

Serendipity and Sociology

Five Decades of Studying Japanese Society

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A retirement lecture is supposed to present an overview of my academic work, but also gives me license to honor those who have supported me and to reflect on the circumstances that have made my career possible. I consider myself a symbolic interactionist, which means that I look holistically at the social structure, social interactions, and other factors that come together in any social situation and also view social situations dynamically, as changing and developing over time. Those elements and conditions shape the decisions that people make to navigate through their lives. Just as often, they carry people along effortlessly so that they find themselves in another situation without having made any conscious decisions at all. Chance or accident, whether positive or negative, has always figured into my sociological analysis, whether I was studying how people in Hawaii chose to terminate a pregnancy through abortion, or how Japanese students ended up participating in a radical social movement.

In my own life, I have always been very conscious of the role of serendipity, which the Merriam-Webster online dictionary defines as “the occurrence and development of events by chance in a happy or beneficial way.”ⁱ I do not believe in fate or destiny, but I do believe in chance and accident. So I am deeply grateful for all the positive social circumstances that have led me to this point, but I also recognize that serendipity has blessed every stage of my life.

I was born in Highland Park, Michigan, as the only child of two professional parents from quite different backgrounds. My father had been smuggled out of Russian-controlled Latvia in the bottom of a hay wagon at the age of four and immigrated to the US with his family. My paternal grandparents were both skilled artisans and entrepreneurs: his father, a skilled machinist, had married a lady who created and sold ladies’ hats in her own shop. My father grew up in Highland Park, went to a small college and then to law school during the depression, and returned to Highland Park as a lawyer. My mother’s family had been in Michigan for generations. After her father had made a disastrous business decision and lost all his capital, his wife (my maternal grandmother) and her five daughters ran a boarding house that served daily

meals to single male faculty at Central Michigan Teacher's College. My mother, the middle daughter, went to that college and became a high school English teacher at the age of 19, when she was barely older than her students.

I grew up in Highland Park as an only child, initially living upstairs from my paternal grandparents, who took care of me while both of my parents worked fulltime. After attending a wartime preschool I entered kindergarten at the age of four, already able to read, and was always the youngest student in my class. We moved to our own home in Highland Park when I entered fourth grade and I became a latchkey child. In addition to working fulltime, both my parents were active in community organizations and soon my father was elected municipal judge in Highland Park. Being a judge's daughter means that if you want something, you have to plead your case with a logical and persuasive argument. Both parents supported and encouraged me in everything I did, but also expected me to be independent, to excel academically, and to behave responsibly as the judge's daughter.

Highland Park was a good place to grow up in postwar America, although a few decades later it became a bankrupt urban slum. In the 1950s it was an independent city of about 30,000 people almost completely surrounded by Detroit. Highland Park had received part of the mass migration from the rural south to the industrial north in the 1920s and continued to prosper through the 1950s with a strong industrial tax base. Its north end housed the first Ford Motors factory, where Henry Ford pioneered the assembly line to mass produce automobiles, while two miles south, the headquarters of the Chrysler Corporation was at the end of my street. When I was growing up, Highland Park was an integrated community, about 30% black, with native Midwesterners and migrants from the south, plus ethnic immigrant communities of Eastern and Southern Europeans, Lebanese, Syrians, and Armenians. There was no upper class (those people lived in much fancier suburbs), but it contained a large working class that included unionized blue collar workers in the automobile industry, an array of shopkeepers and small entrepreneurs, plus an educated middle class that my parents were a part of. My mother taught in predominantly black Detroit high schools and her friends and fellow teachers, both black and white, visited our home. My father often performed civil weddings in our living room for people from all walks of life in Highland Park. It was a time of rising prosperity and shared upward mobility, which muted ethnic and racial tensions in the community.

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Highland Park's six or seven elementary schools went through eighth grade and fed into a single integrated comprehensive high school of about 1,600 students. Its award-winning school system provided a broad, comprehensive education that included strong vocational training plus college preparatory education. Only about a quarter of the graduates went on to college. I took Latin, French, and advanced English classes, but I also learned to cook and sew in home economics from fourth grade through high school. In my senior year I edited the high school newspaper and won some academic awards, but also was named a Betty Crocker Homemaker of Tomorrow. There was time to do everything in those days. I grew up believing that I could do anything I wanted with my life. I was, after all, not only the daughter, but the granddaughter of independent, resourceful working women. Nobody ever told me there were limits.

I only applied to one college, the University of Michigan, and was invited into the Honors college. That summer a fat college catalog arrived in the mail and I pored through it, amazed at all the languages they taught. I decided to learn Japanese, which resonated with books I had read in high school: *The Tale of Genji* and *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*. After meeting my language requirement with French, I took intensive Japanese for a year and became a Japanese language and literature major. There were very few undergraduates taking Japanese. Most of my classmates were graduate students on NDFL (now FLAS) language fellowships, who had previously been in the military in Japan. This was before the modern textbooks for Japanese were written, and my first year intensive Japanese course began with a semester of spoken Japanese using a World War II Army language school textbook.

I was part of a new generation of young Americans just starting to study Japanese, who had no prior experience with Japan and were simply intrigued by the challenge of learning to read characters and speak an Asian language. It was a completely frivolous, non-o thing to do. It was not a job qualification for anything, but I was not thinking that far ahead. I simply wanted to major in something that would NOT qualify me to teach high school. My mother wanted me to be economically independent, but the only occupation she knew was high school teaching, so this was one of my few acts of adolescent rebellion. Actually, neither parent ever questioned what I was taking at the University of Michigan or what I planned to do with it. My father only gave me one firm warning when I left for the University. "Whatever you do, don't join anything." Just a few years earlier, the anti-Communist purges of the McCarthy era had destroyed many careers.

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Sociologically, my generational location is particularly important. I attended the University of Michigan from 1959 to 1963. I not only studied an exotic language out of sheer intellectual curiosity, but also gravitated naturally to *The Michigan Daily*, the student newspaper, because I had been a high school newspaper editor. As a dutiful daughter I didn't join anything, but as a staff member of the *Michigan Daily* I was close to the center of the political activity swirling around the campus, which focused initially on the civil rights movement. Because Ann Arbor was beyond range of the Detroit newspapers, *The Michigan Daily* saw itself not only as a campus newspaper, but also as the daily paper presenting the news of the world to U of M students. We had an AP teletype machine by the news desk and combined campus news with local and national stories.

By my second year at Michigan, the *Daily* was my home base and I rotated as a night editor responsible for the next morