced gradually increasing amounts of discrimination and racism, which culminated in their being sent to death camps. The purpose of the mentioning these stories, however, is to highlight what Channel Sakura sees as racism against Japanese people. The video description stated that by learning about Jewish people suffering under racism in Europe, Japanese can draw parallels to how Koreans are spreading anti-Japanese racism in America through the “propaganda” about “comfort women.” It is implied that Japanese people living in America are facing the same kind of racist attacks that Jewish people had to suffer in pre-Holocaust Europe. Through attacks that try to make people think that the treatment of comfort women was comparable to the Holocaust, and that the Japanese flag is similar to the Nazi German flag, Koreans are spreading racism. These books can be used by Japanese who want to respond to Korean statements about the Holocaust.²⁴⁶

The issue of anti-Semitism in Japan gained international attention in February 2014 when it came to light that copies of Anne Frank’s Diary and other books related to the Holocaust were being vandalized at public libraries throughout the Tokyo area. Foreign journalists, such as William Pesek of

244 Gudrun Pausewang, *Soko Ni Bokura Wa Iawasete: Kataritsutaeru Nachisu Doitsuka No Kioku*, trans. Yumiko Takada (Tokyo: Misuzushobo, 2012)

245 Hans Peter Richter, *Friedrich* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970)

246 “【感々学々】従軍慰安婦をホロコーストに準えるのは、ユダヤ人への侮辱です【桜 H26/3/14】” 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2014 年 3 月 14 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uS7cZg087pw>

Bloomberg and Kirk Spitzer of Time Magazine, wrote articles speculating that the vandalism was the work of "conservative or rightist elements" within Japanese society.²⁴⁷ Jeff Kingston stated that he believed it was probably a sign of the fact that "Japan is in the throes of a culture war led by right-wing reactionaries who feel emboldened under Prime Minister [Shinzo] Abe."²⁴⁸

The response from Channel Sakura was to blame China and Korea. In a February 28 program, Mizushima argued that the issue was unrelated to the right or left in Japanese politics. Japanese people, regardless of their political affiliation, were said to feel sympathy for the sad story of Anne Frank and recognize the "historical truth" (*rekishiteki na shinjitsu*) of the Holocaust. The vandalism was linked to Chinese and Korean efforts to label Japan as the same as Nazis.²⁴⁹ A similar view was expressed by Otaka Miki in her weekly commentary program.²⁵⁰

A suspect was arrested the next month, and reports indicated that the man might have been motivated by mental instability rather than racism. In a Channel Sakura video on the topic, Mizushima expressed doubt about the reports. The acts of vandalism seemed to fit within his view of the world – not as the acts of a Japanese rightist, but as part of an international "campaign" by

247 William Pesek, "Vandalized Anne Frank Diaries Are Troubling Sign of the times," Japan Times, February 25, 2014. <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2014/02/25/commentary/japan-commentary/vandalized-anne-frank-diaries-are-troubling-sign-of-the-times/- .U92ZMvmSzB0>.

248 Kirk Spitzer, "Hundreds of Copies of Anne Frank's Diary Vandalized in Japan | TIME.com," Time, February 27, 2014. <http://world.time.com/2014/02/27/anne-frank-japan-diary-vandalized/>

249 “【言いたい放談】ウクライナとアンネの憂鬱[桜 H26/2/28]” 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2014 年 2 月 28 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-f9C1mPFq1E>

250 “【魔都見聞録】アンネの日記毀損事件が日本を覚醒させる[桜 H26/3/3]” 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2014 年 3 月 3 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EFwHd-j4C4>

Chinese and Koreans to smear Japan as a racist country. To Mizushima, it was the only way that it made sense (*sou shika kangaerarenai*).²⁵¹

Viewer comments on the above-mentioned videos indicate considerable agreement with Channel Sakura's efforts to use the Holocaust to create a sense of Japan being a just country that does not engage in anti-Semitism.

For example, in response to the March 3rd video about the Anne Frank Diary vandalism, user "MrHinemosunotaribito" wrote:

*"There are no Japanese people who hate Israel or Sugihara. And could we do something so terrible to Anne Frank's Diary? It's not possible. This is the kind of book that we want our children and grandchildren to read. I pray that they quickly catch the criminal. And that it isn't a Japanese."*²⁵²

In response the March 13 video on the same topic, user "hiro-hnl zsma" wrote:

*"Vandalizing property doesn't match with the character of Japanese people. If we have a problem with Israel, we'd send a protest letter to the embassy."*²⁵³

251 “【国内情勢】アンネ事件容疑者確保、武器輸出と産業スパイの問題、増税前のベア回答[桜 H26/3/13]” 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2014 年 3 月 12 日). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6c0V_eBdwJ0

252 “【魔都見聞録】アンネの日記毀損事件が日本を覚醒させる[桜 H26/3/3]” 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2014 年 3 月 3 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EWFuHd-j4C4>

253 “【国内情勢】アンネ事件容疑者確保、武器輸出と産業スパイの問題、増税前のベア回答[桜 H26/3/13]” 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2014 年 3 月 12 日). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6c0V_eBdwJ0

A few comments on the two videos bring up the fact that the Holocaust Museum in America had cooperated with Koreans to host an “anti-Japanese” exhibit about the “comfort women.” However, the comments nonetheless place the blame for the vandalism on Koreans, refusing to believe that there is such anti-Semitism in Japan.

4.6 Thoughts on Meaning Making

This chapter has explored techniques that Channel Sakura uses to create a sense of shared meaning for viewers. Skilled social actors, most notably Channel Sakura president Mizushima Satoru, employed a variety of methods to create meaning for members of his organization and its viewers. Their activism was tied to historical heroes; visual symbols of patriotism were ever-present in their programs; their solidarity and commitment to the Japanese nation was reinforced through rituals such as the Yasukuni flag march; and viewers were given a chance to express their support through the interactive medium of online commenting.

In the following chapters, I will move on to detailed accounts of protest campaigns. In each of these campaigns, I will highlight how the skilled social actors within Channel Sakura sought out opportunities within strategic action fields, employing tactics that were meant to improve their position within the field,

and explaining the state of the field through stories and narratives that created meaning for themselves and their supporters.

Chapter 5: The Anti-NHK Protest Campaigns

This chapter will examine Channel Sakura's role in a protest campaign against Japan's public broadcasting organization. In this campaign, Channel Sakura and its allies were challengers in a strategic action field, employing aggressive protest tactics and using new technologies to disseminate a message that created meaning for activists and their supporters.

I will start with background on past disputes over NHK's programming. This will set the context for an examination of the protest campaign against a 2009 documentary.

5.1 Background – NHK, Bias, and Protest Activities

NHK (*Nihon Hoso Kyokai*) is Japan's national broadcasting organization. Much like Britain's BBC, NHK is a publically-owned corporation that is funded through the nationwide collection of license fees from television owners.

NHK is required by law to maintain political impartiality in its programming. In principal, this means that NHK should maintain editorial independence and not allow political pressure from the government or private groups to influence the content it produces.²⁵⁴ However, in recent decades, NHK's adherence to this principal has been challenged by both liberal and conservative groups in Japan.

254 Zorana Kostic, "The Challenges of Digital Broadcast Media: NHK (The Japanese broadcasting corporation), internet, mobile technologies and the future role of the public broadcaster," Paper presented at *ANZCA09 Communication, Creativity and Global Citizenship*. Brisbane, July 2009.

In its news coverage, NHK has been criticized by progressives because they see its news department's reluctance to present strong political criticism as favoring the government. The result is, according to Ellis Krauss, "a cautious, noninterpretive indirect bias toward the government." However, Matsuda Hiroshi of Ritsumeikan University has argued that the production department of NHK creates documentaries with "very liberal" views that often contradict government positions.²⁵⁵ In his study of war memory in postwar Japan, Philip Seaton examined NHK's programming about historical issues, concluding that NHK has an "overall progressive leaning stance."²⁵⁶ William Underwood has also documented how NHK acted as a "redress advocate" in the 1990's for former wartime Chinese forced laborers by criticizing the response of the Japanese government and Japanese corporations.²⁵⁷

Members of Japan's assertive conservative right tend to agree that NHK presents a left-leaning view of history. Conservatives have been publishing attacks on the NHK since at least the 1980's. Seaton has argued that "the sustained ferocious criticisms of NHK by nationalists" are indicative of NHK's overall left-leaning stance.²⁵⁸ He points to Okada Shinichi's 1983 book *Questions for Biased NHK*, which is highly critical of NHK's coverage of the 1982 history textbook dispute, accusing the network of "ignoring the national interest"

255 Reiji Yoshida, Ayako Mie, and Eric Johnson, "Momii's Rise Tests NHK's Reputation," Japan Times, February 2, 2014. <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2014/02/02/national/momiis-rise-tests-nhks-reputation/> - .U9cK6PmSxe4.

256 Philip A. Seaton, *Japan's Contested War Memories: The 'memory Rifts' in Historical Consciousness of World War II* (London: Routledge, 2007) p. 105

257 William Underwood, "NHK's Finest Hour: Japan's Official Record of Chinese Forced Labor," *JapanFocus*, August 6, 2006, <http://www.japanfocus.org/-William-Underwood/2187>.

258 Philip A. Seaton, *Japan's Contested War Memories: The 'memory Rifts' in Historical Consciousness of World War II* (London: Routledge, 2007) pp. 104-105

and “distorting the facts” as well as being “traitorous” through its violation of broadcasting law.²⁵⁹ The conservative magazine *Seiron* has also attacked NHK, running a monthly column called “NHK Watching” since 1997. The column’s author, Nakamura Akira (a supporter of Channel Sakura), has frequently called out NHK’s war-related reporting as biased. One example cited is a criticism of nightly news coverage of the 1997 Ceremony for Remembrance of War Dead, which Nakamura argues was selectively edited by NHK to emphasize condolences to victims of Japanese “aggression” over condolences to Japanese who died in the war.²⁶⁰

The most well-known case of a dispute over NHK’s impartiality took place in 2001. It involved the airing of “Questioning Sexual Violence in War,” a documentary that addressed the “comfort women” issue as a war crime. The documentary, the second part of a 4-part series on war responsibility, featured footage of a mock war crimes trial – the Women’s International War Crimes Tribunal. The tribunal was organized by the NGO Violence Against Women in War Network Japan (VAWW NET Japan) and declared in its ruling “that Japan’s military sexual slavery, known as the comfort women system, was not only a war crime, but a crime against humanity; they found the Showa Emperor Hirohito guilty, and the Japanese government to have incurred state responsibility.” However, when NHK aired the documentary about the tribunal, VAWW NET was angered by what it saw. The final verdict was not included, and scenes of the tribunal were “cut in an unnatural way, so that the line of argument they wished to

²⁵⁹ S. Okada, *Henko NHK E No Kokai Shitsumonjo (Questions for a Biased NHK)* (Tokyo: Sanko, 1983), 4-6. in Seaton Ibid.

²⁶⁰ Nakamura, Akira. “NHK Uocchingu (NHK Watching).” *Seiron*, November 1997, 184-89. in Seaton Ibid.

present was not communicated to the viewers." Moreover, NHK added an opposing viewpoint of the tribunal from a conservative historian. In a protest letter to NHK, VAWW NET complained that the documentary was "completely different from what we were expecting" and did not present what they considered "a fair and balanced account" of their activities.²⁶¹

The general topic of the documentary had been known in advance, so during the editing stage of film product, NHK faced a "state of semi-siege, as rightists mobilized and sound trucks circled the NHK building blaring hostile messages and employees were jostled and abused as they entered or left the premises."²⁶² Left-leaning critics of NHK allege that the pressure from these protests led NHK to change the documentary, adding an opposing viewpoint in the form of an interview with conservative historian Hata Ikuhito, a well-known advocate of the view that "comfort women" were not systematically coerced into sexual slavery by the Japanese military. Hata, who had attended one day of the tribunal's proceedings, criticized it as a one-sided endeavor that lacked a proper defense on behalf of the accused war criminals.

VAWW NET filed a lawsuit against NHK and the subcontractors that created the documentary, claiming that the parties had violated their trust by bowing to right-wing pressure and making fundamental alterations to the program without prior consultation or explanation. VAWW NET demanded 20 million yen in damages. In 2001, a Tokyo District Court ruling found that a subcontractor

261 Yayori Matsui, "Statement of Protest to NHK: VAWW-NET Japan," *Deutsche Ostasienmission*, March 2, 2001. <http://www.doam.org/index.php/projekte/menschenrechte/trostfrauen/nhk-tribunal/275-pr-mr-cw-nhk-vaww>.

262 Gavan McCormack, "How the History Wars in Japan Left a Black Mark on NHK TV (Their BBC)," *History News Network*. February 7, 2005. <http://hnn.us/article/9954>.

had committed a violation of trust, and ordered that 1 million yen in compensation be paid. The same ruling upheld NHK's freedom to edit programming and concluded that the edits had not been made as a result of political pressure. The defendants appealed to the Tokyo High Court. In the interval between appeals, the Asahi Shimbun ran a story based on interviews with an NHK whistleblower, alleging that the edits had been a direct result of political interference. According to the whistleblower, two conservative politicians, Nakagawa Shoichi and Abe Shinzo (at that time deputy chief cabinet secretary), visited NHK's offices before the documentary's airing and pressured the network into making changes. The final edits, such as the removal of the tribunal verdicts, were made after that meeting.²⁶³ Abe acknowledged that the meeting took place and that he had voiced his concern about NHK upholding its commitment to unbiased programming, but denied that he had pressured NHK into censoring the documentary. The Asahi Shimbun eventually announced that its article had contained "uncertain" information.²⁶⁴

In January 2007, the Tokyo High Court issued a ruling that found both NHK and the production companies at fault for failing to provide an explanation before editing the documentary. The defendants were ordered to pay 2 million yen in damages. The case was then appealed to the Supreme Court, where a final decision was issued in 2008. The Supreme Court favored NHK's

263 Norma Field, "The Courts, Japan's 'Military Comfort Women,' and the Conscience of Humanity: The Ruling in VAWW-Net Japan v. NHK," *JapanFocus*, February 10, 2007.

<http://japanfocus.org/-Norma-Field/2352?rand=1395130360&type=print&print=1>.

264 Philip A. Seaton, *Japan's Contested War Memories: The 'memory Rifts' in Historical Consciousness of World War II* (London: Routledge, 2007) p. 108

explanation that broadcasters have the right to freely edit their productions, and that trust and expectations of the plaintiffs were not subject to legal protection. The Court saw no reason for financial damages because NHK had not placed “enormous burdens” upon VAWW NET.²⁶⁵ Although it was a legal loss for VAWW Net, its supporters did not treat the outcome as a complete defeat because it raised awareness about important issues. As Kingston writes, “it is only because of the censorship scandal that many Japanese actually became aware of the tribunal's finding and the degree to which NHK is politicized.”²⁶⁶

Critics on the left saw the 2001 NHK Affair as an example of a public broadcaster being pressured by rightists into “censoring” a documentary that focused on Japanese war crimes. It has been alleged that it ended up silencing NHK and Asahi coverage of the “comfort women” issue.²⁶⁷ Morris-Suzuki saw it as an example of how calls for “fair” and “balanced” reporting can be used to intimidate and hinder journalists who criticize the status quo or report on controversial topics.²⁶⁸

However, to critics on the right, it represented a minor blip in a long history of biased and unfair NHK programming. The edits made to the documentary were a shift towards what conservatives such as Abe Shinzo see as “fair and

265 Akemi Nakamura, “NHK Censorship Ruling Reversed,” Japan Times, June 13, 2008.

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2008/06/13/national/nhk-censorship-ruling-reversed/> - .U9cqtfmSxe4.

266 Jeff Kingston, *Contemporary Japan: History, Politics, and Social Change since the 1980s* (Chichester, West Sussex, U.K.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011)

267 Kamila Szczepanska, *The Politics of War Memory in Japan: Progressive Civil Society Groups and Contestation of Memory of the Asia-Pacific War* (London: Routledge, 2014) p. 91

268 Tessa Morris-Suzuki, *The past within Us: Media, Memory, History* (London: Verso, 2005)

neutral viewpoint.”²⁶⁹ The politicians and protesters had reminded NHK of its duty to produce ideologically balanced contents. They did not see it as censorship. After all, their concerns that NHK would produce a “biased” documentary were precisely what had prompted their protest activities. Despite the incident, NHK remained “progressive-leaning on war issues,” so the right continued to feel that the struggle against “biased” NHK programming was far from over.²⁷⁰

When the 2001 NHK Affair came to a conclusion with the 2008 Supreme Court Ruling, the stage was set for a new round of contention. It had been shown that protests against the public broadcaster had the potential to influence its programming. In addition, the progressive organization that had filed the lawsuit against NHK had demonstrated the potential benefits of legal action – both in terms of putting pressure on NHK and in terms of drawing public attention to issues of political bias.

5.2 Strategic Action Field

Viewed from the lens of Strategic Action Field theory, we can conceptualize a field in which state and non-state actors are in conflict over the programming of Japan’s public broadcasting network. As noted above, the department of NHK that produces documentaries is generally seen to be left-leaning in its historical views. Despite the 2008 court ruling, NHK remained an organization that created left-leaning programming. Within this field, NHK’s

²⁶⁹ “Abe Admits Telling NHK to Censor TV Program,” Japan Times / Kyodo, January 13, 2005.

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2005/01/13/national/abe-admits-telling-nhk-to-censor-tv-program/>

²⁷⁰ Philip A. Seaton, *Japan’s Contested War Memories: The ‘memory Rifts’ in Historical Consciousness of World War II* (London: Routledge, 2007) p. 106

documentary makers and represent the incumbent group. The assertive conservative right, which was fighting to change the way NHK makes documentaries, represent the challengers.

Progressive, left-leaning groups and the assertive conservative right are in conflict over contradicting conceptions of “bias” and “truth.” To the left, NHK should be making documentaries that reflect a progressive view of history, because such documentaries would represent a true account of history and fulfill NHK’s obligations to viewers. To the right, documentaries that reflect a progressive view of history are biased and untruthful. Each side views its historical perspective as the truth, and the other side’s perspective as not grounded in truth and harmful to Japan.

Within this strategic action field, the conservative challengers sought out opportunities to improve their position. In the 2001 case, conservative challenges to the documentary caused its alteration in favor of their historical viewpoints. However, left-leaning activists, who constitute actors within the field fighting to defend NHK’s filmmakers from conservative influence, employed a lawsuit to further their cause. In the protest campaign launched in 2009, conservative challengers learned from the left’s use of a lawsuit to increase public attention to a cause. The conservative challengers also employed Channel Sakura as an online media platform to spread awareness and organize their campaign.

5.3 The “Japan Debut” Protest Campaign

On April 5, 2009, NHK aired the first in the *Japan Debut* series of documentaries, a subsection of *Project Japan* that was meant to explore Japan’s modernization and quest for great power status from the opening of the port of Yokohama in 1859 to the end of the Pacific War in 1945.²⁷¹ This documentary, entitled *A First Rate Asian Power [Ajia no Ittou Koku]*, focused on Japan’s colonization of Taiwan. Utilizing historical documents, interviews with international scholars, and the personal testimony of Taiwanese people who had lived under Japanese rule, it explained the motivations that led Japan to become a colonial power and the effects its policies had on Taiwanese people.

The documentary’s portrayal of the negative aspects of colonialism – political suppression, racial and ethnic discrimination, the treatment of indigenous peoples, military conscription, and policies that suppressed local culture and religion – angered Japanese conservatives and pro-Taiwan independence groups. A coalition of groups, including Channel Sakura, launched a protest campaign against NHK, accusing the public broadcaster of violating its legal obligation to produce politically neutral programs. They accused NHK of selectively editing interviews, intentionally using incorrect or misleading terminology, and presenting false information as if it was factual. In their judgment, NHK’s “biased and fabricated” documentary was created with the

271 「シリーズ・JAPAN デビュー 第1回「アジアの“一等国”」に関する説明」
<<http://www.nhk.or.jp/japan/announce/090617.html>> (2010/12/01 アクセス)

intent of convincing viewers that Japanese rule of Taiwan was evil and that the Taiwanese people feel deep resentment towards Japan.²⁷²

The first group to become involved was the Friends of Lee Teng-Hui Association in Japan, a chapter of a network of organizations that support former Taiwanese President Lee Teng-Hui. As Lee is often regarded as one of the most Pro-Japanese leaders of Taiwan and a friend of Japanese conservatives, the Japan chapter counts several prominent conservative figures among its members. The Association's president in 2009 was Odamura Shiro, a vice-president of the Nippon Kaigi as well as a head of Meiseisha, a publishing company that specialized in nationalist literature and had published a version of Tsukurukai's history textbook.²⁷³ Included among the Associations vice-presidents and directors are Okazaki Hisahiko of Tsukurukai and Kase Hideaki of the Society for the Dissemination of Historical Fact. According to Wikipedia, it had 20 chapters in Japan and a membership of about 1,500 people.²⁷⁴ Its e-magazine, which was sent out about three times a week during the protest campaign, had over 2,900 e-mail subscribers.²⁷⁵ The Association sent a protest letter to NHK on April 10, five days after the program aired. It was also joined by the Taiwan Research Forum, an organization headed by Nagayama Hideki.

272 「A Sinful Broadcast of NHK」 <http://loader.offmatrix.net/nhk/src/up_029.pdf> (2010/12/11 アクセス)

273 One example of this nationalist literature is this Nanking denial book: 「竹本忠雄・大原康男 再審「南京大虐殺」—世界に訴える日本の冤罪」 <<http://www.meiseisha.com/eng/nanking/e-nam1.htm>> (2010/12/10 アクセス) . Membership information retrieved from 「役員名簿「日本会議」」 <<http://www.nipponkaigi.org/about/yakuin>> (2010/12/10 アクセス) and Okumura, Jun. "Most of You Have Not Heard of Nippon Kaigi," GlobalTalk 21 Blog, January 02, 2008, Accessed December 10, 2010. <http://son-of-gadfly-on-the-wall.blogspot.com/2008/01/most-of-you-have-not-heard-of-nippon.html>

274 「日本李登輝友の会 - Wikipedia」

<<http://ja.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E6%97%A5%E6%9C%AC%E6%9D%8E%E7%99%BB%E8%BC%9D%E5%8F%8B%E3%81%AE%E4%BC%9A>> (2010/12/10 アクセス)

275 「メールマガジン日台共栄」 <http://www.melma.com/backnumber_100557/> (2010/12/10 アクセス)

Nagayama was also a member of the Friends of Lee Teng-Hui Association in Japan.²⁷⁶

As mentioned in previous chapters, pro-Taiwan independence groups have aligned themselves with Japan's assertive conservative right because both groups benefit from a view of history that shows Taiwan as a separate entity from China. By highlighting Japanese colonialism as a period of improvement for Taiwan, rather than as a period of Japanese invaders taking over a piece of Chinese territory, Taiwanese independence activists can emphasize that Taiwan has developed an identity that sets it apart from China. This view is in harmony with the Japanese assertive conservative right's favored view of history. Thus, the membership and leadership of organizations such as the Friends of Lee Teng-Hui includes many Japanese who support the assertive conservative right.

It is particularly noteworthy that Kase Hideaki is a director for the association. As was mentioned in Chapter 3, Kase helped bring together the original founders of Channel Sakura. It was in Kase's office that Mizushima Satoru, president of Channel Sakura, was introduced to co-founders Matsuura Yoshiko and Tagata Takeo. Just one day after the friends of Lee Teng-Hui Association in Japan sent their protest letter to NHK, Channel Sakura began making programs attacking the documentary.²⁷⁷ From the very start there was cooperation against NHK.

276 "1/4 【永山英樹】NHK「JAPANデビュー」が削除したこと[桜 H21/4/14]" 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009年4月14日).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uiO93BoNT1A>

277 "1/2 【NHK・アジアの一等国】日台分断工作! ?繰り返される" 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009年4月11日).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8aMHMTTjx9E>

5.4 First Responses

On April 16, 2009, Channel Sakura aired a 3-hour discussion panel about the documentary.²⁷⁸ The people who appeared as panelists represented the both Channel Sakura and the pro-Taiwan independence groups that would ally with it in the coming protest campaign. They included:

- **Odamura Shiro** – Former president of Takushoku University, Vice-chairman of Nippon Kaigi, and head of the Friends of Lee Teng-Hui Association in Japan
- **Koh Sei-kai** – Former de facto Taiwanese ambassador to Japan and Taiwanese independence activist
- **Nishimura Shingo** – a House of Representatives lawmaker involved in conservative history causes
- **Matsuura Yoshiko** – an assemblywoman for Tokyo's Sugunami-ward, member of Nihon Kaigi, and co-founder of Channel Sakura
- **Yuhara Masataka** – Board member of the Friends of Lee Teng-Hui Association in Japan
- **Rin Kenryo** – A Taiwanese resident of Japan, the leader of the Voice of Taiwan and member of the Friends of Lee Teng-Hui Association in Japan
- **Nagayama Hideki** – Head of the Taiwan Research Forum

²⁷⁸ “【討論！】どうしたNHK？！「JAPAN デビュー」問題” 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009 年 4 月 16 日).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fvFR5QYr76o>

It was a chance for an early reaction to the documentary. However, many of the panelists hadn't actually seen the broadcast. This program took the form of a collaborative storytelling, with each person sharing reactions to the documentary. To fill in for not yet having dug into the content of the documentary, the panelists focused on criticizing the general tone of negativity about Japanese colonial rule. They took turns sharing their own experiences visiting Taiwan or living in Taiwan, using those stories as proof that Taiwanese people do not resent Japan. They spoke of their personal anger or sense of victimization when seeing the documentary, or when they were told about the documentary.

For example, Matsuura Yoshiko recalled a recent visit to Taiwan as part of a group of politicians on a fact-finding and cultural exchange mission. She stated that she met many Taiwanese people who loved Japan. Displaying tourist photos, she told viewers about visiting a university campus in Tainan, where she found a Taisho Era monument that commemorated a visit by the then Crown Prince of Japan. It was in a remarkably good state, which must mean that the Taiwanese had maintained and protected it over the years. She contrasted it to another of her tourist photos, showing a statue of Chiang Kai Shek that was left in a state of disrepair, surrounded by overgrown grass. The statue was apparent proof that the postwar regime in Taiwan was viewed as worse than Japanese colonial rule.

Matsuura also mentioned her experience hosting a Taiwanese exchange student in her home. Although it was 10 years ago, she remembered well how the Taiwanese girl was so happy to be doing a home stay in Japan. This

personal experience was more proof that Taiwanese people did not hate Japan. Why, she asked, was NHK trying to convince Japanese viewers that Taiwan hated them?

Rin Kenryo claimed that he had been looking forward to an NHK documentary about Taiwan. A few minutes into the broadcast, he knew it was “not the Taiwan I know” – instead, it was the exact opposite. It was a Taiwan that exists only inside the NHK documentary. Because it was so different from the “truth” that he knew, it made him angry. It seemed to him even worse than the kind of “brainwashing” propaganda documentaries that would air on Taiwanese TV during the era of the Nationalist Chinese dictatorship.

Rin added a tale of his father, who had grown up under Japanese rule. The elder Rin was delighted to host a Japanese guest in their home in the postwar years. Rin also mentioned a story he heard about Ka Tokuzo, who, despite having made negative comments in the NHK documentary, was known to take pleasure in teaching the Japanese language to other Taiwanese people. Rin went on to discuss scenes from recent Taiwanese films that are set in the colonial era. In one scene of the movie mentioned, Taiwanese women encounter a Japanese soldier in their village, and after witnessing his kindness, they learn that Japanese are polite and respectful. Rin shared these stories as a representation of how modern Taiwanese people have feelings of friendless and nostalgia towards Japan.

Koh Sei-kai stated his displeasure about how the documentary put Taiwan on the same level as “anti-Japanese” China and North Korea. He claimed it was

destroying the positive image of Taiwan that exists in Japan. As a Taiwanese person, he agreed that there were some bad aspects of Japanese colonial rule of Taiwan, but felt the NHK documentary had absolutely no balance. He accused NHK of selectively editing interviews with elderly Taiwanese to only show negative things that they said.

Nishimura Shingo hadn't seen the documentary, but heard about it from friends. He mentioned his suspicion about the general nature of NHK. He pointed out that NHK made propaganda for the Americans during the GHQ occupation period. He claimed that the same kind of thing was happening in 2009, only this time NHK was part of the Chinese communist "information war." He viewed the documentary as part of a plan to draw Taiwan away from Japan and into communist China's orbit.

Yuhara Masataka agreed that it was "propaganda" produced from a pro-China standpoint. He expressed confidence that it did not represent the true voice of Taiwanese people. To illustrate the damage that the documentary had done to Japan-Taiwan relations, he told a story about a phone call he received the day after the documentary aired. It was from someone whose father had been a Japanese official in Taiwan during the colonial era. The caller had seen the documentary and became uneasy about the things that his father may have done in Taiwan, thinking that there was a great deal of racism and cruelty towards the Taiwanese people. The caller was convinced that Taiwanese people must resent and hate Japan. Yuhara claimed that the documentary, which was

based on “fabrications,” was tricking Japanese into considering Taiwan an enemy.

At the end of the program, moderator Mizushima Satoru provided information on how to email or call NHK to give them opinions on the documentary.

By gathering together, the people in the room, and in connection, the viewers are sharing in the experience of these stories. Their own encounters with Taiwanese and their own retelling of stories from Taiwanese people are presented as both evidence of NHK’s distortion of the truth, and as evidence of their shared sense of moral indignation. Their stories, all of which drive in the same direction, build solidarity between their respective organizations and reinforce their collective dislike of NHK.

In studying how human beings make sense of anomalous situations, psychologists have demonstrated the importance of storytelling. Stories help us make sense of the unknown, help elicit and channel emotional responses, and help sustain identities at an individual and group level. They are important form of meaning-making that contributes to collective action.²⁷⁹ And it could be said that they were fulfilling such a role in this Channel Sakura program.

Through the medium of YouTube, the action is spread to an online space, where viewers also engage in a form of meaning making through leaving

²⁷⁹ Francesca Polletta, *It Was like a Fever: Storytelling in Protest and Politics*(Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 7.

comments on the video program. For example, user hokila678 wrote this message about the NHK “traitors” in response to part 5 of the video²⁸⁰:

I welcome friendship between Japan and Taiwan! Both countries should kick out the traitors and work together – the people and the government – towards prosperity and good relations. Let’s send protest e-mails and calls about NHK’s distortion of the truth. And let’s punish NHK by spreading the movement to stop paying NHK fees.

And MrMati5055 wrote in response to part 1:

NHK is forgetting that its sponsors are the Japanese people. This is a great crime.

The majority of comments posted in response to the video program expressed similar sentiments.

5.6 Issues of Contention

Below are brief explanations of the specific parts of the documentary that the protesters found particularly worthy of complaint. Each explanation contains the basic arguments of the protesters, followed by a summary of NHK’s responses to the complaints, which were placed on NHK’s website in June and July of 2009.

5.6.1 Editing Interviews with Elderly Taiwanese

On April 21, 2009 – a mere two weeks after the original program aired on NHK – Channel Sakura began to air in-depth reports about the portions of the

²⁸⁰ “5/16【討論！】どうしたNHK?!「JAPAN デビュー」問題” 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009年4月16日).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rpv59QLUFMs>

documentary that had been filmed in Taiwan.²⁸¹ One by one, the elderly Taiwanese people who had appeared in the documentary were tracked down and interviewed by Channel Sakura's reporters.

In the interviews, which were conducted almost entirely in Japanese, the Taiwanese people expressed mostly positive views of Japanese colonial rule. Channel Sakura's reporters showed the NHK documentary to the Taiwanese and explained the objections that had been raised about it. Many of the Taiwanese said that they had mentioned both the positives and negatives of Japanese rule when they spoke with NHK, and agreed with the argument that NHK should have included more of their positive comments.

Several men in their eighties and nineties sat down for extended interviews with Channel Sakura's Inoue Kazuhiko, expressing their dissatisfaction with NHK's editing of their comments and giving point-by-point explanations of parts of the documentary that they found were biased or inaccurate.

Channel Sakura also found a few of the elderly men who had sung war songs and talked to NHK for the documentary. The men were in the same park in which NHK had interviewed them. One man had been shown in the NHK documentary for about 30 seconds, saying that Japan had treated Taiwanese "like orphans and thrown them away" (*minashi ko ni natte suterareta*). When interviewed by Channel Sakura, he told them that the men of his generation had considered themselves Japanese and fought for Japan in the war. He seemed

281 "1/5 【台湾取材レポート】 井上和彦・台湾取材で感じたこと" 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009年4月22日).
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8dqmJrgoSHQ>.

proud of that fact, saying that one can go to Yasukuni Shrine and confirm how hard the Taiwanese fought. Rather than express regret about having lived under Japanese colonial rule, he told Channel Sakura that he regretted that Japan had lost the war. He, and the other men there, had wanted to stay a part of Japan. Another elderly man in the park exclaimed that all of them wanted to be Japanese, while others said that they wanted Japan to support Taiwanese independence. When Inoue thanked them for their service to Japan, they applauded him. Based on this, Channel Sakura concluded that those men were also far more pro-Japanese than the documentary had implied. And, it was argued, Taiwanese as a whole held a similar view of history.²⁸²

One of the most vocal Taiwanese was Ka Tokuzo, whose comments about ethnic discrimination had featured prominently in the NHK documentary. Ka looked back fondly on his days growing up and living in pre-1945 Taiwan, and had even authored a book in Japanese that had been published in 2005 as part of Sakura no Hana Publishing Company's nationalistic "Japanese Pride" (*Nihonjin no Hokori*) series.²⁸³ After he was contacted by groups that objected to the documentary, Ka joined the protest movement and provided statements for anti-NHK news articles and internet videos. Ka felt that NHK had maliciously included only his negative remarks about Japan. In his interviews with Channel

²⁸² Ibid.

²⁸³ 「桜の花出版：母国は日本 祖国は台湾」 <http://sakuranohana.jp/book_bokoku.html> (2010/12/11 アクセス)

Sakura he noted that he agreed with the protesters on almost every point of complaint about the NHK documentary.²⁸⁴



Figure 8 : Ka Tokuzo

There is a great deal of confusion surrounding the protests made by some of the Taiwanese, especially those by Ka Tokuzo. Despite Ka's contribution to articles and video reports criticizing the documentary, a June 6, 2009 explanation letter from NHK to Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) lawmakers stated that NHK had spoken to Ka and confirmed that he did not intend to file an official protest with NHK.²⁸⁵ However, on June 22, NHK is said to have sent a director and producer of the documentary to Taiwan for the purpose of meeting with Ka and the other Taiwanese who had started making public statements against NHK. The purpose of the meeting was apparently to explain NHK's positions to the Taiwanese and convince them to stop participating in the protest campaign

284"【NHK・JAPANデビュー】井上和彦・台湾取材12のポイント”日本文化チャンネル桜(2009年4月27日).
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jMY9XIhhe58>.

285 「中山成彬・再質問状(H21.6.4)に対するNHKからの回答書」<
<http://nakayamanariaki.com/modules/bulletin/index.php?page=article&storyid=41>> (2010/12/09 アクセス)

against the documentary. An October 2009 article in the conservative magazine *Sapio* alleged that the chief director of the documentary, Yamazaki Kenichi tearfully told Ka Tokuzo that anti-NHK protesters had threatened the lives of the director's children. The NHK director also is said to have come to Ka's house equipped with printed statements from some 50 scholars who supported the documentary.²⁸⁶ Under such pressure, Ka is alleged to have signed a statement retracting his protests against NHK.²⁸⁷ However, even after that date, protesters still used quotes from Ka's complaints against NHK. When Ka passed away in February of 2010, Channel Sakura eulogized him as an important figure in the anti-NHK movement.²⁸⁸ As of 2014, new Channel Sakura videos about NHK continue to use footage of Ka accusing the Chinese Communist Party of pulling the strings behind NHK.

In its official response, NHK acknowledged that it had only used short sections of very long interviews conducted with Taiwanese people, but it denied accusations of arbitrary or biased editing. Although it acknowledged that Ka and a man named Sho Shoki had made negative statements about the documentary

286“【直言極言】NHK、崩壊した嘘と隠蔽工作[桜 H21/10/24]”日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009 年 10 月 24 日). http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P_JRu2MkScg.

287『SAPIO』2009 年 8 月 19・26 日号「NHKスペシャル「JAPANデビュー」抗議噴出後に番組担当者が台湾再訪で行なったこと＝井上和彦」<http://news.nifty.com/cs/magazine/detail/sapio-20090903-01/1.htm> A less dramatic version of the story appeared in August 2009 on Channel Sakura: “【永山英樹】NHKの大罪－明るみに出た隠蔽工作[桜 H21/8/11]”日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009 年 8 月 11 日). <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gx8GBhjQjTw>. Although Hamazaki is not mentioned by name in the SAPIO article, he is referred to by name by Tokuzou Ka in Channel Sakura interviews.

288『産経新聞』2010 年 2 月 4 日「NHKスペシャルで「発言ゆがめられた」柯徳三氏が死去」and“【台湾レポート】柯徳三氏の葬儀に参列して[桜 H22/3/11]”日本文化チャンネル桜 (2010 年 3 月 11 日). <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OlozdWWHPa4>.

in interviews with conservative journalists, NHK claimed that it had never received a direct complaint from either man.²⁸⁹

In response to the accusation that it had unfairly edited out the positive comments Ka Tokuzo had made, NHK stated time constraints had forced it to use only 10 minutes of a 5 hour interview, and that portions cut included some praise of Japanese colonialism and some criticism of what Ka considered economic “exploitation” by the Japanese.²⁹⁰

To address Sho’s complaints, NHK provided a quotation from an e-mail he had sent to NHK after watching the documentary. The e-mail, which was written before Sho had been contacted and interviewed by Channel Sakura, praised the documentary and expressed gratitude to NHK.²⁹¹

NHK’s response did not stop Channel Sakura and its allies from continuing to argue that NHK had misled and misrepresented the views of the Taiwanese interviewees.

5.6.2 The Japan-Taiwan War

The Japanese soldiers who arrived in Taiwan following Qing China’s cession of island to Japan in 1895 were met with armed resistance from locals. The NHK documentary described the opposition to the Japanese military as fierce and widespread, occurring on a scale large enough to justify calling the event the “Japan-Taiwan War” [*Nittai Senso*]. It noted that the number of Japanese soldiers who died during the conflict was nearly 5,000.

289 「シリーズ・JAPAN デビュー 第1回「アジアの“一等国”」に関する説明」
<<http://www.nhk.or.jp/japan/announce/090617.html>> (2010/12/01 アクセス)

290 Ibid.

291 Ibid.

In the Japanese language, the conflict is commonly called the “War of the Yin-Wood-Sheep,” [*Itsubi Senso*], and NHK’s use of relatively unknown terminology was questioned by protesters.²⁹² Some saw the adoption of a new term, which placed Japan and Taiwan in opposition to each other, as politically motivated. The term was seen as an attempt to damage Japan-Taiwan friendship by taking a small conflict against former Qing elites and guerillas and redefining it as a war against the Taiwanese nation and people. Channel Sakura programs often referenced a Sankei Shimbun reporter’s discovery that Japan’s National Diet Library does not contain a single publication with the phrase “Japan-Taiwan War” in its title.²⁹³

There were also questions about whether the conflict was even large enough to be considered a “war” at all. These views were not exclusively limited to Japanese conservatives: Ka Tokuzo and another man, Sho Shoki, both told Channel Sakura reporters that they felt the term was an exaggeration.²⁹⁴

Responding to these arguments, NHK explained that the term “Japan-Taiwan War” had first come into use following a 1995 academic symposium marking the 100th anniversary of the Sino-Japanese War.²⁹⁵ It provided the titles of three history books that used the term, two published in 1997 and one

292 in reference to 1895’s place as the 32nd year on the Chinese sexagenary cycle.

293 The claim can be verified at <http://opac.ndl.go.jp/>

294 “【NHK・JAPANデビュー】井上和彦・台湾取材12のポイント” 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009年4月27日). <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jMY9XIhhe58>.

295 「シリーズ・JAPANデビュー 第1回「アジアの“一等国”」に関する説明」
<<http://www.nhk.or.jp/japan/announce/090617.html>> (2010/12/01 アクセス)

published in 2007.²⁹⁶ NHK also defended its description of the event as a foreign war by pointing to the retention of Japan's wartime-only Imperial General Headquarters until the conclusion of the Taiwan conflict and a telegram by Ito Hirobumi referring to the "foreign campaign" [*gaisei*] in Taiwan.²⁹⁷

On a Channel Sakura program that aired shortly after NHK's official response, Yuhara Masataka, secretary of the Friends of Lee Teng-Hui Association in Japan, and Channel Sakura's Inoue Kazuhiko expressed their continued dissatisfaction with NHK. Yuhara and Inoue acknowledged that there were indeed scholars that used the term "Japan-Taiwan War," but saw its existence in only a few very new books as questionable grounds for its adoption as an acceptable name for the conflict.²⁹⁸ They did not consider NHK's arguments to be valid and did not change their view that NHK aimed to sensationalize and inflate the conflict between Japan and Taiwan.

5.6.3 Taiwanese Identity Issues

Another point of contention that protesters have with the documentary is its use of language that they feel unfairly represents Taiwanese people as Chinese. To the protesters, particularly the members of pro-Taiwanese independence organizations, the use of such language was part of an intentional effort by NHK to oppose the idea of a Taiwan that is independent and separate from mainland China.

296 The titles of the books are: 東アジア近代史学会『日清戦争と東アジア世界の変容』1997 ゆまに書房 and 檜山幸夫『日清戦争秘蔵写真が明かす真実』1997 講談社 and 駒込武『東アジア国際政治史』2007. 名古屋大学出版会

297 「シリーズ・JAPAN デビュー 第1回「アジアの"一等国"」に関しての説明」
<<http://www.nhk.or.jp/japan/announce/090617.html>> (2010/12/01 アクセス)

298 “【柚原正敬】「日台戦争」という戦争はあったのか？[H21/6/24]”. 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009年6月24日).
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8vOzE8F6eCE>.

When the documentary discussed the outbreak of the second Sino-Japanese War in 1937, it touched on the ethnic identity of the Taiwanese. Five million Taiwanese were described as Han Chinese: the “same ethnic group” as Japan’s war enemy. The protesters objected to this notion, arguing that most Taiwanese people were not Han Chinese. Ka Tokuzo was most adamant about this issue, appearing multiple times on Channel Sakura programs to insist that Taiwanese people have mixed blood and should not be considered Han Chinese.²⁹⁹

In its official response, NHK cited the works of Waseda University Professor Wakabayashi Masahiro, director of the Japan Association for Taiwanese Studies, as the source of its information.³⁰⁰ It included a quote from Wakabayashi that classified Taiwan’s population as divided between Han Chinese and Aboriginal ethnicities, with the term “Han Chinese” referring to a group that included the Hakka and Min Nan people, as well as mainlanders of other backgrounds.

Another issue of contention was the documentary’s use of the term “Chinese” [*chugoku-go*] when referring to the language spoken by Taiwanese people in the 1930’s. In everyday Japanese speech, that term often refers to Mandarin Chinese, and protesters saw that as the meaning NHK aimed to convey. The following is an excerpt from English language fliers that were

299 5/8 【台湾取材レポート】 柯徳三氏インタビュー・1/3[桜 H21/4/21]”. 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009 年 4 月 21 日).
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eXvmpZbfooA>.

300 The quote is from 若林正文編『もっと知りたい台湾』1998. 弘文堂

spread via the internet to be printed and passed out during street protests which mocked NHK for its alleged distortion:

Mandarin Chinese was spoken in Taiwan at the time under sovereignty of Japan???

It is absolutely a haphazard, failed remark. At the time under Japanese sovereignty, Taiwanese, Taiwan native tongues and Japanese were spoken in Taiwan.

*It was after the Second World War that Taiwanese began to use Mandarin Chinese, under the dictatorship by Chiang Kai-shek.*³⁰¹

NHK's official response denied the accusation that it was referring to Mandarin Chinese when it used the term "Chinese." NHK argued that the Min Nan and Hakka languages spoken in Taiwan at that time were dialects of the Chinese language. As "Taiwanese" [*Taiwan-go*] usually refers to only the more commonly used Min Nan language, NHK argued that it used the term "Chinese" so that Hakka, which was spoken by a sizable minority of Taiwanese at that time, would be included. As it had in the dispute over ethnicity, NHK cited the works of Professor Wakabayashi as the source of its information.³⁰²

5.6.4 The Paiwan People and a "Human Zoo"

One of the most notable issues of contention that will be described in this paper is NHK's use of the term "human zoo" [*ningen doubutsuen*]. The term was used to describe the display of a mock Formosan aboriginal village at the Japan-

301 "TAIWANESE & JAPANESE; TRAMPLED UNDER FOOT BY JAPAN BROADCASTING" Accessed December 13, 2010. http://loader.offmatrix.net/nhk/src/up_032.pdf.

302 As before, the book mentioned is: 若林正文編『もっと知りたい台湾』1998. 弘文堂.

British Exhibition of 1910. The documentary stated that Japan was mimicking the British and French practice of putting colonized people on display in what were called “human zoos.”



[Figure 9 The Paiwanese Villagers in 1910]

The use of this terminology angered some within the assertive conservative right, who saw it as an unfair comparison between the Japanese empire and European empires. Producing Japanese government documents from the time, they argued that the exhibition was meant to display the proud cultural heritage of the Japanese Empire. By stating that Japan was placing the aboriginal people in a zoo-like setting, NHK was accused of dehumanizing the aboriginals and portraying Japan as racist.³⁰³

Channel Sakura reporters were dispatched to Taiwan, where they made contact with members of the Paiwan tribe and explained the complaints against NHK. Representatives of the Paiwan ethnicity disagreed with the use of “human zoo” on the grounds that it made their traditional culture look animal-like,

303 “1/4 【台湾取材レポート】パイワン族の真実—前編【桜 H21/6/18】”. 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009 年 6 月 18 日). <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8vOzE8F6eCE>.

subhuman, and inferior. Displaying their lifestyle and customs at the exhibition was something for which they felt ethnic pride.

Several members of the tribe were interviewed, including one very aged woman – Kao Hsu Yueh-mei - who had appeared in the NHK documentary and commented on how it was “sad” [*kanashii*] to see a photograph of her father at the 1910 Exhibition. The interviews were conducted in Japanese, and despite some apparent communication difficulties, Channel Sakura’s reporters concluded that the woman had really meant to say that she felt “nostalgic” [*natsukashii*] when she saw the photograph.³⁰⁴ Other members of the Paiwan tribe claimed that NHK had never used the term “human zoo” when conducting interviews about the Exhibition, and the tribe regarded those who had traveled to London in 1910 as heroes. To the Paiwan people who joined the protest movement, NHK’s depiction of their ancestors as subjects put on display like animals was an insult to the honor of their people.

NHK’s June 17 response included a short explanation on why it used the term “human zoo.” It argued that the term had been used in Europe at that time to describe displays of “savage” or “uncivilized” people by a “civilizing” colonial power, and that Japan’s display of the Paiwan people was modeled after such displays. To support its claim that the exhibition was modeled after the practices of Western colonial powers, NHK quoted from the prospectus of a 1903 exhibition in Osaka of Taiwanese and Ainu tribes. The prospectus stated in no uncertain terms that the event was based on displays put on by the “civilized

304 “【NHKの大罪】これがNHK流の「真実の報道」なのか？【桜 H21/6/20】”. 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009年6月20日). <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R-Cg0362rZM>.

western nations” [*oubei no bunmei koku*]. NHK also included a quote from a Japanese newspaper article from 1910 that compared the Formosan village display to a zoo.³⁰⁵

After the June 17 response, protesters, including some of the Paiwan people, continued to loudly denounce NHK over the “human zoo” issue. They argued against NHK’s response by claiming there was no evidence that the term “human zoo” was ever used at that time, even in Europe. To question the claim that the London exhibition was meant to be a “human zoo,” protesters pointed to the presence of a similar display at the exhibition that included ethnic Japanese people working in a mock farming village.

To counter what it considered to be “slander” [*hibo chusho*] and “fabrication” [*waikyoku*], NHK posted a second official announcement on its website on July 22, 2010. The supplementary explanation, which was nearly as long as the first explanation that NHK has posted, dealt only with the issue of the Paiwan people and the use of the “human zoo” dispute.

NHK’s second explanation traced the origins of the term “human zoo” back to 19th century Germany and France. NHK noted that a zoo in Paris was turned into a display area of tribespeople in the 1870’s. Records show the German term “anthropologisch-zoologische,” the French term “exposition anthropozoologique,” and the English term “anthropozoological exhibition” were used at that time to refer to anthropological displays of colonized tribespeople, and NHK felt it was justified in translating those terms into “human zoo” in

305 「シリーズ・JAPAN デビュー 第1回「アジアの“一等国”」に関しての説明」
<<http://www.nhk.or.jp/japan/announce/090617.html>> (2010/12/01 アクセス)

Japanese. As an example of its use in the Japanese language, NHK pointed to a book by Tokyo University Professor Yoshimi Shunya.³⁰⁶

NHK also provided a lengthier restatement of its argument that the exhibition was indeed based on similar European exhibitions. It added further information backing up its position about the 1903 Osaka exhibition, as well as quotations from that era of a Diet member who felt it had been demeaning to put fellow humans on display, and a journalist who compared the London display to a zoo. The explanation stated that the opinions of the people put on display do not change the overall nature of the display. NHK also argued that the mock Japanese farming village's demonstrations of agriculture techniques were not comparable to the Formosan village display.³⁰⁷

On the issue of sadness vs. nostalgia, NHK expressed confidence that it had not misrepresented the opinions of the elderly Taiwanese woman. It provided an analysis of the Paiwan language that concluded that there were circumstances in which one word could express either sadness or nostalgia, but based on the context of conversations that had not been included in the final cut of the documentary, NHK's team concluded that the woman had been trying to tell them that she was sad. NHK stated that its staff had not used the term "human zoo" when speaking with the woman, but it was believed that they had

306 The book mentioned is: 吉見俊哉『博覧会の政治学 まなざしの近代』1992年。中公公論新社。東京。

307 「シリーズ・JAPAN デビュー 第1回「アジアの"一等国"」に関する説明・追加」

<<http://www.nhk.or.jp/japan/announce/090722.html>> (2010/12/01 アクセス)

adequately explained the 1910 exhibition before asking her opinion about the photograph.³⁰⁸

The July explanation from NHK provided additional information about the reasoning behind NHK's decision to use certain terminology, but it did not change the mind of many protesters. These protesters, including several Paiwanese people, continued to use the "human zoo" issue as one of the centerpieces of their attack on NHK.

5.6.5 Use of Subliminal Images

In an April 16th 2009 video, Channel Sakura accused NHK of using images to send subliminal messages to viewers. Mizushima explained at length the importance of the various images and symbols used in the opening of the NHK documentary³⁰⁹. He argued images that appear for less than one second, such as a photo of a Chinese war victim, footage of Pearl Harbor, and a photo of Emperor Hirohito are enough to leave a lasting impression on viewers. According to Mizushima, the short opening clip employed imagery and symbols that will cause viewers, even without their conscious knowledge, to be reminded of the idea that Japan and Emperor Hirohito were the aggressors and victimizers in World War II. NHK's use of quickly moving images was depicted as an underhanded "manipulation tactic" (*insho sosa*). NHK denied that the images were being used to send any particular message.

308 Ibid.

309 "1/2 【映像分析】NHKスペシャル「JAPANデビュー」" 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009年4月15日).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I1YtkIJ56-o>.

By highlighting the above-mentioned issues – Channel Sakura portrayed NHK as a dishonest and anti-Japanese organization. Through its revealing of the “fabrications” in NHK’s documentary, Channel Sakura was in turn showing its viewers that the Japanese mainstream media could not be trusted, while Channel Sakura was worthy of their trust. And through the contribution of money to Channel Sakura and the participation in its grassroots protest campaigns, viewers were offered an opportunity to share in the responsibility for spreading the “truth” and saving Japan and Taiwan from nefarious foes.

5.7 Protest Methods Used

In the following subsection, I will explain summarize the tools and the methods of protest employed by the anti-NHK protesters in this campaign. As one would expect from a challenger within a strategic action field, Channel Sakura employed new technologies and new methods. The incumbent, NHK, did not use innovative methods, instead only putting a few pdf files on its website and occasionally answering questions at press conferences.

5.7.1 Online Video Content

Online videos were used a great deal in this protest campaign. As a satellite television station that also distributes its content via the internet, Channel Sakura was the primary provider of online videos in this case. None of the other organizations that participated in the protest movement had their own television studio or access to high quality video production techniques, so they relied on Channel Sakura to spread their message through this medium. Leaders of the

pro-Taiwan groups frequently appeared as guests on Channel Sakura programs and linked to Channel Sakura videos to lend further support to the views they expressed on their websites and e-magazines.³¹⁰

Channel Sakura's distribution of television programming via YouTube made its viewpoint accessible for free to anyone with an internet connection. Dozens of Channel Sakura videos containing detailed attacks on the NHK documentary were available. This distribution method is radically different from NHK and Japan's major private television networks, which limit free online video content to breaking news videos, usually available only on a temporary basis.³¹¹

The fact that NHK only aired *A First Rate Asian Power* on two occasions would typically mean that protesters and people filing complaints about the documentary would have needed to watch it on their television sets in order to formulate an opinion on its contents.³¹² However, in the era of high speed internet, anyone with a computer and internet access can log in to YouTube at any time and view videos from Channel Sakura that provide detailed criticisms of the documentary. And, as was mentioned earlier in this chapter, some of the commentary programs were from people who had themselves missed the original broadcast of the documentary (and presumably had to watch a recorded copy).

310 One example from the Voice of Taiwan newsletter : 「『台湾の声』【NHK問題】報道動画と抗議活動案内（東京・岡山）
<<http://sv3.inacs.jp/bn/?2009100097078774001950.3407>> （2010/12/12 アクセス）

311 Examples include <http://www.nhk.or.jp/news/> (NHK News), <http://www.tv-asahi.co.jp/ann/> (ANN News), and <http://www.news24.jp/> (NTV News)

312 「プロジェクト JAPAN : 未来へのプレーバック。[放送予定] | NHK」

<http://www9.nhk.or.jp/japan/pjyotei/archive_2009.html> （2010/12/11 アクセス）

The documentary itself has also been distributed for free on the internet – but not by NHK. Anonymous internet users who supported the anti-NHK campaign uploaded the entire documentary to video sharing websites. One unauthorized upload of the full-length version of *A First Rate Asian Power* has been available on YouTube since April 15th 2009. As of December 17th, 2010, it had received over 72,000 views, and as of August 1, 2014, that number had grown to over 202,000 views.³¹³ The anonymous uploader put “NHK’s Great Sin” in the title line of the video. The video description contained a warning about the “subliminal” images that could be found in the documentary. Anyone who came across the documentary on YouTube was thus introduced to it in a way that depicted it as anti-Japanese and biased.



Figure 10: The documentary was uploaded to YouTube

313 The video clip can be viewed at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hVH5WaT2byU>

Unauthorized uploading of copyrighted television content is a violation of YouTube's terms of use, and copyright owners need only to file a complaint with YouTube to have any unauthorized videos deleted from the site.³¹⁴ Under such circumstances, the video's continued presence on YouTube suggests that either NHK is unaware that this program is being distributed by third parties, or those within NHK who do know about it are not in the proper bureaucratic position to file a formal copyright complaint with YouTube. Either way, it demonstrates how an incumbent organization within the strategic action field was unprepared to employ new technologies and tactics. NHK did not seek out public support via the internet through the free digital distribution of its documentary, and did not act to prevent anti-NHK protesters from distributing a pirated version of the documentary in a manner that presented the documentary as anti-Japanese.

In the months immediately following the airing of *A First Rate Asian Power*, Channel Sakura uploaded anti-NHK videos several times a week, updating viewers on the latest developments in the movement. In addition to the earlier-mentioned interviews it filmed with Taiwanese people, Channel Sakura regularly aired discussion panels about the content of the documentary. Panelists included members of the pro-Taiwan groups participating in the protests, conservative historians, and journalists.³¹⁵

314 YouTube, "Guidelines and Requirements: Report a copyright violation," Accessed December 15, 2010. <http://www.google.com/support/youtube/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=113113>.

315 An example can be found at :“1/4 【桜プロジェクトSP】NHKからの抗議状、そこから何が見えるのか？[H21/7/24]”. 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009 年 7 月 24 日). <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nc6J-B-jGF8>.

Beyond its videos aimed at educating viewers about the views of the anti-NHK protesters, Channel Sakura produced videos aimed at promoting direction action and participation in protest activities. These included advertisements for protest marches, information seminars, and other offline protest events.³¹⁶ There were also after-action reports praising people who participated in offline protest activities.³¹⁷ When a class-action lawsuit against NHK was prepared and filed, Channel Sakura made programs calling on viewers to join the lawsuit as plaintiffs.³¹⁸ Videos advertising books and magazines with anti-NHK content were also included among Channel Sakura's YouTube uploads.³¹⁹

5.7.2 Offline Protests

This section deals with offline protest actions such as street marches, public speeches, and deliveries of protest letters.

The first such protest took place on April 10, 2009, with the delivery of a protest letter to NHK by the Friends of Lee Teng-Hui Association in Japan.³²⁰ It was the first in a series of such protest letters, several of which received

316 One example: “【高松&札幌】NHK「JAPANデビュー」に抗議する国民大行動[H21/7/2]” 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009 年 7 月 2 日). http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LzEJHV_UEN8.

317 An example would include: “【NHK の大罪】6.13 NHK「JAPANデビュー」に抗議する街頭宣伝行動 in 渋谷[桜 H21/6/16]” 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009 年 6 月 16 日). http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_zAmlZ5n8BI.

318 【NHK 一万人集団訴訟】「第五回口頭弁論」報告[桜 H22/11/19]”. 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2010 年 11 月 19 日). <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GFVKcPZQh2U>.

319 “【プレゼント】NHK 捏造事件と無制限戦争の時代[桜 H21/11/13]”. 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009 年 11 月 13 日). <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i9PqFfZG0Vo>. and “【プレゼント】撃論ムック最新刊「NHKの正体」[H21/7/4]”. 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009 年 7 月 04 日). <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xNJmAT6RCnY>. The books mentioned are: 西村幸祐

「【撃論ムック】NHK の正体—情報統制で国民に銃を向ける、報道テロリズム」 2009 オークラ出版 and 藤井げんき 「NHK 捏造事件と無制限戦争の時代」 2009 総和社

320 「【NHK「JAPANデビュー」問題 これまでの経緯】」 <<http://www.ritouki.jp/2009NHK.html>> (2010/12/09 アクセス)

responses from one of the NHK executive producers responsible for the documentary.³²¹

The pro-Taiwan groups and Channel Sakura also held several large protest marches near the head office of NHK in Tokyo. The first of these took place on May 16, 2009, and involved a march of over 1,000 protesters to the NHK office, where they submitted a letter of protest.³²² Many protesters, including Mizushima, called for the complete dissolution of NHK. On the same day, a small protest was held in Taipei, with a group of about 20 Taiwanese holding signs and chanting slogans in front of NHK's branch office in that city.³²³

A second major demonstration march took place on May 30, drawing about one thousand protesters. During the protest, about 100 protesters temporarily entered the NHK building without permission.³²⁴ The disruption was alarming enough that NHK felt the need to publically condemn the act of trespassing.³²⁵

The third major protest in Tokyo was held on June 20, drawing approximately 900 people.³²⁶ Several subsequent protests, none of which

321 "1/4 【柚原正敬】抗議声明回答報告と検証「台湾から見た日本」【桜 H21/4/20】". 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009 年 4 月 20 日). <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yP54Je4V1p0>.

322 『世界日報』 2009 年 5 月 17 日 「NHK反日報道に約 1 3 0 0 人が抗議 東京・渋谷」
<<http://www.worldtimes.co.jp/today/kokunai/090517-4.html>>

323 "2/4 【NHK 抗議・台湾デモ】NHKは日本への愛情を傷つけた！【桜 H21/6/2】". 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009 年 6 月 2 日). <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NR1uA-zfNpE>.

324 『しんぶん赤旗』 2009 年 8 月 13 日 「NHK「台湾統治」番組 - 右派勢力の攻撃 狙いは」
<http://www.jcp.or.jp/akahata/aik09/2009-08-13/2009081304_02_1.html>

325 NHK. "Summary of Press Conference (June, 2009)." Accessed December 13, 2010. http://www.nhk.or.jp/pr/english/toptalk/kaichou_e/k_e0906.htm#06. and

"【NHK 集団訴訟】8300 件を越えた委任状と NHK からの抗議【H21/6/24】". 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009 年 6 月 24 日). <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ekzrp2njurM>.

326 「【NHK「JAPAN デビュー」問題 これまでの経緯】」 <<http://www.ritouki.jp/2009NHK.html>> (2010/12/09 アクセス)

compared to the scale of the first three large Tokyo demonstrations, were held in Tokyo, Osaka, Yokohama, Nagoya, Sapporo, and other parts of Japan.³²⁷

In July, August, and September of 2009, several small events mixed community service and protest. On at least three occasions, groups of Channel Sakura viewers gathered in the Shibuya area of Tokyo to clean-up trash and litter on the streets.³²⁸ The same kind of clean-up event was also carried out by a few Japanese protesters in front of the NHK branch office in Los Angeles.³²⁹ In another event, viewers collected charity donations for Taiwanese typhoon victims.³³⁰ During these events, participants wore t-shirts with anti-NHK slogans and took the opportunity to spread information about their protest movement to anyone who seemed interested. The events were promoted through Channel Sakura and became subjects for the channel's after-action news programs.

Demonstrations have also been held outside the NHK offices in Tokyo about once a month from 2010 until the time that this dissertation was completed (September 2014). Compared to the height of the protest campaign in 2009, the more recent protests tend to draw no more than a couple dozen participants.

Although these actions took place offline, it is important to note that they were promoted beforehand through Channel Sakura's website and videos and through the e-magazine mailing lists of pro-Taiwan organizations. Photographs

327 「【お知らせ】 NHK「JAPAN デビュー」に抗議する国民大行動」 <<http://www.ch-sakura.jp/topix/1041.html>> (2010/12/09 アクセス)

328 “【NHKの大罪】渋谷（NHK）を掃除しよう！[H21/7/6]”. 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009年7月6日). <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8vOzE8F6eCE>. 2010年

329 “【NHKの大罪】「国民行動 in ロサンゼルス」報告[桜 H21/8/26]”. 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009年8月26日). <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qQc4deQqmq>.

330 “【台湾水害】台湾八八水害街頭募金活動と馬政権の対応[桜 H21/8/24]”. 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009年8月24日). <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8vOzE8F6eCE>.

and video footage filmed at the offline protest events were also later shown on the internet through Channel Sakura and the websites of the pro-Taiwan groups.

5.7.3 The Involvement of Lawmakers

Another noteworthy aspect of the reaction to *A First Rate Asian Power* was the participation of conservative lawmakers in criticism of NHK.

The first event of note took place on April 23 2009, when members of the Machimura faction of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) brought up the topic of the documentary at a general meeting of the Diet. A Sankei Shimbun article quoted lawmakers Nakayama Nariaki, Inada Tomomi, Machimura Nobutaka, and former Prime Minister Abe Shinzo as having voiced criticism of the documentary's portrayal of history.³³¹

On April 28, an LDP group that included several of the above-mentioned politicians – the Diet Member's League to Consider Japan's Future and History Education [*Nippon no Zento to Rekishi Kyoiku wo Kangaeru Giin no Kai*]³³² – sent a letter to NHK demanding an explanation for some of the points of alleged bias and inaccuracy.³³³ On May 11, NHK sent an official response, defending the documentary.³³⁴ A June 4 follow-up inquiry by Nakayama received a similar

331 『産経新聞』 2009 年 4 月 24 日 「安倍、町村氏らがNHK番組を批判「偏っている」」

332 This is the same organization mentioned in the politicians section of the chapter on the Landscape of conservative activism in Japan. They later dropped "young" from the name of their group, allowing in older lawmakers.

333 『産経新聞』 2009 年 4 月 28 日 「自民議連が「偏向番組問題」でNHKに質問状」

334 「中山成彬-平成21年4月5日放送「NHKスペシャル シリーズ JAPANデビュー第1回『アジアの一等国』」に対する公開質問状及び回答書」 < <http://nakayamanariaki.com/modules/bulletin/index.php?page=article&storyid=32> > (2010/12/09 アクセス)

response from NHK on June 6.³³⁵ The arguments and wording of the letter were almost identical to the explanations that would later be posted to NHK's homepage.

On June 11, 2009, Furuya Keiji founded the “Diet Members League to Consider the State of Public Broadcasting” [*Kokyo Hoso no Arikata ni suite Kangaeru Giin no Kai*]. The League consisted of 60 lawmakers from the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), including former Prime Ministers Abe Shinzo and Mori Yoshiro.³³⁶



Figure 11 : Abe Shinzo on Channel Sakura (June 11, 2009)

On the same day the League was formed, Abe Shinzo made an appearance on Channel Sakura and spoke with Mizushima Satoru, echoing

335 「中山成彬-再質問状(H21.6.4)に対するNHKからの回答書」 <

<http://nakayamanariaki.com/modules/bulletin/index.php?page=article&storyid=41>> (2010/12/09 アクセス)

336 『毎日新聞』 2009年6月12日 「自民党：公共放送を考える議員の会が発足総会」 and 『時事通信社』 2009年6月11日 「NHK番組が偏向」＝自民有志が議連」

many of the concerns that protesters had with the documentary.³³⁷ Channel Sakura also aired video of the group's discussions.³³⁸ Mizushima attended the June 25, 2009 meeting of the committee, at which he was officially recognized for his reporting on the issue.³³⁹

Although the LDP was the ruling party at that time, the committee did not receive support from the Prime Minister or cabinet.

5.7.4 Telephone & E-mail Complaints to NHK

Every month, NHK publishes statistics about viewer reactions to its programs. The statistics include information on the number of positive and negative comments received by each month's most popular programs. In 2009, *A First Rate Asian Power* stood out above and beyond all other programs featured in the reports, receiving thousands of viewer responses over a period of several months.

In April 2009, *A First Rate Asian Power* received a total of 2,924 viewer responses. The number was extraordinarily large, easily putting it at the top of the viewer response ranking for that month.³⁴⁰ Had the responses been limited to that month, it would have made it the second-most responded-to NHK program

337" 【安倍晋三】 これからの日本とマスメディア問題[桜 H21/6/11]" 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009 年 6 月 11 日).
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=twjpMjtoBRk>.

338" 【議連発足】 公共放送のあり方について考える議員の会[H21/6/13]" 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009 年 6 月 13 日).
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MZvRJzP-fFE>.

339" 【第3回勉強会】 公共放送のあり方について考える議員の会[H21/6/27]" 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009 年 6 月 27 日).
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XsPBaV7fEnY>.

340 More than 2nd, 3rd, and 4th place programs added together. NHK. 『視聴者対応報告』2009 年 4 月号, p. 6.

for the fiscal year of 2009. However, the viewer responses to the documentary continued to come in for the next few months.

Figure 1: Viewer Reactions to the Japan Debut series³⁴¹

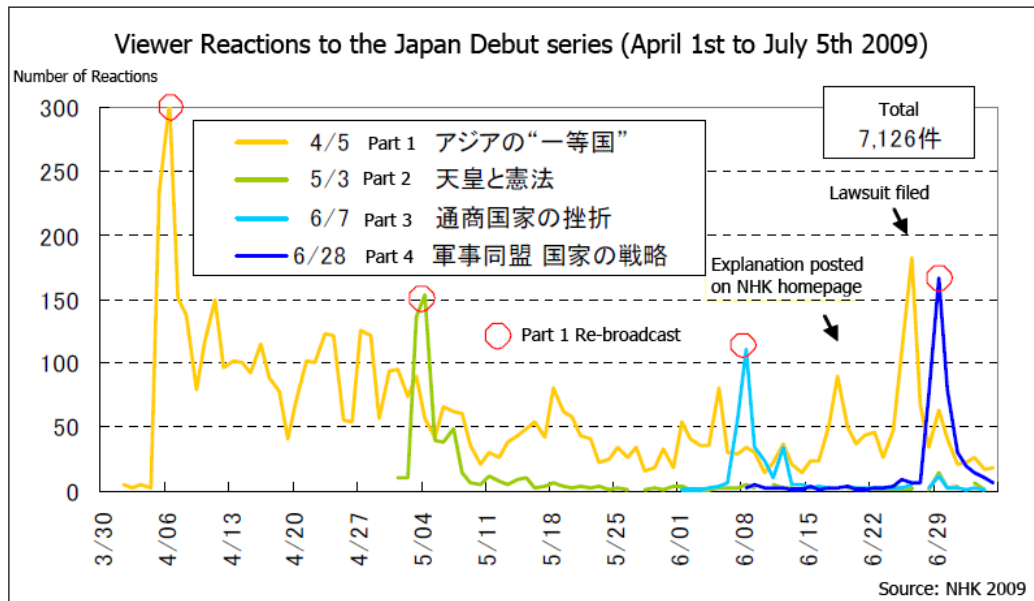


Table 1: Viewer Reactions to A First Rate Asian Power

	Positive	Negative	Inquiry	Other	TOTAL
April 2009	129	1945	570	280	2924
May 2009	26	981	194	217	1420
June 2009	43	235	44	57	379
July 2009	-	-	-	-	141
TOTAL	198	3161	808	554	4864

[Source: 2009 viewer reaction reports and viewer's voice newsletters published by NHK]³⁴²

341 Translated from: NHK. 『視聴者対応報告』2009年6月号. The “Total” figure refers to the number of responses to all four parts of the documentary series. The red circles mark the air dates for each program. The isolated red circle represents that date on which NHK re-aired A First Rate Asian Power.

342 NHK. 『視聴者対応報告』2009年4月号. and NHK. 『視聴者対応報告』2009年5月号. Data for July comes from a smaller newsletter: NHK. 『お客さまの声』2009年7月12日号. The newsletter does not provide statistics on what kind of viewer responses were received.

As Figure 1 and Table 1 show, the viewer comments submitted to NHK via telephone and e-mail were at their highest immediately following the airing of the program on April 5, 2009, but continued at an abnormally high level for several months. In May, the number of responses was 1,420, higher than any other program that aired that month on NHK. By the beginning of July, the number of viewer comments had reached an overall total of 4,824 – far more responses than any of the other documentaries in the *Japan Debut* series and more responses than any other program that year.³⁴³ The data show that the responses were overwhelmingly negative.

In its April 2009 report, NHK highlighted the fact that the internet had something to do with the large number of responses it was getting about the documentary. It included a headline in bold text announcing that many viewer comments had been received because the program had become a popular topic on the internet. The report included a quote from a comment sent to NHK by a 60-year-old man:

*“The Taiwanese people who were interviewed by NHK have appeared in internet videos. They are saying that NHK only aired the negative parts of their comments and completely left out all their positive comments.”*³⁴⁴

Based upon the treatment this case received in NHK’s official viewer reaction reports, it would appear that NHK was well-aware that internet media was one of the major driving forces behind this protest movement.

343 NHK. 『視聴者対応報告』2010年1月号

344 Translated from NHK. 『視聴者対応報告』2009年4月号, p. 6-7.

5.7.5 Class-Action Lawsuit

On June 25, 2009, the protesters filed a class-action lawsuit against NHK. The legal team was headed by Takaike Katsuhiko, a lawyer and a vice president of the Japan Institute for National Fundamentals, a conservative think-tank chaired by journalist Sakurai Yoshiko. Takaike also serves as a vice-president of Tsukurukai. In addition to the NHK case, he was head attorney for three other notable lawsuits on behalf of conservative historical causes. The cases, together with the NHK case, represent a pattern, so I will discuss them briefly before providing more detail on the topic of NHK.



Figure 12: The 100-Man Beheading Contest

The first was a 2005 defamation case against journalist Honda Katsuichi by the families of two deceased Imperial Japanese Army soldiers. Honda had written articles describing how the two soldiers, Mukai Toshiaki and Noda Tsuyoshi, had engaged in a 100-Man Beheading Contest while fighting in against the Chinese in 1937. The contest had originally been described in a 1937 Tokyo

Nichi Nichi Shimbun article, but he was largely forgotten until Honda wrote newspaper articles about it in the 1970's. It was subsequently used to bring public attention to the issue of wartime atrocities in China. Japanese conservatives have claimed that the story was a fabrication of wartime propaganda, and some Western historians, such as Bob Wakabayashi and Joshua Folger support this idea.³⁴⁵ However, the lawsuit was dismissed in 2004 and once more on appeal in 2006. The preceding judge stated that the original article had contained "some false elements and exaggerations" but it could not be proven to be a fabrication.³⁴⁶

The second lawsuit was filed in 2005 against Nobel laureate Oe Kenzaburo. Like the 100-Man Killing Contest case, it was a defamation case claiming that an author had fabricated a description of a war atrocity. A surviving soldier and the family of one of his colleagues alleged that Oe's 1970 book of essays, "Okinawa Notes," contained a false account of Japanese soldiers ordering Okinawan civilians to commit suicide. The claim was rejected in 2008 by the Osaka District Court and Osaka High Court, and its final appeal was dismissed by the Supreme Court in 2011.³⁴⁷ Unlike the other case, the judges in

345 Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi, "The Nanking 100-Man Killing Contest Debate: War Guilt Amid Fabricated Illusions, 1971–75," *The Journal of Japanese Studies* 26, no.2 (2000) and Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi, *The Nanking Atrocity 1937-1938* (Berghahn Books, 2007) pp. 280

346 Chris Hogg, "Victory for Japan's War Critics," BBC News. August 23, 2005.
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/4176272.stm>.

347 Gavan McCormack and Satoko Oka Norimatsu, *Resistant Islands: Okinawa Confronts Japan and the United States* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2012) p. 32

this case completely supported the author's claim that the war atrocities had taken place.³⁴⁸

The third lawsuit was a 2009 civil suit against Chinese film director Li Ying, creator of a 2007 documentary that negatively portrayed the Yasukuni Shrine. It was filed on behalf of Koiwa Toru, a man who alleges that Li filmed him without permission and used 90 seconds of the footage in the documentary. The lawsuit was settled out of court in December 2010, with an unspecified amount of damages paid to Koiwa.³⁴⁹

American filmmaker John Junkerman has depicted Takaike's lawsuits as part of campaign to "downplay" and "discredit" the progressive view of Japanese history:

*"All of these court cases share a common purpose: to discredit treatments of history that highlight the excesses of Japan's imperial past. The suits run on a parallel track to the ongoing campaign to revise public school history texts to downplay incidents like the Nanjing Massacre and the military's abuse of "comfort women" during the war. In fact, activist attorney Takaike also serves as vice-chairman of the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform, which has led the revisionist effort."*³⁵⁰

348 Steve Rabson, "Case Dismissed: Osaka Court Upholds Novelist Oe Kenzaburo for Writing That Japanese Military Ordered "Group Suicides" in Battle of Okinawa," *JapanFocus*, April 2006. <http://japanfocus.org/-Steve-Rabson/2716>.

349 The only source for this claim is a website that has since been taken down. It is listed as: 関連事件等のお知らせ・解説 宗教法人礼拝山興聖観音による布告 (<http://www.koakannon.org/jiken-sonota.html>) A lack of post-2009 news articles about the case indicate that some sort of settlement was reached.

350 John Junkerman, "Li Ying's 'Yasukuni': The Controversy Continues," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 31-1-09, (2009).

The next lawsuit was against NHK.³⁵¹ Using Channel Sakura's programs and the e-mail lists of Pro-Taiwan groups, they directed would-be plaintiffs to Channel Sakura's website, where lawsuit paperwork could be downloaded and filled out.³⁵² At the time of the first filing, nearly 8,400 people had submitted the paperwork, making it Japan's largest-ever class-action lawsuit in terms of number of plaintiffs.³⁵³

The lawsuit accused NHK of violating its legal responsibility to create impartial and truthful documentaries. Using most of the previously-mentioned points of dispute as examples, the plaintiffs claimed that NHK had represented "fabrications" [*netsuzo*] as historical fact. They demanded that NHK give each plaintiff a compensation payment of 10,000 yen.³⁵⁴

351 『共同ニュース』 2009 年 6 月 25 日 「NHKの台湾支配報道は「捏造」 歴史研究者ら 8 千人提訴」
<<http://www.47news.jp/CN/200906/CN2009062501000527.html>>

352 「【NHK 訴訟】 一万人・集団訴訟 及び 名誉毀損訴訟」 <<http://www.ch-sakura.jp/topix/1054.html>> (2010/12/15 アクセス)

353 『産経新聞』 2010 年 6 月 25 日 「NHK相手に 8 4 0 0 人が集団提訴 「JAPANデビュー」 歪曲報道で

354 「【NHK 訴訟】 一万人・集団訴訟 及び 名誉毀損訴訟」 <<http://www.ch-sakura.jp/topix/1054.html>> (2010/12/15 アクセス)



Figure 13: Representatives of the Paiwan ethnicity on Channel Sakura³⁵⁵

Participation in the lawsuit was not limited to Japanese citizens. Included in the instructions on how to submit lawsuit paperwork was an explanation about how non-Japanese could place their signature on documents instead of using a Japanese name seal. Although exact statistics on the breakdown of lawsuit participants has not been reported by Channel Sakura or other media outlets, one news report stated that there are about 150 Taiwanese citizens among the plaintiffs.³⁵⁶ The most visible of the non-Japanese participants were members of Taiwan's Paiwan ethnic group, who, with the assistance of Channel Sakura and pro-Taiwan independence groups, visited Japan on several occasions to speak with the press and voice their support of the lawsuit.³⁵⁷

355 “【証人尋問開始】NHK「JAPANデビュー」一万人集団訴訟の行方[桜 H24/3/5]”. 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2012 年 3 月 5 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5OkQI472vLw>

356 『産経新聞』 2010 年 6 月 25 日 「NHK相手に8400人が集団提訴 「JAPANデビュー」歪曲報道で

357 “【NHKの大罪】パイワン族原告団来日記者会見 [桜 H21/10/7]”. 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009 年 10 月 07 日).

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zcl1gd8qPBw>. And “【NHK 集団訴訟】パイワン族・華阿財氏来日 [桜 H22/5/14]”. 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2010 年 5 月 14 日). <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l5wRU1fO-7M>.

Shortly after the filing of the lawsuit, the lawyers representing the protesters appeared on Channel Sakura to discuss the case. They stated that they believed the lawsuit would last several months to a year.³⁵⁸ It would prove a much longer legal battle. The case worked its way through the Tokyo Regional Court, where a judge ruled against the accusers in November 2012, completely rejecting the demand that NHK pay compensation. Forty-two of them appealed the decision and the case went to the Tokyo High Court, where the judge ruled in November 2013 that the one Paiwanese woman who was directly related to one of the men who had been a part of the “human zoo,” Kao Hsu Yueh-mei, should be paid 1 million yen in compensation because NHK’s use of the term implied that her relative was like a zoo animal. The claims from other members of the Paiwan ethnicity and the claims from Japanese viewers were rejected.³⁵⁹ As of August 2014, NHK had appealed the case to the Supreme Court, and no final decision had been issued.

In addition, the existence of an ongoing lawsuit had functioned as a form of de-facto censorship for the director and others within NHK who were associated with the documentary, preventing them from speaking about the issue. Although NHK had an opportunity to post an official defense of the documentary on its website in early June, after the lawsuit was filed later that month, public comments were limited for legal reasons.

358“1/2 【NHKの大罪】 NHK集団訴訟弁護団に聞く【H21/6/15】”. 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2009 年 6 月 15 日).

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bu5iwQUIGM4>.

359 “Woman sued NHK ‘for dignity’” Taipei Times, January 27, 2014

<<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2013/12/02/2003578139>>. and Ryujiro Komatsu, “Court orders NHK to pay Taiwanese woman for ‘human zoo’ reference,” AJW by The Asahi Shimbun, January 27, 2014

<http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201311290059>.

5.8 The Anti-NHK Protests: Conclusion

In this anti-NHK protest campaign, Channel Sakura and its allies recognized a chance to create an agitation within the strategic action field of public broadcasting in Japan. Although NHK had been making left-leaning documentaries for some years, the 2009 documentary represented a chance for members of the assertive conservative right to challenge the left's dominant position over NHK's broadcasting. The documentary's subject matter and its contents allowed for a protest campaign that could be expanded beyond the normal scope of Japanese conservative protests against NHK to include Taiwanese people.

Through its programs, Channel Sakura created a narrative that interpreted a left-leaning documentary about Japanese colonialism to be a sign of a devious anti-Japanese plot to destroy the bonds of friendship between Japan and Taiwan, benefiting mainland Chinese aims to deny Taiwan its freedom and punish Japan. This narrative was acceptable to the world view of both Japan's assertive conservative right and Taiwan independence activists.

Skilled social actors such as Inoue Kazuhiko and Mizushima Satoru, aided by the Friends of Lee Teng-Hui Association's ties to Taiwanese groups, were able to travel overseas and track down the Taiwanese people who appeared in NHK's documentary. In some cases, Taiwanese who had originally viewed the documentary and made positive comments about it were completely turned in favor of Channel Sakura's view.

The use of a lawsuit by the left in the 2001 NHK incident introduced a new tactic into the field, and conservatives took note. The lawsuit filed by VAWW

NET had failed to win a legal victory for the organization, but it had brought attention and sympathy to the left's claims that conservatives had unfairly pressured NHK into "censoring" a documentary. In the years following that court ruling, conservatives used similar lawsuits to draw attention to what they saw as biased or fabricated versions of history. The lawyer leading the lawsuits, Takaike Katsuhiko, was also a leader of Tsukurukai, one of the organizations within the assertive conservative right that had contributed to the founding of Channel Sakura. In the 2009 anti-NHK campaign, Takaike joined with Channel Sakura to launch a new lawsuit. Thanks to the support of Channel Sakura's allies and viewers, thousands of people signed on to the class-action lawsuit. Although the courts struck down the claims of most of the participants, there was a remarkable ruling regarding the Paiwanese woman and the "human zoo" controversy. Although the final appeal has yet to be decided, it can at least be said that the lawsuit has helped spread awareness about conservatives' problems with NHK.

NHK and its documentary department were limited in their responses to the protests. As one would expect from an incumbent organization, they stuck to old tactics and old methods: releasing letters of explanation and answering questions at press conferences. Fearing an impact on the lawsuit, comments about the documentary were kept to a minimum.

Channel Sakura, on the other hand, used internet communications technology to spread its message, relentlessly producing programs that attacked NHK and called on viewers to join the protests. Mizushima and others explained the situation in a way that was aimed at making participants believe they were

fighting a battle to save Japan against a dishonest and anti-Japanese organization. Even after the Japanese participants in the class-action lawsuit had their claims dismissed, Mizushima and others depicted the court decision in favor of the Paiwanese woman as a victory: another step forward against enemies of Japan. The campaign was explained in a meaningful way, as part of a struggle that would continue, and would eventually lead to the defeat of “anti-Japanese” forces within NHK.

Thus, it can be argued that the “Japan Debut” campaign resulted in a shift within this strategic action field. It was a small shift in favor of the assertive conservative right. NHK did not waiver in its support of the documentary, but its defense of the filmmakers seemed weak in comparison to the aggressive campaign waged by Channel Sakura and its allies. The class-action lawsuit, the offline protests in front of NHK’s offices, and the large number of viewer complaints filed with NHK put considerably pressure on NHK and its documentary filmmakers. The protest campaign made it clear that future attempts to make a documentary about the negative aspects of Imperial Japan have the potential to trigger a response that is surely unpleasant for filmmakers and for NHK as a whole. This arguably weakens the position of NHK’s documentary producers and their left-leaning supporters, and strengthens the position of the assertive conservative right within this field.

The next chapter will introduce a different campaign by Channel Sakura, one in which conservatives aimed to influence public remembrance of World War

II in Okinawa. And, unlike the NHK dispute, it ended in an unambiguous victory for Channel Sakura and its supporters.

Chapter 6: Remembering the Battle of Okinawa

This chapter describes an episode in an ongoing struggle over the remembrance of World War II in Okinawa. The episode took place in 2011 and 2012, and involved a protest that Channel Sakura led against a planned historical signboard that described the war in an “anti-Japanese” manner.

The signboard touched on two sensitive issues: the wartime “comfort women” system and the killings and suicides of Okinawan civilians. To understand the context under which Channel Sakura carried out its signboard campaign, this chapter will begin with background information on the disputes that have taken place regarding the two sensitive issues.

It will then move on to a discussion of the case itself. This is a case of Channel Sakura acting as a challenger within a field against left-leaning Okinawan academics, activists, and the Okinawan media.

6.1 Civilian Deaths in Okinawa: Who to Blame?

The 1945 Battle of Okinawa was extremely costly for Japanese civilians. Over the course of several months, Japanese forces conducted a desperate defense against American invaders, with the majority of the 80,000 man Japanese garrison dying in the process. Okinawa’s civilian population was caught in the middle of the battlefields, and some estimate that over 100,000 civilians – close to a third of the population - died in the battle. Many civilians

killed themselves with hand grenades or improvised weapons, allegedly to avoid the "horror and shame of falling into American hands."³⁶⁰

Wartime Japanese propaganda depicted civilians as fighting and dying alongside Japanese soldiers in the defense of their island. Official postwar Japanese government policies echoed this view. A 1952 compensation law for war-related losses stipulated that payments be issued to the bereaved family members of Okinawan civilians who could be categorized as having died while assisting the Japanese military.³⁶¹ Deaths that took place in other contexts became a "taboo" topic for impoverished Okinawan war survivors.³⁶²

However, as years passed, public attention was given to survivors' testimonies claiming that the Japanese military killed Okinawan civilians or forced them to commit suicide. For example, left-leaning historian Ienaga Saburo's 1968 book "The Pacific War" and Oe Kenzaburo's 1970 book "Okinawa Notes" contained descriptions of Okinawan civilians being ordered by the Japanese military to commit suicide. Oe's book, based on interviews with Okinawan war survivors, stated that Japanese military officers ordered civilians on Zamami and Tokashiki Islands to commit suicide rather than be captured. Public sentiment in Okinawa gravitated towards the idea that the civilian population had been victims of the Japanese military, rather than willful participants who died helping the military. An understanding of the Battle of Okinawa that included and

³⁶⁰ Norma Field, *In the Realm of a Dying Emperor* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1991), 66.

³⁶¹ Tanaka, Nobumasa. "Desecration of the Dead: Bereaved Okinawan Families Sue Yasukuni to End Relatives' Enshrinement." Translated by Steve Rabson. *Shukan Kinyobi*, April 8, 2008. JapanFocus.

³⁶² Kyle Ikeda, *Okinawan War Memory: Transgenerational Trauma and the War Fiction of Medoruma Shun* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 29.

emphasized suffering at the hands of the Japanese military became "one of the most important building blocks for the construction of an Okinawan identity."³⁶³

This sentiment could be tied to acts of extreme protest. When then-Crown Prince Akihito and Crown Princess Michiko visited Okinawa in 1975- the first imperial visit since the end of the war – someone threw a firebomb in their direction and nearly hit them. The attacker was a university student who blamed the Emperor for Okinawan deaths in the war.³⁶⁴

By the 1980's descriptions of military-ordered suicides and fratricide were appearing in Japanese public school history textbooks. As with other claims of Japanese atrocities, the Okinawans' accounts of compulsory mass suicide became a target for Japan's assertive conservative right. It was seen by the right as another example of leftist groups distorting the past to portray Japan in a negative light.

Naono Akiko has written that the narrative of compulsory suicide is in direct conflict with the Japanese right's historical view of the war. The right prefers a narrative of "precious sacrifice," which depicts the war dead as choosing to fight and die for their country. This forms a "nationalist pedagogy" that "incites sentiments of love and loyalty to the nation through which the very act of the narrative performance interpolates a growing circle of national

³⁶³ Hirofumi Hayashi, "Unsettled State Violence in Japan: The Okinawa Incident," in *State Violence in East Asia*, ed. N. Ganesan and Sung Chull Kim (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2013), 91-92.

³⁶⁴ Kyodo, "High Anxiety for Okinawa Governor over '75 Imperial Visit," Japan Times, November 23, 2012, http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2012/11/23/national/high-anxiety-for-okinawa-governor-over-75-imperial-visit/#.U_WGvfmSzB0.

subjects." To protect this narrative, "Okinawa's compulsory mass suicide must be forgotten and instead remembered as consented and voluntary sacrifice."³⁶⁵

The first conservative challenge came in 1982, when right-leaning members of the Ministry of Education's textbook approval board ordered textbook publishers to remove descriptions stating that Japanese soldiers killed Okinawan civilians. The board claimed that personal testimony was not a reliable source of information. This sparked a wave of protest from Okinawa. The Okinawan Prefectural Assembly unanimously passed a resolution of protest demanding that the Ministry of Education reverse its decision. The vote was supported by local politicians who were members of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). The Ministry of Education backed down from its decision and restored the descriptions.

The following year, the Ministry of Education added the words "mass suicide" (*shudan jiketsu*) to textbooks descriptions of Okinawan civilian deaths. This wording implied that civilians voluntarily died instead of being forced to do so. Historian Ienaga Saburo sued the Ministry of Education over the wording change, and although he eventually lost the lawsuit, the Supreme Court ruling stated that the deaths could not fairly be described as voluntary. The decision

³⁶⁵ Akiko Naono, "Producing Sacrificial Subjects for the Nation: Japan's War-related Redress Policy and the Endurance Doctrine," in *Toward a Sociology of the Trace*, ed. Herman Gray and Macarena Gómez-Barris (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 125-126.

caused more textbook publishers to include descriptions of non-voluntary Okinawan deaths.³⁶⁶

6.2 The Comfort Women Issue

One of the major topics in Japan's history disputes is the remembrance of the so-called "comfort women" – the thousands of women who worked in brothels on Japanese military bases across Asia during the war. In the 1990's, liberal activists in Korea and Japan succeeded in bringing the comfort women issue to the attention the world. They used the testimony of surviving comfort women, many of whom claimed to have been coerced or forced into becoming prostitutes. The women told stories of terrible abuse at the hands of Japanese soldiers.

To activists on the left, these women were "sex slaves" – forced or kidnapped into servicing the Japanese military. They saw a need for the modern Japanese state to officially recognize and apologize for the comfort women system. The Japanese government conducted a study in 1993 on the comfort women, concluding "that in many cases they were recruited against their own will, through coaxing, coercion, etc., and that, at times, administrative/military personnel directly took part in the recruitments."³⁶⁷ Japan also established the Asian Women's Fund, a semi-private organization that delivered compensation

³⁶⁶ Hirofumi Hayashi, "Unsettled State Violence in Japan: The Okinawa Incident," in *State Violence in East Asia*, ed. N. Ganesan and Sung Chull Kim (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2013), 91-92.

³⁶⁷ The full text of the 1993 Kono Statement can be found at: <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/women/fund/state9308.html>

payments and apology letters signed by the Prime Minister to surviving comfort women.

Japan's assertive conservative right strongly disagreed with the Japanese government's 1993 response. In their view, left wing activists were distorting the truth about history. Conservatives argued that there was no systematic military participation in the coercion and kidnapping of Asian women. They preferred to see the comfort women as "prostitutes" or "camp followers" rather than as "sex slaves." If abuses had taken place during "recruitment" of the women, conservatives believed that most of those abuses were either isolated incidents of rogue soldiers, or the work of private brokers. By passing responsibility away from the Japanese military and government, they were depicting history in a manner that fit with their overall view of World War II: the Japanese army was not involved in mass criminal actions.

In the late 1990's, descriptions of comfort women began to increase in Japanese junior high school history textbooks. Tsukurukai (The Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform) was founded in 1996 as a direct response to the appearance of comfort women in history textbooks. Its founder, Fujioka Nobukatsu, was determined to see such references erased from all junior high school textbooks. Not only did he argue that it made Japanese schoolchildren dislike their own country, but it hurt the image of Japan around the world:

The masochistic slant in Japanese history education has reached the point to include a completely ungrounded, actually false story, that it is

included in all the middle-school history textbooks authorized by the Ministry of Education. I would like to explain to you why a description of so-called "military comfort women", should not be included in middle-school textbooks.

*The term "military comfort women", or *jugun ianfu*, has come to mean an absolute distortion of historical fact, that the Japanese military transported women, against their will, to war zones. People all over the world now seem to believe that these women then became "sex slaves" to satisfy the sexual needs of Japanese soldiers.*

[...]

Prostitution in itself is a tragedy, but there is no evidence to indicate that the women were forced into it by the Japanese military. If this had been the case, I am sure the proud Koreans would have been so outraged that they would have stood up to kill all Japanese, no matter what the consequences.³⁶⁸

In addition to arguments based on perceived distortions of fact, Fujioka also objected to the inclusion of such a topic in junior high school textbooks

³⁶⁸ Nobukatsu Fujioka, "Education Issues, Comfort Women and the Creation of a New History Textbook," Association for Advancement of Unbiased View of History from Association for Advancement of Liberal View of History, February 25, 1999, <http://www.jjiyuushikan.org/e/education.html>.

because it was a sexual subject that was not suitable to be taught to young children.

While creating its own history textbook, Tsukurukai engaged in an aggressive campaign to convince the school boards and the public that comfort women should not be mentioned in any textbooks.

The first year of campaigning was unsuccessful. By 1997, all textbooks that passed that year's screening by the government contained mentions of comfort women in the context of the forced wartime mobilizations of Korean laborers.³⁶⁹

However, by the early 2000's, the campaign began to see some success. Only 20 percent of textbooks included descriptions of comfort women in 2002-2006. Tsukurukai had "precipitated a perceptible overall shift" towards their position on the acceptability of comfort women in textbooks.³⁷⁰ After these successes, Tsukurukai moved on to targeting other issues, such as descriptions of Okinawan civilian deaths during the war.

6.3 Events in the 2000's

In December 2006, during the first Prime Ministership of Abe Shinzo, the Ministry of Education reversed its long-held position on the Battle of Okinawa. It ordered publishers to remove references to the military's involvement in the mass

³⁶⁹ Chunghee Sarah. Soh, *The Comfort Women: Sexual Violence and Postcolonial Memory in Korea and Japan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 169-170.

³⁷⁰ Philip A. Seaton, *Japan's Contested War Memories: The 'memory Rifts' in Historical Consciousness of World War II* (London: Routledge, 2007) 130-131.

suicides. Instead of “being forced” (*kyosei sareta*), the books were asked to state that civilians had been “cornered into” (*oikomareta*) committing killing themselves.³⁷¹

As in 1982, the Okinawan Prefectural Assembly and local governments across Okinawa passed resolutions demanding that the textbook revisions be overturned. A protest march was organized and over 100,000 people participated, making it the largest demonstration since Okinawa was returned to Japan in 1972.³⁷²

The Ministry reacted to the Okinawan pressure by changing its decision. The phrase “civilians were forced by the Japanese army into committing mass suicides” was instead changed to “civilians were driven to commit mass suicides using hand grenades and other means distributed to them with the involvement of the Japanese army.” The result dissatisfied many of the Okinawans who had participated in the protest, and who had hoped for a complete reversal. However, it did represent a minor victory for the Okinawans and a defeat of the assertive conservative right.³⁷³

The Asahi Shimbun ran an editorial in December 2007, questioning whether the first decision had been made due to the influence of Abe and arguing that the controversy had helped draw public attention to the historical accounts of Okinawans:

³⁷¹ Gavan McCormack and Satoko Oka Norimatsu, *Resistant Islands: Okinawa Confronts Japan and the United States* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2012), 33-34.

³⁷² Norimitsu Onishi, “Okinawans Protest Japan’s Plan to Revise Bitter Chapter of World War II,” *The New York Times*, October 06, 2007, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/07/world/asia/07okinawa.html?pagewanted=all>.

³⁷³ Steve Rabson, “The Politics of Trauma: Compulsory Suicides During the Battle of Okinawa and Postwar Retrospectives,” *Intersections: Gender and Sexuality in Asia and the Pacific*, no. 24 (June 2010), <http://intersections.anu.edu.au/issue24/rabson.htm>.

At that time, the government was led by former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, whose motto was to "break away from the postwar regime." Was the expert panel in some way influenced by the Abe administration's political posture? Ironically, this outrageous move by the education ministry caused the grueling wartime episode to attract unprecedented public attention.

Previously, most school history textbooks contained only brief descriptions about the mass suicides in Okinawa. The revisions submitted by the publishers also included descriptions about the social background for the tragedies. As a result, the textbooks offer much more information about the bloody battle fought in Okinawa in 1945.

The public controversy over the textbook references raged for nine months. A huge protest rally was held in Okinawa during that period, which gave many people the opportunity to learn not only about the bloodshed in Okinawa but also about the serious flaws in the ministry's textbook screening system.³⁷⁴

Other victories for the left soon followed. As mentioned in Chapter 5, conservatives who had filed a lawsuit aiming to discredit Oe Kenzaburo's writings

³⁷⁴ Kyoko Selden, trans., "Shudan Jiketsu Kentei: Mananda Mono Ga Ookikatta," editorial, *Asahi Shimbun*, December 27, 2007

about compulsory suicides had their case rejected in 2008 and 2011. The judges' decision that suicides had been ordered by the military further strengthened the position of progressive groups that wanted to include such descriptions in textbooks.

6.4 Strategic Action Field

Looking at the events from the 1980's to the 2000's, it would be fair to describe Okinawa as hostile territory for the assertive conservative right. In both 1982 and 2007, local assemblies, the prefectural assembly, and large numbers of protesters were able to mobilize in opposition to attempts to change history education to reflect the viewpoints of the assertive conservative right. These forces can be described as incumbents within the strategic action field of Okinawan historical commemoration.

In the following campaign, which began in 2011, Channel Sakura entered into the field of Okinawan historical commemoration. In this field, those who represent the assertive conservative right were challengers. As previous events had shown, conservatives have had considerable difficulty making progress against the progressive/left historical view in Okinawa.

6.5 The 32nd Army Headquarters

Prior to the 1945 Battle of Okinawa, the Imperial Japanese Army (IJA) created a series of fortifications around the site of Shuri Castle. When the battle began, many non-combatants sought refuge and protection within the military's

underground tunnels and bomb shelters. One such site of refuge was the underground complex that housed the headquarters of the IJA's 32nd Army.³⁷⁵

The remnants of the 32nd Army headquarters now lie in Shuri Castle Park, one of the most-visited tourist attractions in Okinawa Prefecture. In 1997, the Okinawa Prefectural Government (OPG) created a plan to preserve and open the headquarters to the public. However, the implementation of the plan was delayed due to concerns about the safety of crumbling tunnels. In 2011, the OPG established a committee of five experts to create a draft for an explanation signboard that would be erected above ground near the site of the closed-off headquarters. The committee, chaired by Professor Ikeda Yoshifumi of the University of the Ryukyus, produced a draft in November of that year, delivering it to the OPG for review.³⁷⁶

In its draft, the committee included two items that prompted protest from Channel Sakura: references to the presence of “comfort women” at the headquarters, and text describing the “slaughter of local residents” by Japanese soldiers.

The challengers saw an opportunity for collective action that could aid their cause. One day after the draft was created Channel Sakura began to call on its viewers to put a halt to the “Leftist Okinawans who are falsely accusing our war dead of crimes.”³⁷⁷ Mizushima and his co-host expressed worry about how

375 George Feifer, *The Battle of Okinawa: The Blood and the Bomb* (The Lyons Press, 1992) p. 69.

376 “OPG to set up an explanation board about the former 32nd Army Headquarters Shelter at Shuri,” *Ryukyu Shimpo*, November 23, 2011. accessed March 28, 2012, <http://english.ryukyushimpo.jp/2011/11/30/4647/>

377 “【沖縄戦】絶対阻止！英霊に濡れ衣を着せる沖縄左翼【桜 H23/11/24】”. 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2011 年 11 月 24 日). <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P0coyjhk1EU>.

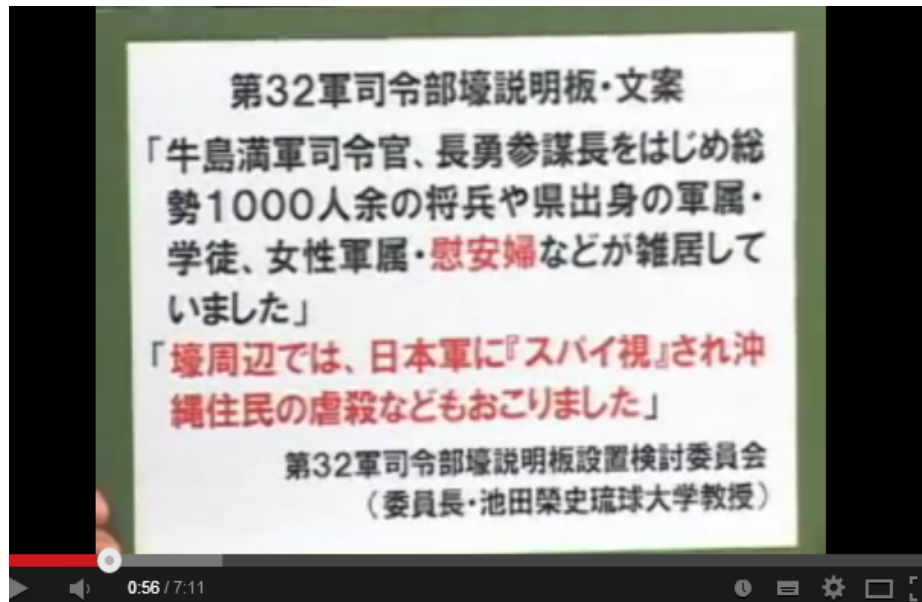
children who visited the park might read such a description and believe an “untrue” and “anti-Japanese” version of history. It was evident that they were concerned about the impact the sign could have on the public remembrance of the Battle of Okinawa.



Figure 14: Iha Naeko

Channel Sakura struck back by preparing special programs that used the eyewitness testimony to challenge the OPG committee’s assertions. For these programs they interviewed Iha Naeko, a woman who served as a nurse with the 32nd Army headquarters from the beginning of the Battle of Okinawa until the final days of the battle. She acknowledged the presence of female civilians, but strongly denied the existence of “comfort women” at the site. In addition, she declared that there was absolutely no massacre of civilians by Japanese soldiers. Ina tearfully denounced the signboard's "unforgivable" inaccuracies as an insult to the many people who died during the Battle of Okinawa. At the end of the 15 minute testimony video, Channel Sakura announcers appeared on screen and called on viewers to contact the OPG and share their thoughts about the

signboard draft.³⁷⁸ They also recommended that viewers check out their older programs about the history of the Battle of Okinawa, several of which also included eyewitness testimony from Ina.



【沖縄戦】絶対阻止！英霊に濡れ衣を着せる沖縄左翼
[桜H23/11/24]

Figure 15 - Channel Sakura's call to action, highlighting the offending passages

Channel Sakura depicted the inclusion of “comfort women” on the sign as an insult both to the Japanese soldiers and Okinawan civilians who died. These anti-Japanese Okinawan leftists wanted to make people think that the brave Japanese soldiers who died were using their tunnels for “free sex” instead of trying to protect Okinawa. Moreover, it was argued that the signboard was

³⁷⁸ "【伊波苗子】元従軍看護婦の証言・第32軍司令部壕の真実[桜H23/11/28]". 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2011年11月28日). <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P0coyjhk1EU>.

insulting the women who had been present in the tunnels by unfairly labeling them as prostitutes.³⁷⁹

The leftists were “the kind of people” (*renchu*) who should “should go to China.” But, Channel Sakura warned, instead of leaving Japan, they were spreading their “ideology” all over Okinawa and in the main islands of Japan. As the image above shows, the leftists had to be “absolutely stopped.” And it was the viewers who, like in other Channel Sakura grassroots campaigns, would be taking action to stop the enemy.

6.6 A “Censored” Signboard

In February 2012, the OPG announced the wording it would use for the explanation signboard. The words “comfort women” and the passage about the “slaughter of local residents” were not included in the final version of the signboard.³⁸⁰ The English, Chinese, and Korean translations also dropped references to Okinawa as a “sacrificial stone” (*suteishi*).³⁸¹ The conservative protests against the draft had been successful.

Newspaper articles stated that changes had taken place because the prefecture had responded to protests. The Okinawa Times noted that the OPG had received 82 official complaints via e-mail, telephone, or fax, with many of the

379 “【奥茂治】第32軍司令部壕説明板問題のその後[桜 H24/5/7]” 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2012年5月7日).
http://youtu.be/_2PqmC34aMY

380 『琉球新報』2012年2月24日 「「慰安婦」を削除 第32軍司令部壕の説明板 県が方針決定」
<<http://ryukyushimpo.jp/news/storyid-187846-storytopic-1.html>>

381 Gavan McCormack and Satoko Oka Norimatsu, *Resistant Islands: Okinawa Confronts Japan and the United States* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2012) p. 42.

complaints coming from outside of Okinawa.³⁸² The Ryuku Shimpo stated that the revision occurred because of protests that had been brought about due to a “satellite television program.”³⁸³ As there was no other satellite television channel that covered the issue, Channel Sakura pointed to the report as an admission that their organization and its viewers had been the driving force behind the success of the campaign.³⁸⁴

The OPG's decision to revise the signboard was denounced by local groups and the local media. Professor Ikeda and other members of the committee who had written the signboard draft protested the decision.³⁸⁵ The Ryuku Shimpo and Okinawa Times both published editorials criticizing the decision and demanding that the OPG explain its actions.³⁸⁶ Several citizens' groups, including some battle survivors who were working as volunteer tour guides, organized study meetings to discuss the issue and collectively voice their opposition to the revised signboard.³⁸⁷

382 『沖縄タイムズ』 2012年2月24日 「「住民虐殺」削る 司令部壕の説明板」

<http://www.okinawatimes.co.jp/article/2012-02-24_30235/>

383 『琉球新報』 2012年2月25日 「文言削除 高まる批判」 pp.28-29

384 "【伊波苗子】生き証人が語る、第32軍司令部壕の真実【桜 H24/3/1】". 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2012年03月01日).

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P0coyjhk1EU>.

385 『琉球新報』 2012年2月29日 「第32軍壕説明板 検討委、県に記述削除の撤回求める」 <<http://ryukyushimpo.jp/news/storyid-188070-storytopic-1.html>>

386 『沖縄タイムズ』 2012年3月26日 「「社説」- [32軍壕説明板設置] 県のやり方はおかしい」

<http://www.okinawatimes.co.jp/article/2012-03-26_31562/> and 『琉球新報』 2012年2月25日 「32軍壕記述削除 事実の明記は県の責務」

<<http://ryukyushimpo.jp/news/storyid-187895-storytopic-11.html>>

387 『琉球新報』 2012年3月26日 「県強行設置に怒り 平和ガイドら「撤去を」 32軍壕説明板」 <<http://ryukyushimpo.jp/news/storyid-189113-storytopic-1.html>>

Despite opposition to the OPG's decision, the prefecture quickly moved ahead with plans to print the signboard.³⁸⁸ It was completed and placed in Shuri Castle Park in late March of 2012.³⁸⁹ The haste of its construction caused some critics on the left to claim that the OPG had rushed the signboard's completion because it did not want protesters to have enough time to mobilize against it.³⁹⁰ While this is a possibility, it is also plausible that the signboard was quickly erected because bureaucrats wanted to use money from the 2011 fiscal year's budget for public works.

On April 12th, Okinawa's Peace and Gender Equality Division uploaded a lengthy official explanation of the government's policy regarding the controversial decision. It stated that the purpose of the signboard was to describe events that took place at the 32nd Army headquarters, and that the government failed to find evidence that it housed "comfort women" or that it was the site of "massacres" of civilians accused of spying. The government denied any intention of covering-up or hiding the existence of atrocities that took place during the Battle of Okinawa. It pointed out that detailed descriptions of the plight of "comfort women" and other civilian victims could be found at the Okinawa Prefectural Peace Memorial Museum.³⁹¹

388 『琉球新報』 2012 年 3 月 28 日 「第 3 2 軍司令部壕、記述削除再検討を アピール採択」
<<http://ryukyushimpo.jp/news/storyid-188791-storytopic-1.html>>

389 "【超限戦】沖縄・第 32 軍司令部壕跡説明文の捏造撃退【桜 H24/3/26】". 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2012 年 03 月 26 日).
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P0coyjhk1EU>.

390 Shun Medoruma, "We Cannot Allow Governor Nakaima to Falsify the History of the Battle of Okinawa," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 10, Issue 15, no. 2, (2012).

391 "第 32 軍司令部壕説明板設置についての経緯と考え方". 沖縄県の平和・男女共同参画課 (2012 年 04 月 12 日).
<http://www.pref.okinawa.jp/site/kankyo/heiwadanjo/heiwa/dai32.html>.

The OPG has not stated that the conservative protests were directly responsible for the revision, so it is impossible to be certain that Channel Sakura or protesters were its cause. However, observers have credited Channel Sakura as the organization that started the protest campaign. Okinawan author Medoruma Shun, a vocal opponent of the revision, claimed that conservative-leaning members of the OPG used “the right-wing protest that started with an appeal from Channel Sakura” as an “excuse” or “opportunity” to revise the signboard.³⁹² Similarly, reports from the Okinawan media strongly suggest that Channel Sakura was an important driving force behind the protests and that the OPG took notice of the protests. Other factors could have determined the OPG’s decision, but the end result matched exactly what the protesters had demanded.

While the OPG was correct to note that it still commemorated the issues in question at other sites, conservative activists had clearly scored a victory in the fight over the explanation signboard. Visitors to Shuri Castle Park who read the sign would not be exposed to descriptions that Channel Sakura and its supporters considered “untrue” and “anti-Japanese.”

For Channel Sakura, it was a rare example of an unambiguous victory. Mizushima expressed his deep gratitude to the viewers of Channel Sakura. This was something achieved by “everybody’s power” (*minnasan no chikara de*). They could “truly feel” (*jikkan*) that Channel Sakura had a mission to spread the truth and was succeeding at that mission. Unlike in other campaigns, when victories were harder to understand, this was a case in which no detailed

392 Shun Medoruma, “We Cannot Allow Governor Nakaima to Falsify the History of the Battle of Okinawa,” *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 10, Issue 15, no. 2, (2012).

explanation was necessary. User comments on the videos announcing the result praised Channel Sakura as fighting for truth in defense of Japan.³⁹³

6.7 Closing Thoughts

In this campaign, Channel Sakura perceived a chance for agitation within the field of Okinawan historical commemoration. The group of progressive scholars who prepared the signboard draft had, it could be argued, created a possibility for the right to attack and criticize their claims. There was not much evidence for the slaughter of civilians and the presence of comfort women *within that particular cave complex*. While it would be extremely difficult for a conservative group to campaign against Okinawa's overall commemoration of those two historical issues, a campaign focused on the narrow issue of whether or not those particular events occurred in the particular location of the signboard offered a chance for successful contestation. By noticing the opening, starting a protest campaign, and seeking out personal testimony from a war survivor who could support conservative claims, Channel Sakura's news team displayed considerable social skill.

At the end of this short campaign, the signboard in question no longer contained the descriptions that conservatives demanded be removed. However, in the big picture, erasing a detail from one signboard was not much. As the OPG had noted in its official explanation, museums and other historical markers in Okinawa contained descriptions of comfort women and compulsory mass

393 "【超限戦】沖縄・第32軍司令部壕跡説明文の捏造撃退【桜 H24/3/26】". 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2012年03月26日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IRbs520bOe0>.

suicides. It could be said that left-leaning views of the war were still strong in Okinawan, and that Channel Sakura's achievement was at best a minor setback for the left.

Nonetheless, it still represented a slight shift in the balance of this particular strategic action field. Channel Sakura and the assertive conservative right had managed to gain a small victory in the field, which arguably improved position relative to the incumbent left.

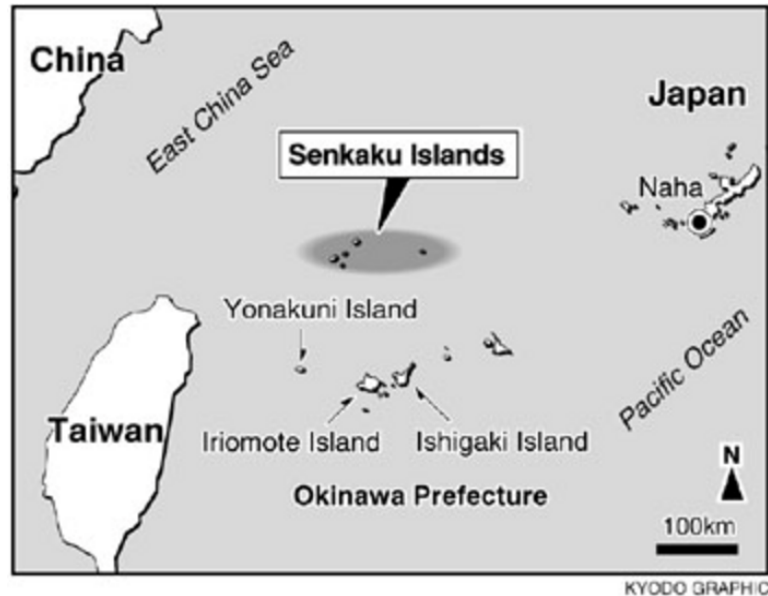
Even accepting the idea that this was not a big victory, it was still an event that Channel Sakura could use to create meaning for its followers. The assertive conservative right portrays itself as an extreme underdog against powerful leftist and anti-Japanese forces, so any small adjustment in their favor, even if it is a piecemeal gain, can be cause for celebration. And if Channel Sakura explained the event in a way that encouraged a sense of collective achievement and meaning, the scale of the victory was not particularly important. The result, even though small, was something that activists could point to as proof that victories are sometimes possible, and that such victories are only possible when "everyone" joins together in a grassroots protest campaign.

Chapter 7: The Senkaku Islands: Protest Marches & Boat Activism

This chapter discusses Channel Sakura and Ganbare Nippon's role in an activist campaign centered around the Senkaku Islands – an area of dispute between Japan and China. The campaign occurred after clash between a Chinese fishing boat and Japanese coast guard ships in 2010, making the territorial issue a major source of tension between Japan and China. As a part of the assertive conservative right, Channel Sakura recognized the opportunities presented by the crisis and engaged in an activist campaign that put pressure on the Japanese government, provoked protests from China, and helped provide shared meaning and a sense of accomplishment for participants in its campaigns.

I will start by introducing the pre-2010 events to provide the context and background for what happened and how the events can be considered as taking place within a strategic action field. The next part will summarize events between 2010 and 2014, with a focus on the activism of Channel Sakura and Ganbare Nippon. Special emphasis is placed on how Channel Sakura's internet videos explained the situation in a meaningful way to viewers, and how skilled social actors within the organization used new and innovative tactics to exploit shifts in the field to their advantage.

7.1 Senkaku Islands – Background



The Senkaku Islands are a group of small uninhabited islands in the East China Sea. The name refers to eight islands – Uotsuri, Kitakojima, Minamikojima, Kuba, Taisho, Okinokitaiwa, Okinominamiwa, and Tobise. Of these, Uotsuri Island is the largest (3.6 square kilometers), followed by Kuba Island (0.87 square kilometers), Minamikojima Island (0.32 square kilometers) and Kitakojima Island (0.26 square kilometers). The other islands are less than 0.04 square kilometers each. The nearest inhabited Japanese island is Ishigaki Island, which is approximately 170 kilometers away.³⁹⁴ Taiwan is also less than 200 kilometers away, while the distance to the Chinese mainland is about 400 kilometers. The islands are administered and controlled by Japan, but are also claimed by Taiwan (the Republic of China -ROC) and mainland China (the

³⁹⁴ "Senkaku Islands Information." Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan.
http://www.mofa.go.jp/a_o/c_m1/senkaku/page1we_000009.html.

People's Republic of China - PRC). Taiwan and China refer to the islands as the Daioyutai and Daioyu islands, respectively.

Japan's territorial claim to the islands dates back to the end of the 19th century. Formal annexation took place on January 14, 1895. Although the annexation took place during the Sino-Japanese War (August 1894 –April 1895), the Japanese territorial claim was based on the assertion that the previous surveys of the islands had concluded that there was "no trace of having been under the control of the Qing Dynasty of China."³⁹⁵ Consequently, the islands were not mentioned among the territorial concessions that Japan received from China under the April 1895 Treaty of Shimonoseki.

From 1895 to 1945, the Senkaku Islands were administered as a part of Okinawa prefecture. The islands were host to human activity from the 1900's until the until 1940, when Japanese businessman Koga Tatsushiro purchased several of them from the Japanese government and built a fish processing facility and worker housing on Uotsuri island.³⁹⁶ The outbreak of World War II forced Koga to abandon his business venture.

The islands remained uninhabited throughout the war, save for a brief period from July 3 until August 18, 1945. In what later became known as the "Tsushima Maru Incident," two ships evacuating Japanese civilians from Ishigaki Island to Taiwan were attacked on July 3 by American planes near Uotsuri Island. One ship was sunk and another was heavily damaged. Survivors of the attack

³⁹⁵ "Senkaku Islands Q&A," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan.

http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/senkaku/qa_1010.html-q2.

³⁹⁶ Hiromichi Moteki, *The Senkaku Islands Constitute an Intrinsic Part of Japan* (Tokyo: Society for the Dissemination of Historical Fact, 2010) http://www.sdh-fact.com/CL02_1/79_S4.pdf.

were left stranded on Uotsuri Island without adequate food or provisions. Several dozen starved to death before the end of the war, and a rescue ship, arrived.³⁹⁷



Figure 16: A signboard erected on the Senkaku Islands by American authorities (1970)

Following Japan's defeat in the Pacific War, the United States administered the islands as part of Okinawa. During this period, the American military leased Kuba Island and Taisho Island from the Koga family and used the islands for artillery and bombing practice.³⁹⁸ When the United States formally returned Okinawa prefecture to Japan in 1972, the Senkaku Islands were included in the transfer.

³⁹⁷ Micheal Cucek, "Flag Waving Perverts," Shisaku, August 20, 2012. <http://shisaku.blogspot.jp/2012/08/flag-waving-perverts.html>.

³⁹⁸ Hiromichi Moteki, *The Senkaku Islands Constitute an Intrinsic Part of Japan* (Tokyo: Society for the Dissemination of Historical Fact, 2010)11.

7.1.1 Territorial Disputes Emerge

Taiwanese territorial claims to the Senkakus were announced in 1970, and mainland China followed with its own claims in 1972. Both parties claimed that their ownership of the islands was based on pre-1895 historical evidence that showed the islands to be a part of China. In their view, Japan obtained the islands in 1895 as a part of its unjust imperialist expansion. Japanese opponents of these claims have argued that the PRC and ROC claims were created because of a 1969 United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE) report that suggested the existence of oil and natural gas reserves in the seabed near the islands.

When Japan and mainland China formalized diplomatic relations in 1972, the Senkaku issue was not included in treaty negotiations. During the 1978 negotiations of a peace and friendship treaty between the two nations, anti-treaty politicians in Japan (including Ishihara Shintaro of the LDP's Seirankai faction)³⁹⁹ were insisting that the Japanese government demand Chinese recognition of Japanese sovereignty over the islands. On April 12, 1978, in what some observers interpreted as a Chinese show of force against the anti-treaty Japanese politicians, between 80 and 150 armed Chinese fishing boats appeared in the waters near the islands. According to Shaw, this was a Chinese strategy that "backfired" and caused a negative reaction in Japan. Pro-treaty politicians in Japan began to see a weakening of support for their cause, and

³⁹⁹ Reinhard Drifte, "The Japan-China Confrontation Over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands--Between "shelving" and "dispute escalation"", *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 12, Issue 30, no. 3, (2014)

within several days China realized this and the fishing boats were withdrawn.⁴⁰⁰

Others, such as Manicom, have argued that Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping sent the fishing boats as to demonstrate his “nationalist credentials” to those within China that could threaten his reform policies.⁴⁰¹ The treaty was ultimately passed without official negotiations regarding the status of the islands. Chinese leaders did not want the dispute to hinder the treaties, so there was an agreement to not discuss the issue at that time.⁴⁰² Deng stated that resolution of the territorial dispute should be left to “wiser” future generations.⁴⁰³

7.1.2 The Field of Senkaku Island Sovereignty

Following the theories of Fligstein and McAdams, the above-mentioned events surrounding this issue can be conceptualized as taking place within a Strategic Action Field. Within the Field of Senkaku Island Sovereignty there are both state and non-state actors. In the period from the 1970's to the 2000's, the Japanese state represented an incumbent actor, maintaining physical possession of the islands and resources such as the Japan Coast Guard, the Self-Defense Forces, access to media, financial resources, and so on.

The Chinese state, on the other hand, was a challenger. China was at a disadvantage resource-wise and was not in a position to effectively overturn

400 Hanyi Shaw, *The Diaoyutai/Senkaku Islands Dispute: Its History and an Analysis of the Ownership Claims of the PRC, ROC, and Japan* (Baltimore: School of Law, University of Maryland, 1999) p. 16

401 James Manicom, "Sino-Japanese Cooperation in the East China Sea: Limitations and Prospects." *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 30, no. 3 (2008): 455-78.

402 "NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS: China Claims It Agreed with Japan to Shelve the Dispute in 1972, Japan Denies," AJW by The Asahi Shimbun, December 26, 2012.

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/special/Senkaku_History/AJ201212260103.

403 Zijian Lu, *China's Policy towards Territorial Disputes: The Case of the South China Sea Islands* (London: Routledge, 1989)

Japanese dominance in the field.⁴⁰⁴ Because the Field of Senkaku Island Sovereignty was considered less important than the numerous other proximate fields that make up the relationship between Japan and China (for example, fields related to trade), the Chinese government wanted to delay discussion of the territorial dispute until a later time.

The Taiwanese state was also a challenger, but following the worldwide shift in diplomatic recognition to mainland China, good relations with Japan became more important than putting pressure on Japan regarding the territorial issue. Thus, in the coming sections, the Taiwanese state is almost entirely absent. The Japanese state, for its part, wanted to avoid discussion of the Senkakus, as an official recognition that any other country had a legitimate cause for disputing Japanese ownership would have weakened the Japanese state's position within the field.

The Chinese state was willing to accept its inferior position within the field, but only within conditions that preserved its possibility for a future restructuring of the field in its favor. As one can observe from the events that took place during the treaty negotiations of 1978, China was unwilling to consider treaty terms that required abandonment of its territorial claim to the Senkakus. China was willing to deploy a threatening number of fishing boats to emphasize its resolve.

In the following section, I will explore how Japanese conservative and right-wing groups have taken their place as challengers within the field. Other

404 M. Taylor Fravel, "Explaining Stability in the Senkaku (Diaoyu) Islands Dispute," ed. Gerald L. Curtis, Ryosei Kokobun, and Jisi Wang, in *Getting the Triangle Straight: Managing China-Japan-US Relations* (Tokyo; New York, NY: Japan Center for International Exchange, 2010) pp.149-150

challengers, representing the non-Japanese territorial claims, have also entered the fray.

7.1.3 Japanese Activists

Since the 1970's the Japanese government has avoided official policies that could provoke escalations from China. In response to the lack of governmental action, Japanese conservative activists have sought to carry out their own actions that could assert Japan's ownership of the islands. This in turn provoked responses from foreign activists – from Taiwan, Hong Kong, and mainland China. Some of this activism took the form of traditional protest activities, such as street demonstrations and the publishing of nationalist literature. However, the most visible, and perhaps the most important actions were landings on the islands. Japanese activists would land on the island to erect flags, lighthouses, and memorials. Foreign activists would seek to raise their own national flags and destroy or damage the physical structures placed by Japanese activists. According to Daiki:

The gist of the Japanese activists' movement has been to land on the Senkaku/Daioyu Islands, set up facilities – especially lighthouses – and then to request the Japanese government authorize the lighthouses. The activists feel that government authorization would prove that Japan is “effectively controlling the Islands.”⁴⁰⁵

405 Ibid Daiki 183

Min Gyo Koo has argued that the lighthouse incidents demonstrated "how domestic groups could use the sovereignty issue to embarrass their own and other governments." Nationalist groups had been "fundamental to the way which the dispute has manifested itself."⁴⁰⁶ M. Taylor Fravel has expressed a similar view, stating that "the leading source of friction in the dispute over the past two decades has been the efforts by citizen activists to land on the islands to demonstrate their countries' sovereignty claims." The actions of activists "compel the governments to get involved" in the dispute.⁴⁰⁷

On August 13, 1978, the day after the Japanese and Chinese governments signed the Treaty of Peace and Friendship, a group of Japanese conservative activists landed on Uotsuri Island and erected a makeshift lighthouse. Ishihara Shintaro, a prize-winning novelist who had been entered national politics as a Diet member in 1968, was involved in the landing. In his memoirs, Ishihara claims to have led the lighthouse-building expedition. He wrote that the necessary funds were raised from fellow conservative politicians within the Seirankai faction of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, and that he recruited the expedition party himself. The team that built the lighthouse included a mixture of university students and radical right wing activists.⁴⁰⁸

One of the participants in Ishihara's expedition was Eto Toyohisa, a member and future leader of Nihon Seinensha (The Japan Youth Association -

406 Min Gyo Koo, *Island Disputes and Maritime Regime Building in East Asia: Between a Rock and a Hard Place* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2009) p. 117

407 M. Taylor Fravel, "Explaining Stability in the Senkaku (Diaoyu) Islands Dispute." ed. Gerald L. Curtis, Ryosei Kokobun, and Jisi Wang in *Getting the Triangle Straight: Managing China-Japan-US Relations* (Tokyo ;New York, NY: Japan Center for International Exchange, 2010) p. 151.

408 Shintarô Ishihara, Kokkanaru Gen'ei, *Waga Seiji E No Han Kaisô* (Tôkyô: Bungei Shunjû, 1999), pp. 367-368.

hereafter referred to as Seinensha). Seinensha is a uyoku group founded in 1969 by Kobayashi Kusuo, a top cadre of the Sumiyoshi-kai, one of Japan's largest yakuza syndicates.⁴⁰⁹ According to their homepage, they were unsatisfied with the "weak-kneed" policies of the Japanese government and acted to protect Japan's claim to the Senkaku Islands. They write that their actions were directly influenced by China's own boat activism:

"In April just before the conclusion of Japan and China Friendship Treaty on 12th August, 53rd Year of Showa Era (1978), an incident occurred that 140 Chinese armed fishing boats invaded to the sea area of Senkaku Islands and took threatening actions for a week. As the Government could not take any measures against such an outrage, we had a sense of Impending crisis, organized "a suicide corps for the possession of Senkaku Islands", landed at the Islands and constructed a lighthouse in order to insist the possessing right. Since the light of Japan was lit, we guarded the light of Japan for 27 years until today."⁴¹⁰

Seinensha landed on the islands several times over the following years: once in May 1979, once in March 1982, and again in June 1984. The missions were carried out to observe the state of the islands.⁴¹¹ (Goats were also released on Uotsuri Island under the assumption that they could serve as an emergency

409 Ibid Daiki 181

410 From the organization's homepage: <http://www.seinensya.org/>

411 Shibuichi Daiki, "Contemporary Japanese Rightist Movements," PhD diss., National University of Singapore (2006) p.

food source if anyone was stranded there. The goat population gradually increased, and with it came the destruction of local vegetation.)

A decade after the first lighthouse was built, in 1988, Seinensha members returned to repair it. They submitted an application to the Japanese government a year later, requesting that the lighthouse be granted the status of an official navigation indicator. After delays in the approval process, they returned to the islands in June 1990 to improve the quality of the lighthouse and ensure it would meet Japan Coast Guard (JCG) regulations.⁴¹² News reports suggesting that the application would be accepted prompted protests from mainland China and from Taiwanese politicians. A Taiwanese group attempted a landing on the islands, bringing along a news crew, who subsequently broadcasted the footage of the ships being turned back by the Japan Coast Guard. Anti-Japanese demonstrations followed, and the Japanese Foreign Ministry intervened in the process to force the rejection Seinensha's application in April of 1991.⁴¹³ Despite this setback, Seinensha returned to the island in 1994 and 1995 to perform maintenance to the lighthouse.

Another small crisis took place in 1996, after Eto led another group of Seinensha members to the islands and erected a solar-powered aluminum lighthouse on Kitakojima Island, again applying for Japanese government recognition.⁴¹⁴ Protests followed in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and mainland China. On

412 Ibid 185

413 Neville Maxwell, Chien-Peng Chung, Francine R. Frankel, and Harry Harding. "Domestic Politics, International Bargaining and China's Territorial Disputes," *The China Journal*, no. 54 (2005): 194.

414 Mutsuko Murakami, "Center of the Storm Japan's Rightists Shed Light on the Issue," CNN, September 20, 1996. <http://edition.cnn.com/ASIANOW/asiaweek/96/0920/nat1a.html>.

September 26, 1996, an activist from Hong Kong drowned when trying to evade the Japan Coast Guard during a failed landing attempt. His death prompted another landing attempt a month later, this time by activists from Hong Kong and Taiwan. The activists succeeded in coming ashore at Uotsuri Island on October 7, where they planted PRC and ROC flags. Their flags were removed several days later by Japanese authorities. Prior to the landing, the Japanese government announced on October 4 that it had rejected Seinensha's lighthouse recognition application. When a Seinensha expedition was sent to the islands in December, they found that their lighthouse had been vandalized.

More landings followed in 1997. This time, it was conservative politicians and journalists instead of right wing organizations. On April 27, Ishigaki city assemblyman Nakama Hitoshi and a Sankei Shimbun reporter landed on Uotsuri Island.⁴¹⁵ A few weeks later, on May 6, Diet member Nishimura Shingo (a figure also mentioned in the NHK Chapter) landed on Uotsuri Island to fulfill an election campaign promise he made at the time of the 1996 crisis.⁴¹⁶ He was joined by Nakama Hitoshi, journalist Miyajima Shigeki, and filmmaker Inagawa Kazuo. Nishimura was an opposition party lawmaker at that time, and the Japanese government, under the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, condemned the visit. As in the past, activists from Hong Kong and Taiwan responded with their own attempt to land on the islands, but were blocked by the JCG. During the

⁴¹⁵ "Politician Joins Activists in Landing on Senkaku Islands," Japan Times, May 6, 1997.

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/1997/05/06/national/politician-joins-activists-in-landing-on-senkaku-islands/> - .U9n-xfmSxe4.

⁴¹⁶ James Manicom, *Bridging Troubled Waters: China, Japan, and Maritime Order in the East China Sea* (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2014) p. 52

confrontation, the activists' boats collided with Japanese patrol boats on several occasions, and three activists were captured after jumping onto the JCG boats. The activists were released without any charges filed against them. Then, in September of 1997, Chinese activists attempted to charter an airplane that would fly to and parachute down on the islands. Engine troubles caused the airplane to make an emergency landing shortly after take-off from an airport in the Philippines, forcing a cancellation of the plan.⁴¹⁷

7.1.4 A Short Period of Calm

The Chinese government responded to the 1997 landings with a public statement reiterating its claim to the islands, but as Manicom notes in his study of the dispute, Beijing displayed it was "clearly capable of being pragmatic when confronted with provocations from Japanese nationalist" because its statements also acknowledged that the landings had been against the policy of the Japanese government.⁴¹⁸ The field had entered a period of stability and moderation for the state-level actors:

This period reveals that despite crises in Sino-Japanese relations, the two sides were able to fall back on Deng's maxim. Furthermore, as a consequence of the tensions of 1996, a tacit consensus emerged between

⁴¹⁷ Hanyi Shaw, *The Diaoyutai/Senkaku Islands Dispute: Its History and an Analysis of the Ownership Claims of the PRC, ROC, and Japan* (Baltimore: School of Law, University of Maryland, 1999) p. 20

⁴¹⁸ Ibid

*Beijing and Tokyo that policymakers would not allow themselves to be manipulated by nationalist actors.*⁴¹⁹

Chien-peng Chung expressed a similar view about the same period:

*All three governments [including Taipei] were engaging in tactic communication and behaviorable convergence with one another, to signal the fact that they were trying their utmost to play down, if not suppress, the entire controversy by doing nothing to encourage and everything to restrain their domestic nationalist forces; and that they expected this goodwill to be reciprocated by the opposing governments.*⁴²⁰

The incumbent state actor and the two challenger state actors in the “Field of Senkaku Island Sovereignty” had decided to stick with the status quo for the time being. The conservative activists – non-state actors within the field – would try the same kind of tactics they had employed in earlier decades, but would receive no major response from the states. In November 1997 the Chinese and Japanese governments signed a new fisheries agreement, agreeing to establish jointly controlled maritime boundaries while leaving the waters around the Senkaku Islands untouched.⁴²¹

419 James Manicom, *Bridging Troubled Waters: China, Japan, and Maritime Order in the East China Sea* (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2014) p. 52

420 James Manicom, *Bridging Troubled Waters: China, Japan, and Maritime Order in the East China Sea* (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2014) p. 52

421 Ibid Shaw 21

Seinensha returned to Uotsuri Island in April 2000 and constructed a small granite Shinto shrine, calling it the "Senkaku Shrine" (Senkaku-jinja). Between 2000 and 2004 they made annual visits to the island, carrying out lighthouse maintenance and holding prayer ceremonies at the shrine.⁴²² The building of the shrine prompted little more than an official protest statement from the Chinese government, which was answered by an official Japanese response asserting Japanese ownership of the island.⁴²³

Another right wing organization, calling itself Nihonjin no Kai (Japanese Person's Association) landed on Uotsuri Island in May of 2001. They were accompanied by politician Nishimura Shingo. It was the only time that the organization visited the islands, but its members gained infamy in 2002, when they founded Kenkoku Giyugun (National Building Volunteer Corps), an armed nationalist organization. It was disbanded in 2003 after its key members were arrested for bomb threats and attacks on groups associated with North Korea. Nishimura denied prior knowledge of the organization's criminal composition.⁴²⁴

Starting in 2002, Japan's national government began to rent Uotsuri, Minami-Kojima and Kita-Kojima Islands from their Kurihara family, who had inherited the Koga family land titles.⁴²⁵ When landings by Japanese activists occurred in the 1990's, the Japanese government had cited the islands' private

422 Shibuichi Daiki, "Contemporary Japanese Rightist Movements," PhD diss., National University of Singapore (2006) 187

423 Ibid 211

424 David McNeill, "Murakami Ichiro and Ultra-Nationalist Intimidation in Japan," *Japan Focus*, July 2003. <http://www.japanfocus.org/-David-McNeill/1750>.

425 "Japan Says It Has Leased Disputed Island for Decades," *Taipei Times* / AFP, January 9, 2003. <http://www.taipetimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2003/01/09/0000190302>.

ownership as a reason why it could not ban Japanese citizens from coming ashore on the islands.⁴²⁶ After 2002, the government began to restrict access to the islands.⁴²⁷ The rules within the field had changed, and Seinensha was blocked from carrying out further visits to the islands.

While the Japanese government restricted the activities of its own activists, Chinese government action in the waters near the Senkakus increased. Throughout 1998 and 1999, Chinese surveying vessels were operating within the Japanese-claimed seas around the islands, refusing to recognize JCG orders to leave the area.⁴²⁸ There were also a few cases of Chinese naval vessels operating near the islands.⁴²⁹ Despite Japanese official protests, and a short-lived 2001 agreement that China would provide advanced notice of research activities carried out in “waters near Japan and in which Japan takes an interest,” unannounced Chinese surveying missions continued.⁴³⁰ The situation had gradually become one in which “Chinese vessels operated with relative impunity” in the waters around the islands.⁴³¹

A multitude of factors in proximate fields led to increasing tensions between Japan and the PRC, and the Senkaku Islands Sovereignty Field was

426 "Press Conference by the Press Secretary 4 October 1996," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan.
<http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/press/1996/10/1004.html>.

427 Maya Kaneko, "Ishigaki Fishermen Fret over Senkaku Encroachment," Japan Times, December 8, 2010.
http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2010/12/08/national/ishigaki-fishermen-fret-over-senkaku-encroachment/_U9m2KfmSxe4.

428 Paul O'Shea, "Sovereignty and the Senkaku/Diaoyu Territorial Dispute," Working Paper, *EIJS*, Stockholm School of Economics, 2012.

429 Kerry Dumbaugh, David Ackerman, and Richard Cronin, *U.S. China's Maritime Territorial Claims: Implications for U.S. Interests* (Rept. Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2001)

430 Ibid O'Shea

431 Ibid O'Shea

affected by those changes. Junichiro Koizumi took office in April 2001, and his subsequent visits to the Yasukuni Shrine led China to put a halt on meetings between the two countries' leaders during his years in office. In a study of Chinese actions near the islands between 1978 and 2007, Krista E. Wiegand argued that the increase in Chinese activities near the islands from the late 1990's to the early 2000's could best be explained as "a dual strategy of issue linkage and coercive diplomacy." China used "militarized threats" such as increased patrols near the islands as "bargaining leverage to force changes in Japan's policies or actions regarding other disputed issues."⁴³² In the late 1990's, Wiegand identified linkages to Japanese government actions that were reaffirming the U.S.-Japan security alliance, while in the 2000's, Koizumi's shrine visits are linked to Chinese actions near the Senkakus.

Prior to 1996, ideational factors, namely the idea of asserting territorial sovereignty over the islands, were the main motivation for Seinensha activists. The islands were valued most of all because they were Japanese, making them a part of the sacred Japanese nation. They saw it as their mission to defend the sovereign territory of Japan. The economic or material advantages of controlling the islands were not particularly stressed. However, after China declared an expansion of its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) in 1996 and the increase in Chinese survey ship activity, there was a "shift in nationalist thinking," with

⁴³² Krista E. Wiegand, "China's Strategy in the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands Dispute: Issue Linkage and Coercive Diplomacy." *Asian Security* 5, no. 2 (2009): 189

Seinensha and conservative politicians devoting more attention to the material and economic value of the East China Sea.⁴³³

March 24, 2004 saw the first ever landing by mainland Chinese activists. Seven activists landed on Uotsuri Island, planted two Chinese flags (a PRC and a ROC flag), and vandalized the lighthouse and shrine. It was also the first time that an activist landing party had been formally arrested by Japanese authorities.⁴³⁴ Before local authorities could file trespassing charges against the activist, Japan's national government intervened and had the activists deported.⁴³⁵ The Koizumi administration did not want the issue to interfere with a planned visit by Japan's Foreign Minister to Beijing. After this incident, the Japanese government reportedly told its Chinese counterparts that future landings by activists would result in deportation instead of arrests.

One uyoku group in Japan responded with violence to the Chinese landing and the Japanese government's deportation of the activists. In the early morning hours of April 24, Nakagama Nobuyuki, a 34-year-old member of Nihon Kominto (Japan Emperor's People Party) rammed one of the organization's loudspeaker buses into the gates of the Chinese consulate in Osaka. No one was hurt in the incident, but the gate to the consulate was badly damaged. Nakagama was arrested and the Japanese government issued a formal apology to China.⁴³⁶

433 James Manicom, "Sino-Japanese Cooperation in the East China Sea: Limitations and Prospects." *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 30, no. 3 (2008)

434 Zhouxiang Lu and Fan Hong, *Sport and Nationalism in China* (New York: Routledge, 2013) p. 150

435 AFP. "Japan Says It Has Leased Disputed Island for Decades," Taipei Times, January 9, 2003.

<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2003/01/09/0000190302>.

436 "China Indignant at Japanese Right-wing Attack on Consulate General in Osaka," People's Daily Online, June 25, 2004. http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200404/23/eng20040423_141323.shtml.

Xinhua News Agency referred to the attack as “the most serious by a suspected Japanese right-winger against Chinese diplomatic facilities since the normalization of diplomatic relations in 1972.” Nakagama was sentenced to seven years in prison.⁴³⁷ Nihon Kominto, like Seinensha, is a right wing group that dates back to the 1960’s and has ties to organized crime.

The island landing and consulate attack of 2004 did not become a major crisis for the two countries. But, as Manicom notes, future events would not be managed so smoothly:

*"The 2004 landing marked the last time the two were able to manage tensions over the islands under the consensus reached after the 1996 crisis. Both Deng's modus vivendi and the agreement to manage nationalist tensions began to unravel as policy makers in both countries became more attuned to the importance of the islands and the surrounding maritime space."*⁴³⁸

The lighthouse that Seinensha built on Uotsuri Island was granted official navigational beacon status by the Japanese government on February 9, 2005.⁴³⁹ Seinensha’s efforts to assert sovereignty seemed to have finally paid off, and the organization treated the decision as a major victory. While some considered this

437 "Japanese Man Jailed for Damaging Chinese Consulate," Xinhua News, September 27, 2005.
<http://china.org.cn/english/2005/Sep/143521.htm>.

438 Ibid Manicom p.52

439 Norimitsu Onishi, "Japan and China Dispute a Pacific Islet," The New York Times, July 09, 2005.
<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/07/10/international/asia/10japan.html?pagewanted=all>.

event an expression of a tougher stance towards China, Manicom has argued that the government's decision was meant to prevent future escalation of the territorial issue. Up until that point, Seinensha had used lighthouse maintenance as a justification for its attempts to land on the islands, and those landings had provoked responses from abroad. By taking ownership of the lighthouse, the Japanese government was putting an end to Seinensha's boat activism.

The next few years passed without a major diplomatic incident. One interesting episode occurred in 2008, when a JCG patrol ship collided with a Taiwanese recreation fishing boat that had entered Japanese-claimed waters near the islands. The Taiwanese boat sank, and despite Japan's initial claims that the Taiwanese had rammed the Japanese ship, video evidence later proved that the JCG had been at fault in the collision. Japan issued a formal apology and paid compensation for the lost boat and fishing equipment.⁴⁴⁰

In 2009, the Liberal Democratic Party was swept out of office and replaced by a new government under the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ). The DPJ government pursued a closer relationship with China, and it seemed like there would be no major conflict with China. Despite the DPJ's intentions, the Senkaku Island sovereignty field would destabilize in 2010.

7.1.5 Channel Sakura & the Senkakus: Pre-2010

In the first few years of Channel Sakura's existence, there was no major crisis surrounding the Senkaku Islands. The field was relatively stable. During

⁴⁴⁰ Ellis Krauss, "Crisis Management, LDP, and DPJ Style," *Japanese Journal of Political Science* 14, no. 02 (2013): 177-99.

that period, Channel Sakura focused its time and efforts on opportunities in other fields (see NHK chapter for an example). Yet, the Senkakus were still an issue of importance within the assertive conservative right. Some Channel Sakura programs introduced viewers to the value of the islands, both in a material sense and in an ideational sense.

Professor Yamada Yoshihiko of Kaiyo University discussed the state of the Senkakus with Channel Sakura's "Today's Self-Defense Forces" program in March 2009. He discussed how the fishermen of Ishigaki Island had considered the Senkakus a valuable fishing area since the Edo Period. Yamada stated that the islands were far and difficult for the fishermen to safely reach, even though they were a good source of tuna. He argued that the fishermen would benefit from the construction of some facilities on the islands. There is also mention of how the Japanese government was renting the islands and would not allow people to land there. The importance of strengthening good relations with Taiwan, and with Lee Teng-Hui, was introduced as a way to take a stand against Chinese territorial claims. In this video one can observe the employment of a topic that would appear over the coming years of Channel Sakura video programming about the Senkakus: the plight of the common fisherman. As a grassroots movement "by the Japanese people and for the Japanese people," it is a narrative that fits with the identity that Channel Sakura is trying to create.

The natural resources under the seabed were not ignored, but the hardworking Japanese fishermen were given more attention.⁴⁴¹

The material and strategic value of the Senkakus was emphasized in a program that aired on September 14, 2009. It featured former naval officer Hiram Yoichi discussing the DPJ administration on “Today’s Self-Defense Forces.” The Senkaku issue was mentioned in relation to China, but it was used in to talk about issues in other proximate fields. The DPJ was said to be threatening the Japan-America alliance creating a dangerous situation by proceeding with plans for an East Asian Community. In 2009, the DPJ government had been trying to relocate the American base at Futenma and the alliance with the United States was strained. Hiram used the story of America leaving Subic Bay and the subsequent China seizing of islands in the South China Sea as a warning to Japan: If America leaves, Japan would lose the Senkakus within six months, and Japan would be able to do nothing, just like the Philippines. And it would lose out on the seabed gas reserves.⁴⁴²

Past landings on the Senkakus were discussed on July 10, 2010. Channel Sakura devoted a group discussion program to the “dangerous” situation in the Senkaku Islands. Guests included an impressively credentialed panel of retired MSDF Rear Admiral Kawamura Sumihiko, retired ASDF General Sato Mamoru, retired JCG Academy Superintendent Miyake Norio, and Takubo Tadae of Nippon Kaigi. The panel held a detailed discussion of the growing

441 "1/2 【山田吉彦】 石垣島から見た尖閣諸島をめぐる最新情勢[桜 H21/3/27]". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2009年3月27日).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6JQ5c6JwsKA>

442 "【平間洋一】 民主党政権における安全保障上の危機[桜 H21/9/11]". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2009年9月11日).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VGi53F8usgc>

military threat that China poses to Japan, and how China will try to gain control of the Senkakus. Of particular note were comments from General Sato, who recalled how the activists from Hong Kong and Taiwan were smart to bring along many journalists along with them when they tried to land in 1996.⁴⁴³ (In the coming years, Channel Sakura would employ a similar tactic.)

An interesting prediction came on July 23, 2010. Mizushima criticized the Japanese government's weakness in pushing the Senkaku problem to future generations, when it should have instead asserted Japan's ownership of the islands. Although the program was meant to complain about how Google Maps features both the Japanese and Chinese names for the islands, Mizushima mentioned a larger threat to Japan. He warned about a plan for an "invasion" of Chinese/Taiwanese/HK boats that would come to the Senkakus. He called on the Japanese government to show the will to protect the country, even if it meant having nuclear weapons. Furthermore, if the politicians did not have the will to do it, then the people would need to rise up and defend the Senkaku islands by establishing a "people's defense force" (*minkan boeitai*). Three minutes into the video, Mizushima makes a striking prediction. He mentioned that an international meeting of Chinese businessmen would take place in Los Angeles on September 7, 2010, and that the meeting will be used to plan the advancement of China's territorial claims to the islands. Although the meeting in

443 "1/4 【討論！】尖閣が危ない！危機の中の東アジアと日本【桜 H22/7/10】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2010年7月10日).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lijP20j-uVA>

question proved to be unimportant, that date would indeed mark a major event in the Senkaku Island sovereignty field.⁴⁴⁴

7.2 The 2010 Boat Collision Incident

On the morning of September 7, 2010, a Chinese trawler collided with JCG patrol boats near the Senkaku Islands. The captain of the trawler was detained and charged on September 9 with the crime of interference with a public servant in the execution of his/her duties. The Chinese government demanded the release of the captain. Japan's DPJ government under Naoto Kan refused, stating that it would leave the decision in the hands of local prosecutors in Okinawa. China's response was harsh. Violent anti-Japanese street demonstrations occurred in China, the Chinese government cancelled ministerial-level meetings, exports to Japan of rare earth metals encountered sudden delays, and four Fujita employees were arrested in China for allegedly filming a military installation. The pressure seemed to work – and on September 24, the prosecutors in Okinawa announced the release of the captain, citing diplomatic concerns.⁴⁴⁵ The Kan administration was seen having caved in to Chinese demands, and having pushed the decision onto a local official instead of taking responsibility for it.⁴⁴⁶

444 "【直言極言】尖閣列島が危ない！【桜 H22/7/23】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2010 年 7 月 23 日).

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ESJw-q_Y_Mg

445 Martin Fackler and Ian Johnson. "Japan Retreats In Test of Wills With the Chinese," The New York Times, September 24, 2010. <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/25/world/asia/25chinajapan.html?pagewanted=all&r=0>

446 Paul Jackson, "Prosecutor Diplomacy?" The Diplomat, September 28, 2010.

<http://thediplomat.com/2010/09/japans-prosecutor-diplomacy-2/>

To some, the Kan administration seemed to have broken with the established rules within the field.⁴⁴⁷ Up to that point, trespassers had been deported instead of charged with crimes.⁴⁴⁸ Or, it could be seen as a case in which China deliberately sought an escalation of the dispute. Either way, it was a bad outcome for Kan and the DPJ. The Japanese government's handling of the dispute was widely criticized as weak-kneed, and public support for the Kan administration declined.⁴⁴⁹

From the beginning of the crisis, Channel Sakura moved to take advantage of the opportunity and carry out a grassroots campaign. On September 9, a Channel Sakura news report described the collision as a "political" and "deliberate" act by the Chinese government. The JCG was praised for detaining the captain, who was, according to Mizushima, likely a member of the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN). He explained that it was necessary to protest at the Chinese embassy, to show that the Japanese people believed the territory belonged to their country.⁴⁵⁰ Then, on September 10, Mizushima declared that Ganbare Nippon would be launching demonstrations to denounce Chinese "aggression" in the Senkakus. He denounced the Japanese government's "cowardly" (*okubyo*) response and unwillingness to take stronger actions displaying sovereignty over the islands. He reminded viewers of an

447 Sourabh Gupta, "Japan and China's Latest Spat over the Senkakus," East Asia Forum, September 23, 2012. <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2012/09/23/japan-and-chinas-latest-spat-over-the-senkakus/>

448 Tanaka Sakai, "Rekindling China-Japan Conflict: The Senkaku/Diaoyutai Islands Clash," The Asia-Pacific Journal, 39-3-10, September 27, 2010.

449 Kosuke Takahashi, "China signals V for victory," Asia Times Online :: Japan News and Japanese Business and Economy, October 5, 2010. <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Japan/LJ05Dh01.html>.

450 "【日本解体の危機】尖閣侵略、女性天皇、靖国分祀[桜 H22/9/9]". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2010年9月9日). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z_QAA6QEx40

article he had written for a Yasukuni Shrine newsletter in August. The article had called readers to action under the headline “if the government can’t fulfill its duty defend the country, than the people will” (*kuni no gimu, seifu ga dame nara kokumin ga*).⁴⁵¹ The narrative of grassroots heroes rising up to save the country was used to create meaning for viewers and mobilize support. Ganbare Nippon held protests in Shibuya and in front of the Chinese embassy on September 10 and 11th, and in front of the DPJ party headquarters on September 13.⁴⁵²

A video was later uploaded to show highlights from the September 10 and September 11 demonstrations. It included footage of Mizushima, Nagayama Hideki (Taiwan Research Forum), Kobayashi Tadashi (former Chairman of Tsukurukai), and Umehara Katsuhiko (former mayor of Sendai). It also showed Ganbare Nippon volunteers as they diligently handed out fliers to passing pedestrians. The cameraman took special note of people who stopped to take photos of the demonstration, including several foreigners. At the end of the report, Channel Sakura news anchors discussed the importance of the demonstration. They noted that although most passing pedestrians would have less than 30 seconds to hear the speeches, just hearing the word “Senkaku” would make them aware of the issue.⁴⁵³ Throughout September, Channel Sakura regularly devoted its programs to the Senkaku issued and held protests every

451 "【直言極言】 守れ尖閣！ 目覚めよ国民！ 緊急国民行動【桜 H22/9/10】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2010 年 9 月 10 日).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cEvEI8Zgi68>

452 "【国土防衛】 遂に直接行動に出るか？ 中国の尖閣侵略【桜 H22/9/10】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2010 年 9 月 10 日).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v5j04kde6Z0>

453 "【頑張れ日本！】 尖閣侵略阻止！ 民主党糾弾！ 緊急国民行動【桜 H22/9/13】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2010 年 9 月 13 日).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Kx80n7jbXA>

weekend in Shibuya. Viewers were continually reminding of how the protests represented grassroots justice-seeking.

The release of the captain proved an opportunity to make a popular YouTube video. On September 25, Channel Sakura hit the streets in the Kichijoji neighborhood of Tokyo to ask two hundred random people on the street about their views on the release of the captain. While there were a few people who said they supported the decision, and some who didn't have any opinion on the matter, the overwhelming majority of people shown in the video disagreed with the government's handling of the crisis. The video contained a short and simple introduction followed by twelve minutes of footage showing the pedestrian's responses. The final few minutes of the clip contained commentary from Miwa Kazuo, who compared the Japanese government's decision to someone caving in to extortion from a gangster. It was a simple video without any particularly extreme message, meaning that it could be shared easily among people and even viewers without conservative leanings could very much agree with its message. It proved to be one of Channel Sakura's most popular uploads, receiving over 100,000 views.⁴⁵⁴

Major protests were planned for October 2 in Tokyo. Ganbare Nippon chapters across Japan were called upon to make it a nationwide event. On the same day, activists passed out fliers and delivered speeches in front train stations in Akita, Utsunomiya, Yokohama, Kamakura, Nagoya, Fukushima, Matsuyama, Okayama, and Kumamoto cities. Mizushima called on anyone,

454 "1/2 【尖閣問題】日本の対応をどう思いますか？新宿・吉祥寺[桜 H22/9/28]". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2010年9月28日). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cJlrIQsRT_0

even lone activists, to take to the streets and let people know that China is threatening the peace of Asia.⁴⁵⁵ When the Tokyo demonstration was held, it attracted 2,670 people, making it the biggest demonstration organized by Ganbare Nippon to that date.⁴⁵⁶ Ganbare Nippon organizers in Nagoya also succeeded in attracting about 400 people to their demonstration.⁴⁵⁷ Tamogami Toshio stood in the front of the Tokyo demonstration alongside Mizushima, leading the march forward. The Tokyo demonstration attracted the attention of international media, such as the Wall Street Journal⁴⁵⁸, Reuters, and the Globe and Mail.⁴⁵⁹ Channel Sakura noted that there was considerable attention from such international outlets, but aside from the Yukan Fuji newspaper, it was almost completely ignored by domestic media.⁴⁶⁰

455 "2/2 【特別討論】徹底検証・尖閣問題の行方[桜 H22/9/27]". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2010 年 9 月 27 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oF8iWoDybG4>

456 "【街頭宣伝】10.2 中国の尖閣諸島侵略糾弾！全国国民統一行動[桜 H22/10/5]". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2010 年 10 月 5 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ppJdqGfODE>

457 "【名古屋】10.2 中国の尖閣侵略糾弾！全国国民統一行動[桜 H22/10/8]". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2010 年 10 月 8 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6MImWeoAio4>

458 Yuka Hayashi, "China Row Fuels Japan's Right," The Wall Street Journal, September 28, 2010. <http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052748704791004575519662349329820>.

459 "Rise of the Far-right in Japan," The Globe and Mail, October 5, 2010. <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/rise-of-the-far-right-in-japan/article1370255/>

460 "【街頭宣伝】10.2 中国の尖閣諸島侵略糾弾！全国国民統一行動[桜 H22/10/5]". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2010 年 10 月 5 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ppJdqGfODE>



【10.16尖閣デモ】中国大使館包囲！尖閣侵略糾弾！デモ行進[桜H22/10/18]

Figure 17 : Channel Sakura shows the news media that came to film their 10/16 demonstration

Under the Ganbare Nippon banner, an even larger demonstration was held on October 16 in Tokyo. It was slightly larger than the October 2 demonstration, drawing between 2,800 and 3,200 participants.⁴⁶¹ Their march included over 600 Japanese flags, creating a powerful image.⁴⁶² Mizushima declared that the demonstration had shown that the Japanese national flag is something that normal people can use. No longer was it not something reserved for the uyoku.⁴⁶³ Comments were once again made about a lack of domestic media coverage, even though Mizushima claimed to have faxed announcements

461 2010.10.16 【尖閣衝突事件】東京の中国大使館前で2800人デモ、沖縄でも集会 産経新聞

462 "【10.16 尖閣デモ】中国大使館包囲！尖閣侵略糾弾！リレートーク[桜 H22/10/18]". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2010年10月18日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dFA0cxbCeFE>

463 "【10.16 尖閣デモ】中国大使館包囲！尖閣侵略糾弾！デモ行進[桜 H22/10/18]". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2010年10月18日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RyJj-p-lchohttps>

of the demonstration to every major newspaper and TV channel's news and society department.⁴⁶⁴ As with the previous demonstration, international media was on hand to cover the event.⁴⁶⁵

More regional protests followed. Several days later, a demonstration organized by the Ganbare Nippon branch office in Kagawa drew about 300 people.⁴⁶⁶ Then, on October 31, the Nagoya branch held a demonstration with about 640 participants.⁴⁶⁷

Meanwhile, anti-Japanese protests were held in China. The Chinese media covered Ganbare Nippon demonstrations and images of the anti-Chinese protest signs were used to incite anger among Chinese nationalists.⁴⁶⁸ The Chinese Foreign Ministry responded to the protests with a statement at an October 17 press briefing:

Q: On the afternoon of Oct. 16, hundreds of Japanese right-wing activists staged a demonstration in front of the Chinese Embassy in Japan. How do you comment?

A: The Chinese Government has expressed grave concern to the Japanese side over this case.

464 "【永山英樹】10.16 尖閣デモに関するメディアの報道[桜 H22/10/21]". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2010年10月21日).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iUxj-md73bc>

465 "Japan Rallies against China over Disputed Islands," Reuters, October 16, 2010.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/10/16/us-japan-china-protests-idUSTRE69F0PH20101016>.

466 中国で再び反日デモ、香川県でも300人規模の反中デモ 2010/10/24 サーチナ

http://news.searchchina.ne.jp/disp.cgi?y=2010&d=1024&f=politics_1024_001.shtml

467 "漁船衝突事件で中国政府に抗議 名古屋でデモ". 中日新聞 (2010年11月1日).

468 Lisa Liang, "Beijing Allows Anti-Japanese Sentiment to Flare in China amid Massive Protests," The Christian Science Monitor, October 18, 2010. <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Asia-Pacific/2010/1018/Beijing-allows-anti-Japanese-sentiment-to-flare-in-China-amid-massive-protests>.

*We urge the Japanese side to earnestly fulfill the obligations prescribed in the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and take effective measures to ensure the safety of China's diplomatic missions, institutions and personnel in Japan.*⁴⁶⁹

Some Chinese internet users spread pictures of uyoku sound trucks that were taken years earlier, claiming that they were images of the September and October 2010 protests held in Tokyo.⁴⁷⁰

7.3 Channel Sakura & Nihon Seinensha

Nihon Seinensha would not play a major role in the 2010 protests. But Seinensha did take notice of Channel Sakura's activism, and sent them a present: video footage taken during Seinensha's past landings on the Senkaku Islands. Channel Sakura's response indicated a level of discomfort with the idea that they could be linked to Seinensha.

On an October 14th special program about the footage, Mizushima seemed visibly uncomfortable in mentioning the name of "Seinensha" - pronouncing it faster than any of the other words in his sentence. Nonetheless, he thanked them for providing the video.

He reiterated the fact that Channel Sakura and Ganbare Nippon are "kokumin undo" activist group that is working for the sake of the Japanese people. He said that "we" each have our "own way of thinking" (*sore zore no kangae*

469 "Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Ma Zhaoxu's Remarks," Chinese Embassy Website, October 17, 210. <http://ma.china-embassy.org/eng/fyrth/t762394.htm>.

470 Kai Pan, "Chinese Forwarding Photos Of Anti-China Protests In Japan," China/Divide, October 2, 2010. <http://chinadivide.com/2010/chinese-forwarding-photos-of-anti-china-protests-in-japan.html>.

kata) and "our" way of thinking was different from uyoku activism. By showing the world the video of Seinensha activists landing on the islands, Channel Sakura claimed to be displaying evidence that "we" are practicing sovereignty of the islands. Mizushima reminded viewers that "we" need to keep fighting to maintain that claim.

Aside from about 20 seconds of one man in camouflage fatigues putting up a Japanese flag, almost nothing about the video clip from Seinensha looked like it came from a far-right uyoku group with yakuza ties. In most of the footage shown by Channel Sakura, there were men wearing normal blue and white work clothing. In the background, Japan Coast Guard ships were shown at anchor, taking no action against the activists.

However, searches on YouTube revealed that other, longer copies of Seinensha's video were available (showing landings made in 2001, 2002, and 2003). In the other version, groups of men wearing military-style uniforms and white headbands were shown landing on the island. Rather than being passive, the Japan Coast Guard was blaring out warnings over loudspeakers informing the Seinensha activists that they were violating the law by landing on the island. Footage from 2004 showed Seinensha members verbally berating a silent line of shield-carrying Coast Guard personnel who blocked access to their fishing boat and prevented them from carrying out their planned landing. From the differences between the footage shown on Channel Sakura and the longer footage available on YouTube, it would appear that Channel Sakura only used

parts of the video that would fit the image of their preferred form of non-extremist activism. They did not want to celebrate images that looked like uyoku activism.

7.4 After the Video Leaked

Frustration with the Kan administration was further ignited by news that the government had video footage of the boat collision, but had been withholding it from lawmakers and the public. A select group of lawmakers were allowed to see an edited portion of the video in the last week of September, but it was decided that it would not be released to the public. Then, on November 4th, copies of the video appeared on YouTube.com. It had been leaked without the government's permission. A DPJ politician recognized the damage the leak would do to his party, stating that it was "totally different from presenting it to the public in an official manner, and it leads the people's further erosion of faith in Japan's government."⁴⁷¹ To make matters worse, the video seemed to very clearly show that the Chinese trawler had intentionally rammed the JCG ships. To people who thought that the Japanese government should have insisted on prosecuting the Chinese captain, it proved that Japan had been right after all, and that the government had shamefully failed to uphold the law.

Since mid-October, Channel Sakura had been promoting a rally to be held in Tokyo's Hibiya Park on November 6. Unlike the previous marches, which had been carried out under the banner of Ganbare Nippon, this march would include several Pro-Taiwan independence groups, as well as organizations that

⁴⁷¹ Kyung Lah and Jo Ling Kent, "Lawmaker: Leaked Video Shows Crash That Led to China-Japan Dispute," CNN, November 05, 2010. <http://edition.cnn.com/2010/WORLD/asiapcf/11/05/japan.china.island.dispute/>

advocated nationalism for ethnic minority groups within China. It was given a dramatic title: The Meeting to Establish Solidarity for Freedom and Human Rights in Asia (also translated as “the Freedom and Peace for Asia Rally and Demonstration”). A Japanese advertisement for the rally contained a message calling for action against “Chinese Imperialism:”

*The people of Asia who are threatened by Chinese Imperialism will join together to protect freedom and peace by holding the Meeting to Establish Solidarity for Freedom and Human Rights in Asia on November 6. We call on those with courage to join us!*⁴⁷²

Channel Sakura even produced an English language advertisement video, which contained the following description (typos and misspellings left as in the original):

Condemn China's Invasion to Senkaku Islands!
Condemn China's Militaristic Hegemony over Asia!
Recapture Abduction Victims!
Free Dr.Liu Xiaobo, The Nobel Peace Winner!
Solidarity of Asian Nations for Freedom and Human Rights!

Rally Date: November 6th,2010 from 1:00pm to 3:30pm

Place: Hibiya Open-Air Concert Hall (Tokyo)

472 "【更新版】11.6 自由と人権アジア連帯集会&デモ[桜 H22/10/27]". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2010 年 10 月 27 日).<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jO4q2eKSSU0>

Demonstration Parade: start at 3:45pm

Street Speech: 5:30pm to 7:00pm at Yurakucho Station Open Space

Guest Speakers for Rally

Toshio Tamogami(former Chief of staff, Japanese Air Force), Yuriko Koike(Chairperson of Executive Committee LDP), Hiroshi Yamada(former Suginami Mayor), Shingo Nishimura(former National Diet number), Masaaki Akaike(former National Diet number) Hideaki Kase, Kouichi Sugiyama, Shigeo Iizuka (Family number of Abduction victim), Huan Wenxiong (Taiwan), Ilham Mahamti(Uygur), Pema Gyalpo (Tibet), and other speakers from Mongolia, Manchuria, Indonesia, North Korea, Bangladesh, and etc.

Hosted by:

- Ganbare Nippon! National Action Committee*
- Somo Zenkoku Chihogijinnokai(National Grass-Root Local Assembly Members)*
- Friends of Lee Tong-Hui Association in Japan*
- Taiwan Research Forum*

It was an impressive array of speakers, all of whom had appeared on Channel Sakura in the past.

Over 4,000 people attended, making it the largest conservative demonstration in postwar Japan.⁴⁷³ Keeping with the international image of the demonstration, English language announcements about their views were played over a loudspeaker as participants marched through the streets.⁴⁷⁴ A recap video of the protest uploaded by Channel Sakura showed long lines of young people, including young mothers pushing baby carriages and people walking Hinomaru-wearing dogs, marching along the street. Onlookers were shown applauding them as they passed. Afterwards, Mizushima happily shared that Iran's PressTV, which had referred to Ganbare Nippon as a "right-wing" group in an earlier report, had chosen to use the word "conservative" for its report on the rally. NHK had even filed a report, referring to them as a "citizen's group" (*shimin dantai*). To Mizushima, the "voice of the people" (*kokumin no koe*) had moved the media into recognizing their movement.⁴⁷⁵

APEC held a meeting in Yokohama in November of 2010, and a Ganbare Nippon demonstration was held to coincide with it. On November 15, approximately 3,500 people joined. Footage showed that some of the same baby carriage mothers and dog walkers who had participated in the Tokyo demonstration also participated in the Yokohama demonstration.⁴⁷⁶ A week later,

473 AFP. "Anti-China Rally Held in Japan after Video Leak of Collision," Sino Daily, November 6, 2010. <http://www.sinodaily.com/afp/101106161959.n8reemoh.html>.

474 "【頑張れ日本】 11.6 自由と人権アジア連帯集会ーデモ行進【桜 H22/11/9】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2010 年 11 月 9 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U1YBM2AFY2s>

475 "【草莽崛起】 11.6 自由と人権アジア連帯集会&デモ ダイジェスト【桜 H22/11/8】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2010 年 11 月 8 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aqEYXWZlvaA>

476 "【11.13 横浜】 中国のアジア侵略・人権弾圧を阻止する抗議デモ【桜 H22/11/15】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2010 年 11 月 15 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=50VF-38SZIo>

a demonstration held by Ganbare Nippon's Osaka chapter drew about 3,300 people.⁴⁷⁷

Three more demonstrations were held in December. A Tokyo demonstration on the 1st had a total of about 1,700 participants. On the 5th, about one thousand people attended a march in Kobe.⁴⁷⁸ And finally, on December 18, a 4,000-person demonstration took place in the Shibuya area of Tokyo.

Other groups organized their own anti-China protests during this period. Compared to Channel Sakura and Ganbare Nippon's events, they were quite small. For example, on October 16, a group associated with Nippon Kaigi held an event in Okinawa, drawing about 700 people.⁴⁷⁹ The xenophobic group Zaitokukai organized protests on October 17 and November 13, drawing about 200 and 100 people respectively. A group calling itself the Kansai Action Committee to Protect the Senkaku Islands drew about 1,000 people to a demonstration in Osaka on October 22.⁴⁸⁰

The September 2010 crisis had created an chance for action. The perception among some people that the Japanese government had mishandled the issue and had made itself look weak created an opportunity for activists. Channel Sakura had established Ganbare Nippon earlier in 2010, with the well-

477 "【11.20 大阪】中国糾弾！全国国民統一行動・デモ行進【桜 H22/11/23】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2010 年 11 月 23 日).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=onw1fmJcfdc>

478 "【頑張れ日本】12.5「中国による尖閣諸島侵略阻止！」デモ in 神戸【桜 H22/12/9】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2010 年 12 月 9 日).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ERBEqaDsl9s>

479 "[尖閣事件]沖縄現地レポート・尖閣海域を守る沖縄県民の集い". 日本会議(2010年10月18日).
<http://www.nipponkaigi.org/activity/archives/1519>

480 【社会】民間団体「尖閣諸島を守ろう関西実行委員会」が中国政府に抗議するデモ行進 - 大阪 産経ニュース 2010/10/22
<http://sankei.jp.msn.com/politics/policy/101022/plc1010222252027-n1.htm>

known Tamogami Toshio as a leader. They made use of Ganbare Nippon chapters across the country to organized several sizable protests outside of the Tokyo region. In cooperation with allied groups such as the Friends of Lee Teng-Hui Association in Japan, Ganbare Nippon was able to organize the largest conservative demonstrations in the postwar era. They gained media attention inside and outside of Japan.

7.5 Crowdfunding for a Boat

Ishigaki city councilmen Nakama Hitoshi and Minosoko Yoichi landed on Minami Kojima Island on December 12, reportedly to carry out a survey of the island.⁴⁸¹ They were briefly questioned by the Japan Coast Guard, but not detained. They then flew to Tokyo, where they participated in a December 18 Ganbare Nippon Demonstration.⁴⁸² A December 21 Channel Sakura news program was devoted to an interview with them,⁴⁸³ and the video they had filmed during their landing was shown on Channel Sakura on January 6, 2011. After showing the video, Mizushima announced that Channel Sakura was planning to raise money for a Senkaku “defense boat.” It would be used to help assert

481 "China Protests Japanese Visit to Disputed Islands," Reuters, December 10, 2010.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/12/11/us-china-japan-islands-idUSTRE6BA0L320101211>.

482 "3/3 【頑張れ日本！】 12.18 渋谷 国民大行動・街頭宣伝活動【桜 H22/12/20】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2010 年 12 月 20 日).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LF24fBr2bJg>

483 "【仲間均&箕底用一】 石垣市議尖閣上陸！【桜 H22/12/21】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2010 年 12 月 21 日).

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qGx5mfn_xGA

Japan's sovereignty in June of 2011, the same month that Chinese nationalist groups were reportedly planning their own trip to the islands.⁴⁸⁴

It was hoped that several thousand viewers would donate money, allowing for the purchase of a used fishing boat. They adopted a crowdfunding strategy, using YouTube videos and e-mailing lists to call on people to donate for the defense of Japan's threatened territory.⁴⁸⁵ Funds were raised quickly – going from 8,837,040 yen from 280 donors on February 3,⁴⁸⁶ to 12,153,072 yen from 442 donors on February 9,⁴⁸⁷ to 15,180,823 yen from 594 donors on February 24.⁴⁸⁸ If one were to do the math, it came out to roughly 25,000 yen per donor, a very high amount, which suggests that there may have been a few donors that gave very big donations.⁴⁸⁹ The boat was then purchased for an undisclosed sum. Mizushima had predicted in January that it would probably cost between ten and twenty million yen.

Demonstrations continued in Tokyo and other cities. Over 500 people joined a Ganbare Nippon demonstration in front of the National Diet building on January 12. Mizushima had announced the demonstration the day before through the internet, so it was especially remarkable that so many people came

484 "【尖閣上陸】南小島上陸映像と秘密保全法【桜 H23/1/6】".日本文化チャンネル桜(2011 年 1 月 6 日).<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kSK4F84dKcc>

485 For more information on the concept of Crowdfunding, consult: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crowdfunding>

486 "【ご報告】「尖閣防衛船」購入ご支援の状況【桜 H23/2/3】".日本文化チャンネル桜(2011 年 2 月 3 日).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HtliHIF1dME>

487 "【ご報告】「尖閣防衛船」購入ご支援の状況【桜 H23/2/10】".日本文化チャンネル桜(2011 年 2 月 10 日).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aEoAdD7slb0>

488 "【頑張れ日本】「尖閣防衛船」購入支援状況について【桜 H23/2/24】".日本文化チャンネル桜(2011 年 2 月 24 日).
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_zluTeV5wCM

489 "【ご報告】NHK 名誉毀損裁判判決と尖閣防衛船購入【桜 H23/4/28】".日本文化チャンネル桜(2011 年 4 月 28 日).
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LdohTQeFR_0

and joined him.⁴⁹⁰ Mizushima traveled to Nagoya on February 27 to lead a protest in front of the Chinese consulate. About 400 people participated.⁴⁹¹

Protest activities were planned for March of 2011, but the Tohoku Earthquake and Tsunami caused political activism to be temporarily put on hold. Like many organizations in Japan, Channel Sakura raised money and collected supplies to assist with disaster relief. They also created programs about the state of the people in temporary housing.⁴⁹²

At the end of May 2011, Mizushima revealed photos of the fishing boat they had purchased, which would be called the Daiichi Sakura Maru (Sakura Maru #1).⁴⁹³ Mizushima delivered an on-the-scene report from Naha on the status of the boat on June 8. He showed the viewers the interior of the boat that they had helped Channel Sakura purchase, telling them that “we” (Mizushima and the viewers) would soon be going to Ishigaki island, and then onward to the Senkakus. The mission would be carried to help defend the islands for the sake of the fishermen of Ishigaki.⁴⁹⁴ The ship passed official safety inspections and was taken to Ishigaki Island. Landing on the Senkaku islands was not discussed. Instead, Mizushima stated that the plan would be to conduct fishing around the

490 "【頑張れ日本】1.12 民主党言論封殺抗議！緊急国民行動【桜 H23/1/13】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2011 年 1 月 13 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hHBEyhxcm8>

491 "【頑張れ日本】2.27 尖閣・領事館、中国糾弾名古屋デモ【桜 H23/3/3】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2011 年 3 月 3 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AReuvypuHDY>

492 "【被災者の声】東日本大震災・現地取材レポート【桜 H23/4/28】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2011 年 4 月 28 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pjep26lzyjg>

493 "【頑張れ日本】尖閣防衛・第一桜丸と復興ポスター【桜 H23/5/19】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2011 年 5 月 19 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8fqDggl89EI>

494 "【尖閣防衛】「第一桜丸」船舶検査完了報告【桜 H23/6/8】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2011 年 6 月 8 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x8YodXBSvFg>

islands and carry out news reporting. He wanted to perform activism that would abide by the law and support the fishermen of Ishigaki.⁴⁹⁵



Figure 18: Mizushima Satoru & the Daiichi Sakura Maru's Special Flag

In celebration of the Daiichi Sakura Maru's upcoming voyage to the islands, a Channel Sakura viewer from Chiba prefecture donated a custom-made fishing flag (*tairyo bata*). Mizushima shared his excitement about the flag with viewers by unwrapping and opening its box it in front of the camera.⁴⁹⁶ It was remarkably similar to unboxing videos that are popular on other YouTube channels, in which viewers and the creator share in the experience of opening the box to a new product.

495 "【お知らせ】第一桜丸現況・石巻市ボランティア募集・デモ妨害[桜 H23/6/9]". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2011 年 6 月 9 日).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aUZcui2E5TA>

496 "【尖閣防衛】草莽の志と共に、第一桜丸の大漁旗[桜 H23/6/30]". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2011 年 6 月 30 日).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oqmKUQFjzSc>

On the first of July, Mizushima made a video discussing the purpose of the fishing expedition. Standing in front of the colorful fishing flag, he expressed his thanks to the viewer who donated the flag and the people who donated money. He talked about the beautiful Mt. Fuji and Sakura on the flag, both traditional symbols of the Japanese nation. He told viewers that in the postwar period, the concept of having an obligation to defend your country didn't exist in Japan. But "we," the people of Ganbare Nippon, were different. Ganbare Nippon was carrying out its activism for the future, for "our" ancestors who made this 2,000 year old country. Certain unnamed government officials had apparently warned Ganbare Nippon that they shouldn't bring a cameraman on their fishing trip. Mizushima saw this as an action that would block the people's "right to know" (*kokumin no shiru kenri*) and the "freedom of the press" (*hodo no jiyu*). The most important way to defend Japan would be to protect the livelihood of the fishermen (*nani yorimo gyoshi-san no seikatsu wo mamoru koto*).⁴⁹⁷ Thus, the boat's primary mission was to provide such a protection for fishermen. Through this narrative, the activists and their supporters were depicted as collectively defending the basic rights of Japan and its people.

The fishing expedition was carried out on July 3. In a video report that aired on July 7, it was deemed a great success. By carrying out the everyday activity of fishing in the area of the islands, they stated that they were reaffirming and defending the rights of Ishigaki's fishermen. They delivered a clear message to viewers: the Japanese government had failed to properly protect the

497 "【直言極言】領土と歴史の防衛は国民の義務である【桜 H23/7/1】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2011 年 7 月 1 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WjDQW-1d0U4>

fishermen's livelihood, so it was up to their grassroots movement to defend the country and its people. Thanks to everyone who watched Channel Sakura and made donations, they were able to carry out this mission.⁴⁹⁸ According to Channel Sakura, the fact that the Chinese government had made an official protest about their fishing boat was proof that their fishing activities were exercising Japanese sovereignty over the islands.⁴⁹⁹ As an added bonus, the pro-China activist boat that Mizushima had warned viewers about had been blocked by the Japanese Coast Guard on July 1.⁵⁰⁰

A second fishing expedition was planned for October or November. Introducing the second plan, Mizushima emphasized that Ganbare Nippon had kept their promise and did not try to deviate from the plan and land on the islands. They displayed photos of the island, commenting on how beautiful they looked.⁵⁰¹ From Mizushima's comments on not making a surprise landing on the islands, one can observe that he is trying to guide Channel Sakura and Ganbare Nippon's activism within the limits of the existing rules of the field. Their setting a plan, submitting it to authorities, and then following it without major deviation is a demonstration of his organization's willingness to play by those rules, and thus be considered a legitimate actor within the field. Channel Sakura did not want to

498 "【草莽崛起】7.3 尖閣防衛、集団漁業活動報告 その2 [桜 H23/7/7]". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2011年7月7日).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0cygytMCrBs>

499 Li Xiaokun, "China, Japan Seek Better Ties amid Sea Disputes," China Daily, July 5, 2011.

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2011-07/05/content_12832991.htm.

500 "Taiwan Protests to Japan after Activist Boat 'barred'," Tengri News / AFP, July 1, 2011.

<http://en.tengrinews.kz/unrest/Taiwan-protests-to-Japan-after-activist-boat-barred-2888/>

501 "【尖閣防衛】実効支配強化！集団漁業活動第2弾へ [桜 H23/9/23]". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2011年9月23日).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZFz23pUHIXY>

be seen as an extremist organization, and breaking the rules at that time could result in such a designation.

The second fishing expedition took place without any major problems. Fish caught on the expeditions were brought to Tokyo and served to Diet lawmakers at a special luncheon in the Diet building on November 15.⁵⁰² The flag of the Daiichi Sakura Maru, well-worn from the winds of two fishing trips, was displayed on the wall of the room. Sushi chefs were brought in to prepare sashimi for the lawmakers. Attendees included Hiranuma Takeo (LDP), Yamatani Eriko (LDP), Nakayama Kyoko (LDP), Morita Takashi (LDP), Shimajiri Aiko (LDP), Shindo Takashi (LDP), Nagao Takashi (LDP), Eto Seiichi (LDP), Gishi Nobuo (LDP - brother of Abe Shinzo), Komiyama Yoko (DPJ), Mukoyama Koichi (DPJ), and Akazawa Ryosei (LDP).

Through their support of a crowdfunding campaign that allowed the fishing missions to become a reality, Channel Sakura's viewers had "opened the road" to the Senkakus.⁵⁰³ Between 2011 and 2013, they would carry out 18 fishing expeditions to the islands.⁵⁰⁴ Each mission was an affirmation of their belief that they were patriots who were protecting their country. The missions were recorded in detail and brought home to be viewed via the internet, bringing the virtual experience of visiting the Senkakus to thousands of supporters. Channel Sakura also allowed some viewers to physically participate in the fishing

502 "【守るぞ尖閣】11.15 尖閣の魚を食す会【桜 H23/11/16】".日本文化チャンネル桜(2011 年 11 月 16 日).

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sqw6Eor_CeY

503 "【直言極言】尖閣問題から見える日本の主権【桜 H23/7/22】".日本文化チャンネル桜(2011 年 7 月 22 日).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DWgIgYpL9Ec>

504 "【守るぞ尖閣】第 18 回 尖閣諸島集団漁業活動レポート【桜 H25/11/28】".日本文化チャンネル桜(2013 年 11 月 28 日).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-FJgbgsdKzM>

missions by selling tour packages that included airfare to Okinawa, a hotel, a ride along on the fishing boat to one of the Senkaku Islands.

7.6 Buying the Senkaku Islands

The field entered a new phase in April 2012, when Ishihara Shintaro announced his intention to use his position as governor of Tokyo to buy the three largest Senkaku Islands from their private owners. Ishihara had participated in the construction of a lighthouse on the islands in 1978, and according to the owners of the islands, he had made several offers over the years to purchase the land. However, because he had made the offers as a private individual, they were unwilling to sell it. Now that the offer was being made on behalf of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, the owners finally seemed willing to sell.⁵⁰⁵

Rather than use normal taxpayers' money to make the purchase, Ishihara announced a fundraising campaign. Individuals who supported the plan were asked to send in contributions. Channel Sakura became an enthusiastic cheerleader for the campaign, producing videos calling on viewers to send money to Ishihara's Senkaku fund.⁵⁰⁶

Ishihara expressed a desire to take actions that would further strengthen Japan's claim to the islands, such as building port facilities there.⁵⁰⁷

⁵⁰⁵ "Owner OK with Metro Bid to Buy Disputed Senkaku Islands," Japan Times, May 18, 2012.
http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2012/05/18/national/owner-ok-with-metro-bid-to-buy-disputed-senkaku-islands/-_U9ryX_mSzB0.

⁵⁰⁶ "【守るぞ尖閣】東京都尖閣諸島寄附金口座ご案内【桜 H24/4/30】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2012 年 4 月 30 日).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p1kq8ez7lq8>

⁵⁰⁷ Jun Hongo, "Tokyo's Intentions for Senkaku Islets," Japan Times, April 19, 2012, section goes here,
<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2012/04/19/national/tokyos-intentions-for-senkaku-islets/>.

The national government, which had been paying rental fees for the islands since 2002, had until the beginning of the 2013 fiscal year to take action and prevent the sale. Before the contract ran out, the Noda administration decided it would try to outbid Ishihara and nationalize the islands. The national government was aiming to end the flare-up of the dispute by taking ownership of the Senkakus and preventing Ishihara from building port facilities or using the islands for other purposes that could worsen relations with China. Foreign Minister Genba Koichiro stated that the purchase would ensure the “peaceful and stable maintenance and management” of the islands.⁵⁰⁸

The national government reportedly estimated the value of the three islands at around 500 million yen. However, Ishihara’s fundraising campaign proved highly successful and the Tokyo metropolitan government collected more than 1.4 billion yen in contributions from the public for its bid. The central government was forced to counter with an offer of about 2 billion yen. The owners accepted the national government’s offer, and Ishihara donated the 1.4 billion yen to the national government.⁵⁰⁹

Channel Sakura supported Ishihara’s plan and used its programs to encourage viewers to make donations to the Tokyo fund.⁵¹⁰ Viewers were told that the “anti-Japanese” mainstream media in Japan was carrying out a smear campaign to make Ishihara’s plan appear like a waste of government resources

508 <http://ajw.asahi.com/article/views/editorial/AJ201209060033>

509 "Noda Government to Buy Senkaku Islands for 2 Billion Yen," AJW by The Asahi Shimbun, September 5, 2012. http://ajw.asahi.com/article/special/isles_dispute/AJ201209050013.

510 "【守るぞ尖閣】東京都尖閣諸島寄附金口座ご案内【桜 H24/4/30】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2012 年 4 月 30 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p1kq8ez7lq8>

and an unfair provocation. Ishihara had to make his announcement in America, it was claimed, because he needed the Western media to actually report what he had said. The Japanese media could not be trusted to report it.⁵¹¹ This narrative reinforced the notion that Channel Sakura was the only TV channel in Japan that was trustworthy and willing to tell the people about important issues. This meant that its viewers were members of a special group who had access to the truth and thus a responsibility to help spread the word to people who were being exposed to untruthful news reports from the mainstream media.

7.7 Landing on Uotsuri Island

There were ambitious plans for that summer. Channel Sakura and Ganbare Nippon would turn their August 2012 fishing expedition into a large scale ceremony to pray for the Japanese who had died on and near the Senkaku islands in 1945. An application was made asking for government permission to land on the islands, but the application was rejected. In a video reporting about the rejection, Mizushima mentioned news articles about Hong Kong activists who planned a landing on the islands. He incorrectly predicted that one foreign ship could easily be stopped by the Japan Coast Guard.⁵¹²

On August 15, the anniversary of Japan's defeat in World War II, the fishing boat carrying activists from Hong Kong and Taiwan successfully evaded Japan Coast Guard patrols and reached the islands. Seven activists landed on the island and raised their flags as a means of "claiming our sovereign rights to

511 "【ニュースの読み方】東京都尖閣募金の意味【桜 H24/5/9】".日本文化チャンネル桜(2012 年 5 月 9 日).

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7YctvA4D_Eo

512 "【尖閣】政府は上陸申請を却下、保釣連盟は・・・【桜 H24/8/15】".日本文化チャンネル桜(2012 年 8 月 15 日).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ljbA1OnVHrY>

the world." The activists, who were members of the same organization that had landed in 1996, were briefly detained by Japanese authorities and then deported. They were not charged with any crime.⁵¹³

Mizushima was visiting the Yasukuni Shrine on August 15, together with a group of Ganbare Nippon members. When he delivered a short speech to a crowd of supporters, he expressed his intent to travel to the islands, but did not mention a plan to make a landing.⁵¹⁴ The August 16 Channel Sakura news program reporting on the pro-China activists' landing portrayed it as a sneaky act that had taken place on a day when people across Japan had been quietly gather to pray to the spirits of their ancestors and the heroic war dead (*nihonjuu ga sosen to eirei no tame ni shizukana jikan wo sugoshiteita 15 nichi*). He denounced the DPJ government for quickly releasing the activists without investigating their backgrounds and checking if they were Chinese soldiers or spies.⁵¹⁵

For Channel Sakura and Ganbare Nippon, the landing marked a major change in the conditions of the field. Pro-China activists had just performed an act that had increased their stature and could be seen as an assertion of China's sovereignty over the islands, embarrassing Japan. Moreover, the Japanese government had shown an unwillingness to file any trespassing charges against the activists. Mizushima and his allies saw an opportunity to take action and

513 Chester Yung, "Hong Kong Activists Claim Success After Senkaku Landing," China Real Time / Wall Street Journal, August 15, 2012. <http://blogs.wsj.com/chinarealtime/2012/08/15/hong-kong-activists-claim-success-after-senkaku-landing/>

514 "【HD】 H24.8.15 頑張れ日本 靖国神社内での演説 水島社長が尖閣に行きます".turbo911kai(2012 年 8 月 15 日).<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NAFHESDI4MM>

515 "【尖閣不法上陸】 活動家逮捕、メディアは強制送還へ世論誘導【桜 H24/8/16】".日本文化チャンネル桜(2012 年 8 月 16 日).<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bvtYgdb9Gk8>

attempt their own landing on the islands, and perceived that the rules of the field had changed in favor of such an action. It was unlikely that the Japanese government would try to arrest and charge them with trespassing just days after it had let foreign activists get away with the same act.

Around 150 people gathered at Yonaguni and Ishigaki Islands on August 18 and boarded 21 fishing boats.⁵¹⁶ They included Ganbare Nippon and allied activists, conservative politicians, journalists from domestic and international media outlets, Shinto priests, and fishermen whose boats had been chartered for the journey. The politicians included Diet members from the Lawmakers Federation to Protect Japanese Territory (*Nihon no Ryodo wo Mamoru Tame Kodo Suru Giin Renmei*). Tamogami Toshio was also present. The flotilla arrived near Uotsuri Island in the early morning of the nineteenth and a Shinto ceremony was held on one of the ships, offering prayers to the people who had died there in 1945.

Shortly after the ceremony, Mizushima declared that he was going to swim ashore. With the help of Channel Sakura staff, he tied a rope around himself and jumped into the sea. After some minor difficulty with rough waves, he made it ashore.⁵¹⁷ The rope was then used to guide another nine people ashore: four from Ganbare Nippon/Channel Sakura, and five regional lawmakers. The Ganbare Nippon members who joined Mizushima were: Asano Kumi (Channel Sakura/Ganbare Nippon), Ito Sukeyasu (Ganbare Nippon / retired MSDF), and a

516 "Japan, China Islands Disputes Deepen with Landings, Protests," AJW by The Asahi Shimbun, August 19, 2012. http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201208190016.

517"1/3 【守るぞ尖閣】 魚釣島上陸レポート・低画質分割版[桜 H24/8/23]".日本文化チャンネル桜(2012年8月23日). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XSbWacm_mAg

Channel Sakura cameraman. The lawmakers were: Kojima Yoshiro (assemblyman from Ibaraki), Tanaka Yutaro (Tokyo Suginami assemblyman), Kosaka Eiji (Tokyo Arakawa assemblyman), Wada Yuichiro (Hyogo prefectural lawmaker), and Suzuki Akihiro⁵¹⁸ (Tokyo metropolitan assemblyman). They spent two hours on the island. Some of it was spent offering formal prayers to the people who had died on the island. The Channel Sakura representatives explored with their camera, documenting the existence of a small stream and taking note of the environmental degradation of the island. Channel Sakura's cameraman filmed plastic bottles and other garbage that had been swept ashore. The plastic bottles had Chinese writing on them.⁵¹⁹ Japan Coast Guard ships were visible offshore, but the JCG did not take any action until the activists had returned to their own boats.⁵²⁰ Rubber speedboats approached and a team of JCG personnel briefly questioned them about the landing. No one was detained or arrested.

518 Suzuki gained international attention a few years later, after he apologized for making sexist remarks during a Tokyo assembly session: Will Ripley, "Tokyo Assembly Member Apologizes for Sexist Heckling of Female Colleague," CNN, June 24, 2014. <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/06/23/world/asia/japan-sexism-heckling/>

519 "【守るぞ尖閣】魚釣島上陸レポート【桜 H24/8/23】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2012 年 8 月 23 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fe1GnttsGdY>

520 "3/3 【守るぞ尖閣】魚釣島上陸レポート・低画質分割版【桜 H24/8/23】". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2012 年 8 月 23 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ETyxLkYVqE0>



Figure 19 : Praying on Uotsuri Island

Justifying his actions at press conference on August 30,⁵²¹ Mizushima claimed that the original and main intent to the trip to the islands was to carry out prayers for the spirits of the dead. Although their request to land had been rejected several days earlier, he claimed afterwards that he had left port intending to stay on the boats, carry out the prayers, conduct some fishing, and return without landing. His decision to jump into the water and swim ashore was a spontaneous action.

He described the landing by the Hong Kong activists as a Chinese military action. The landing party had included reporters from Phoenix TV, a station owned by people with ties to the Chinese communist party, thus making the reporters “paramilitary” (*minpei*) agents of the Chinese government and military.

521 "【自由報道協会】 8.28 洋上慰霊祭と尖閣上陸に関する記者会見[桜 H24/8/30]". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2012 年 8 月 30 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cWC7ZKh2W68>

He also portrayed himself as an environmentalist. The footage filmed by Channel Sakura represented a record of the environmental degradation on the island. The lack of government management of the island had apparently led to a situation in which local flora and fauna were threatened. Mizushima noted that the video would be uploaded to YouTube and NicoNico Douga so that the public could view it.⁵²² This was in contrast to the government, which had not distributed information in such a free and open manner.

Speaking to Channel Sakura viewers in an editorial video on August 23, Mizushima explained why they had broken with their procedure of only carrying out acts with prior government permission. He compared the Senkaku Islands to the yard of a neighbor's house. One usually won't enter the neighbor's property without permission. But what if you saw a crime happening in your neighbor's yard, and your neighbor was deliberately doing nothing to stop it? Surely, Mizushima argued, such an emergency would call for entry into the neighbor's yard without permission. In this story, the neighbor represented the "spineless" Japanese government, which was not doing enough to punish the Chinese who had rammed ships and landed on the islands. Channel Sakura, as a good neighbor, was standing up for the peace of the neighborhood.⁵²³ From this description, Mizushima's decision to swim ashore almost sounded like it was a premeditated act, rather than a spur of the moment decision.

522 "【直言極言】頑張れ日本！全国行動委員会[桜 H22/2/12]". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2010 年 2 月 12 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0wG1dgqBIL0>

523 "【直言極言】問題の本質、魚釣島への上陸を果たして[桜 H24/8/24]". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2012 年 8 月 24 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HqhgG8pmh0A>

YouTube comments from viewers expressed praise and joy at Mizushima's landing on the island. For example, user aikokudanjidesu wrote, "Thinking of the importance of August 15th, one couldn't simply be quiet and do nothing!" User edo945 stated his/her joy at the possibility of seeing video footage filmed by Mizushima and the landing party. Messages of gratitude were expressed by users 12redoak and mangopuddingful. Meanwhile, user takaberry3 added a simple, "I resolutely support Mizushima!" [*danko shiji shimasu*].⁵²⁴

Whether it had been planned in advance, or was a decision made on that day, the landing on the Uotsuri Island had shown that the Japanese government was unwilling to take strict measures at that time. Channel Sakura and Ganbare Nippon abruptly broke with their previous policy of strictly observing government-mandated rules in its boat activism. They took action during a window of opportunity in which the Japanese authorities would be unwilling to arrest them. A skilled social actors, they used their social connections, monetary resources, and organizational skills to gather a large flotilla of ships and bring along politicians and the international media. A landing could be carried out without punishment, and could be done so right in front of news cameras and reporters. Together with their own cameras and the ability to distribute video of their voyage to thousands of people via the internet, they achieved a level of visibility that went far beyond the recognition that Nihon Seishensha achieved from the 1970's to the 1990's.

524 "【直言極言】問題の本質、魚釣島への上陸を果たして[桜 H24/8/24]". 日本文化チャンネル桜(2012年8月24日).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HqHgG8pmh0A>

It was a limited window of opportunity, however. On subsequent fishing expeditions they did not attempt to make landings. This was likely because the Japanese government began to take a stricter stance towards their fishing boats, fearing the impact of another landing.

7.8 China's Reaction

China responded to the events of 2012 in the form of street protests and increasingly aggressive patrol boat activities near the islands.

After the Chinese activities were deported, protests erupted in cities across China, including a protest of over 5,000 people in Shenzhen.⁵²⁵ The protests coincided with Channel Sakura and Ganbare Nippon's landing. Japanese cars and Japanese restaurants were vandalized by mobs enraged by Japanese activists' visit to the islands.⁵²⁶

The Japanese government's nationalization of the Senkaku Islands in September was treated as an escalation by the Chinese government.⁵²⁷ A second wave of protests took place across China, with more rioting and destruction of Japanese cars and businesses.⁵²⁸ Many Japanese companies

⁵²⁵ "Chinese Stage Anti-Japan Rallies over Senkakus," Japan Times / Kyodo, August 20, 2012.

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2012/08/20/news/chinese-stage-anti-japan-rallies-over-senkakus/> - U-WTKfmSzB0

⁵²⁶ Tania Branigan, "China Protests over Japanese Activists' Visit to Disputed Island," The Guardian, August 20, 2012.

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/aug/19/china-protest-japan-senkaku-diaoyo-island>.

⁵²⁷ Jane Perlez, "China Accuses Japan of Stealing After Purchase of Group of Disputed Islands," The New York Times, September 11, 2012. http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/12/world/asia/china-accuses-japan-of-stealing-disputed-islands.html?_r=0.

⁵²⁸ Ben Blanchard and Antoni Slodkowski, "Anti-Japan Protests Reignite across China on Occupation Anniversary," Reuters, September 18, 2012. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/09/18/us-china-japan-idUSBRE88F00H20120918>.

were forced to halt production at their factories in China after several cases of sabotage.⁵²⁹

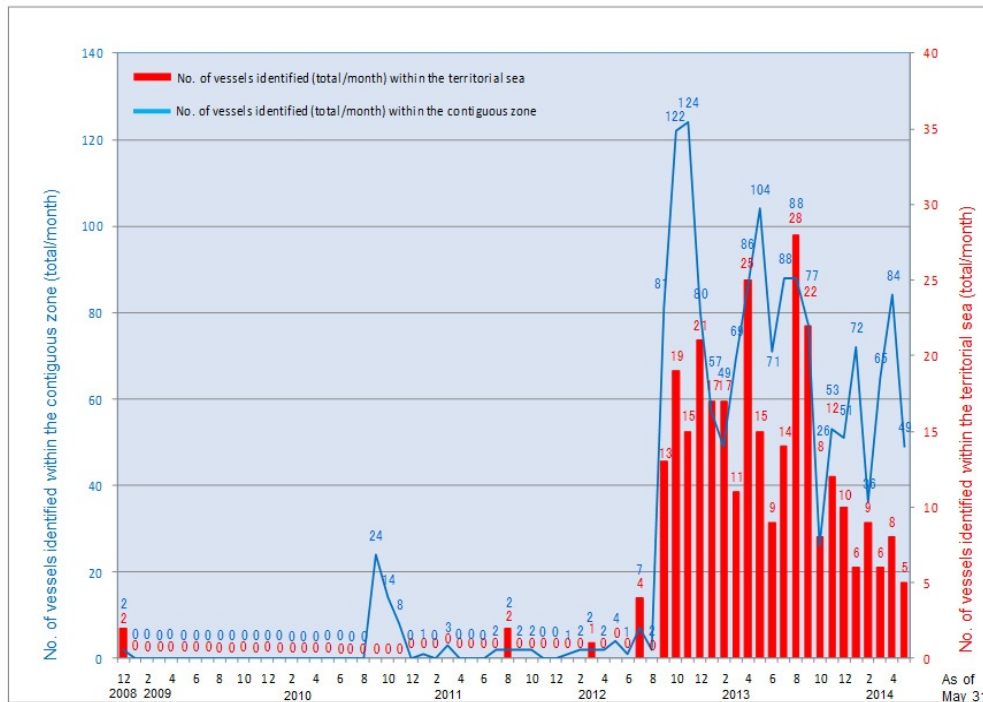


Figure 20: The number of Chinese government and other vessels that entered Japan's contiguous zone or intruded into territorial sea surrounding the Senkaku Islands (Source: Japan Coast Guard)

China also deployed patrol ships to the area. As the figure above shows, there has been a dramatic increase in Chinese patrols near the Senkakus since September 2012. This has led to numerous tense face-offs between Japan Coast Guard ships and Chinese patrol vessels.⁵³⁰

⁵²⁹ Kazunori Takada and Chris Buckley, "Japan Brandname Firms Shut China Plants after Protest Violence," Reuters, September 17, 2012. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/09/17/us-china-japan-idUSBRE88F00H20120917>.

⁵³⁰ AP. "China's Coastguard Confronts Japanese Ships near Disputed Islands," Theguardian.com, July 26, 2013. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jul/26/china-coastguard-confronts-japan-disputed-islands>.

7.9 Increased Restrictions on Boat Activism

The attitude of the Japan Coast Guard towards the Ganbare Nippon fishing trips became much stricter in 2013. The waters around the Senkakus were witnessing regular incursions by Chinese patrol ships, creating a very fragile situation. Although the December 2012 elections meant that conservative Abe Shinzo was the leader of a new LDP government, it did not translate into support for conservative boat activism. The field had once again adjusted to a new balance, in which Japanese and Chinese patrol ships were confronting each other around the Senkakus every month, and fishing boats were not welcome.

Prior to their eleventh fishing expedition, which took place in January 2013, JCG officials told Channel Sakura that their fishing boats would not be allowed to come closer than one mile to the islands. This was an order from above, meant to prevent them from landing. They were also warned about the presence of three Chinese patrol vessels. The seas were quite rough that day and visibility was low, so despite the presence of Chinese ships within three miles of their location, Channel Sakura could not obtain footage of the incident.

On the next expedition, while leading their fishing boats towards the islands in April of 2013, JCG ships shadowed them and repeatedly issued warnings about the one mile restriction. Using a loudspeaker, Mizushima

declared that they were not breaking any laws. When a Chinese ship appeared, they headed back to Ishigaki Island.⁵³¹

Chinese patrol vessels were on the scene when Mizushima conducted fishing trips in May and June.⁵³² NHK news reports were worded in a way that claimed the Chinese patrol ships were entering the area because Japanese fishing boats were there. Mizushima criticized this style of reporting, arguing that it unfairly blamed Japanese people for the “aggression” committed by China.⁵³³ On their August fishing trip, the JCG aggressively placed its boats in the way of the Ganbare Nippon ships, trying to prevent them from entering waters within one mile of the islands.⁵³⁴

In July 2014, the rules in the field had changed yet again. When attempting to make its 20th fishing expedition, Channel Sakura ran into official interference. As in the past, they applied in advance for permission to carry out fishing activities in the waters around the islands. The application was rejected, and coast guard officials blocked them from boarding their ship.⁵³⁵ They decided not to disobey Coast Guard orders, and instead carried out weekly protests in Tokyo, calling on the Japanese government to reverse the decision.

531 "【現地レポ】尖閣・操業不能海域、「我が海」を誇示する中国海警局[桜 H25/4/25]".日本文化チャンネル桜(2013 年 4 月 25 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BmFVHtEa00E>

532 "【守るぞ尖閣】中国公船団と遭遇、切迫する尖閣領海の現状[桜 H25/5/28]".日本文化チャンネル桜(2013 年 5 月 28 日).<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GaWbd5nDAc4>

533 "2/2 【守るぞ尖閣】悠然たる中国公船、海保の敵は誰なのか？－南北小島編[桜 H25/7/4]".日本文化チャンネル桜(2013 年 7 月 4 日). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YR50_QPve-Q

534 "【職権とは】伊藤祐靖が見た尖閣の海 Part 6 ～ 命令と要請[桜 H25/8/20]".日本文化チャンネル桜(2013 年 8 月 20 日).<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CL6Evr27Ex4>

535 <http://mamoretaiwan.blog100.fc2.com/blog-entry-2407.html> <http://www.yaeyama-nippo.com/2014/07/21/%E9%A0%91%E5%BC%B5%E3%82%8C-%E5%87%BA%E6%B8%AF%E5%86%8D%E3%81%B3%E9%98%BB%E6%AD%A2-%E7%8B%99%E3%81%84%E3%81%86%E3%81%A1-%E3%81%A8%E5%8F%8D%E7%99%BA/>

7.10 Returning to the Senkakus



Figure 21: Fishing in August 2014

Permission to conduct another fishing mission was finally given on August 11, 2014. Mizushima received a phone call from Fisheries Agency informing him that a decision had been made to allow Ganbare Nippon to once again fish near the Senkaku Islands. The authorities apologized for the previous rejection, claiming that there had been a "misunderstanding" regarding the request. Ganbare Nippon conducted its twenty-first fishing expedition on August 12. Flanked by several JCG patrol vessels, they encountered three Chinese patrol ships. They filmed themselves fishing as Japanese and Chinese coast guard ships engaged in a tense stand-off. As they finished, they played the Japanese national anthem over loudspeakers to show the world that they were in Japanese territory. The presence of Chinese ships was depicted as a reason why "we"

must support the continued efforts of Ganbare Nippon to engage in fishing near the Senkakus.⁵³⁶

7.11 Closing Thoughts

In this chapter, I explored Channel Sakura and Ganbare Nippon's activism regarding the Senkaku Islands dispute. Through the conceptualization of a strategic action field, I demonstrated how the composition of the field changed over time, and that changes in the field helped determine the kind of tactics employed by activists. Following the 2010 boat collision crisis, the skilled social actors within Channel Sakura and Ganbare Nippon perceived and acted upon destabilizations of the field. Actors drew upon the resources that were available and employed tactics based upon their conception of the rules of the field. Channel Sakura and Ganbare Nippon tried to conduct lawful and peaceful acts of protest, employing the language of grassroots activism, freedom, and democracy to justify the need to engage in collective action to "protect" the islands and their nation from China. The situation and their actions were explained in a way that helped forge a shared meaning for participants. Throughout the campaigns, they reminded viewers that it was their grassroots support that made the protests, the fishing expeditions, and the landings possible. In doing so, they cast themselves and the viewers as patriots and heroes.

⁵³⁶ "【守るぞ尖閣】中国公船三隻と対峙！尖閣漁業活動レポート[桜 H26/8/14]". 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2014 年 8 月 14 日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n0EyFZzxHHQ>

Conclusion

Nihon Bunka Channel Sakura celebrated the 10th anniversary of its founding on August 15th, 2014. Mizushima Satoru, Matsuura Yoshiko, and other leaders of the organization declared that the past ten years had been very successful, and told viewers that it has been all thanks to their grassroots support. And to continue to defend Japan, they would need continuing support for their grassroots movement.⁵³⁷

It is a message that resonates with supporters of the assertive conservative right. It worked before, in each of the campaigns researched in this dissertation. Channel Sakura's message matches their world view, and they can take comfort in the fact that they are not alone. They have created a grassroots movement with the power to mobilize several thousand supporters. Their movement is one with long-term goals that call for long-term commitment and long-term support. These goals are broad enough to justify continued activism and survival as an organization.

The aim of this dissertation was to explain a new type of conservative activism that has emerged in Japanese society through an examination of Nihon Bunka Channel Sakura. It also aimed to describe how Channel Sakura has maintained solidarity and cohesion through the creation of shared meaning.

In Chapters 3 and 4, it was shown that this type of activism had ties to older strains of conservative activism in Japan. One key co-founder was Tagata

⁵³⁷ "【水島総】井尻先生の復帰と、10年の歩みを振り返って[桜 H26/8/18]". 日本文化チャンネル桜 (2014年8月18日). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ZTw7YQ5INs>

Takeo, a former kamikaze pilot who had been involved in far right groups during the early postwar years. Channel Sakura's other leaders, such as Mizushima Satoru and Matsuura Yoshiko, were products of the postwar generation and their youth had been influenced by an aversion to radical left-wing campus activism of the 1960's and 1970's, together with an admiration for Mishima Yukio's nationalist vision.

Their initial plan was to run a conventional satellite television station, relying on formal subscription payments to fund their organization. However, as noted in Chapter 3, this proved to be a failure. They took a very unconventional step to save Channel Sakura – they began to give away its content for free on the internet and sought voluntary donations instead of subscription payments. It ended up saving their organization. It also put them in contact with a broader and younger section of Japanese society.

Their organization was tied to Japan's assertive conservative right, a variety of groups that had emerged in the 1990's as a backlash against left-leaning views of history. Prominent groups within the assertive conservative right, such as Tsukurukai and Nippon Kaigi, have used Channel Sakura as a conduit to disseminate their message to a larger audience. The embrace of internet communications technology and its use for the creation of alternative media outlets demonstrate how Japanese conservative activism is evolving as times change and new opportunities present themselves.

Their target audience was a segment of Japanese society that feels dissatisfied with the malaise of post-1990's Japan. This included some people

from the baby boomer generation, but also a considerable number of younger people. A number of different factors caused them to gravitate towards the assertive conservative right. Some were economic or social, such as feelings of insecurity over the decline of lifetime employment, the growth of a new underclass, and the feeling of uncertainty over “lost” decades of economic stagnation. Other reasons were political, such as a feeling that Japan had lost its direction in the post-Cold War world order, and a perception of a country under siege by “anti-Japanese” countries such as China and Korea.

Channel Sakura’s activism meanders between the cyber world and the real world. In some cases, such as the fundraising campaign for a fishing boat to visit the Senkaku islands or the recruitment of people into the anti-NHK class-action lawsuit, the internet was extremely valuable. However, Channel Sakura and its allies also place value in offline protest marches and offline rallies. Solitary-building activities that take place on the streets are filmed and used online to create meaning for a wider audience of supporters.

Four factors stood out as contributing to Channel Sakura’s emergence and ability to maintain its strength and cohesion. First of all, it was an organization founded by skilled social actors with ties to a variety of groups within the assertive conservative right. Channel Sakura did not need to create an audience from scratch, nor did they need to provide their own in-house expert guests to appear on their programs. They could draw upon a network of like-minded people, providing a base for fundraising and participation in offline protest marches. The second factor was Channel Sakura’s inclusiveness.

Whereas other organizations, such as Tsukurukai, have experienced major fractures due to ideological differences between members, Channel Sakura has endeavored to represent a wider spectrum of conservative opinion. It has functioned as a gathering point for various conservative groups, allowing for cooperation despite disagreements over some points. The third factor was Channel Sakura's concern with avoiding violence, hate speech, and lawbreaking. This has made their online videos and offline protest marches stand out as very different from the alienating and scary activism of traditional uyoku groups. Last, but not least, the free distribution of content via the internet was also a major factor. This made their video programs accessible to any person with an internet connection, bringing their message to many people who were not already involved in grassroots conservative activism. All of these factors combined to make Channel Sakura a unique and relevant part of Japan's assertive conservative right.

That is not to say, however, that Channel Sakura is a large organization with a huge following. Although some readers might see parallels to America's Fox News Channel or to the American Tea Party movement, it is important to note that there are very significant differences. While those organizations may use similar tactics to encourage grassroots-style protests in favor of a conservative message, they are much larger and much better funded than Channel Sakura. Channel Sakura does produce relatively professional-looking video programs, but there is little evidence suggesting that it has huge financial resources at its disposal. A generous estimate of its viewership would be in the

tens of thousands, and its offline protest activities have rarely attracted more than a couple thousand people. In this sense, it is a very small group.

Although the number of such people who turn to the assertive conservative right is only a tiny minority on the margins of Japanese society, their impact should not be underestimated. The three cases examined in this dissertation make it clear that they have the potential to make their voices heard in the debates over the way Japan remembers pre-1945 history and how Japan handles territorial disputes.

From the perspective of International Relations scholarship, this dissertation helps to fill a gap that has so far been largely neglected: domestic social trends. The actions of politicians such as Abe Shinzo have deservedly received a lot of attention, but the domestic situation in Japan has been undeservedly ignored. This dissertation provided a window into a significant social trend that provides grassroots support for national policymakers like Abe.

All three of the cases studied in this dissertation held international significance. The ongoing conservative attempts to influence the remembrance of pre-1945 history in Japan have been seen as hostile actions by countries that were occupied or colonized by the Japanese Empire, particularly China and South Korea. Channel Sakura and the assertive conservative right are part of an important social trend in Japan. Although they are a relatively small group on the margins of Japanese society, it is clear that they have achieved some international impact.

Among the three cases studied, their greatest activism success was in the campaign concerning the Senkaku islands. The assertive conservative right has argued that changes in the way Japanese society remembers the past will have a positive impact on present and future generations of Japan. Although the Senkaku territorial dispute has its roots in history and can be tied to the disagreements over Imperial Japan's past, it is also a current event. The Senkaku issue is one in which potential participants can easily identify an immediate threat to their country. It is understandable that an immediate foreign policy crisis would animate more people than a dispute over how one should remember events that took place generations ago. The fact that their opponent was the People's Republic of China also helped them draw support from groups opposed to the Chinese government, including Uyghur, Tibetan, and Taiwanese organizations.

From a theoretical perspective, it was found that Field Theory and the concept of social skill were very helpful in the examination of Channel Sakura. As one would expect from Field Theory, Channel Sakura and its allies sought out opportunities to improve their position relative to other actors within strategic action fields. As a challenger within fields, these activists lacked the ability to completely overturn the system in their favor. Yet, as Field Theory predicts, challengers capitalize on slight destabilizations of the field in order to gain even tiny adjustments in their favor. Through the efforts of skilled social actors, activists can create meaning for themselves and others, maintaining cohesion in situations where overall victory seems nearly impossible, and when changes in

their favor are usually piecemeal. The cases studied followed this pattern. Thus, this dissertation provides a significant example of how Field Theory can be applied to gain an understanding of real world events.

Throughout this research, I have been asked about the overall impact that groups like Channel Sakura have over Japanese society and Japan's relationship with its neighbors. The three cases, especially the Senkaku case, illustrate that Channel Sakura and its allies are a small group, but one that has a visible impact on Japan. The majority of the Japanese population may not share the views of the assertive conservative right, but there are few groups that are actively campaigning against them. Only one case studied – the Okinawa signboard campaign – included counter-protests from left-leaning groups. In the others, the assertive conservative right faced little visible opposition from other citizens' groups. There is also no professional left-leaning internet based video channel creating videos to act as a counterweight to Channel Sakura. It would not be unreasonable to conclude that the lack of opposition has made the goals of Channel Sakura and its allies easier to achieve. The presence of ideologically sympathetic lawmakers, including Prime Minister Abe Shinzo, can also be said to magnify their influence. However, successes up to this point have been relatively small, putting them under the radar of most of Japanese society. If they were to achieve a major success, it is possible that they could face a backlash from people who do not share their views.

Internationally, their activism has almost certainly contributed to the worsening of Sino-Japanese relations. As noted in Chapter 7, their Senkaku

islands activist campaign helped provoke a negative reaction from China. Reports of their protest march in Tokyo and their landing on one of the islands were used to fuel anti-Japanese protests in China. Channel Sakura's fishing expeditions to the islands were cited by the Chinese government as a provocation, and used to justify increasingly aggressive patrols by Chinese vessels. Other campaigns which are not touched upon in this dissertation, such as Channel Sakura's activism in opposition to new "comfort women" memorials in the United States, are also arguably detrimental to Korea-Japan and U.S.-Japan relations.

Some might conclude that Channel Sakura and its allies are hurting Japan's international image through such campaigns. However, those who sympathize with Channel Sakura's viewpoint would consider their activism to be a morally right campaign on behalf of historical truth. In this sense, setting the record straight and helping Japan regain national pride are seen as more important than potential damage to Japan's relationships with other countries.

Worsened relations with China and Korea can also be considered beneficial for Channel Sakura. Many of their campaigns revolve around the idea that China and the two Koreas are "anti-Japanese" nations. It would not be controversial to state that Japanese people would be less likely to have positive feelings towards countries that are displaying hostility towards Japan. Therefore, such a situation has the potential to increase support for organizations like Channel Sakura.

It remains to be seen whether Channel Sakura can continue into the future. But if skilled social actors such as Mizushima remain at the helm and organizational rifts do not occur, it would not be unreasonable to expect its survival for some years to come.

Recommendations for Future Research

This is far from the final word on Channel Sakura and organizations like it, and many questions remain unanswered and unexplored.

Information about the number of people who support the assertive conservative right and organizations within it remains slim. The brief look at YouTube data in Chapter 3 gives an imprecise estimate of the number of people who regularly view Channel Sakura's videos, and more comprehensive data collection would grant a better estimate. Tracing the estimated numbers of participants in offline events over the course of several years could also prove fruitful.

The use of interviews could also improve the understanding of why this kind of grassroots movement has maintained cohesion and attracted supporters. As noted in an earlier chapter, Channel Sakura did not respond to requests for interviews, and individuals turned down interview requests, mainly due to scheduling conflicts. Despite this limitation, there was a great deal of information available about the viewpoints of the main actors within Channel Sakura and the views of its supporters. However, real face-to-face interviews would provide a chance to gain better information.

The study of internet-mediated activism remains a very difficult endeavor. But new technological tools and methodologies are constantly being created by programmers and scholars. The future will surely bring with it new chances to gain a more detailed and comprehensive view of how collective actors make use of internet communications technology.

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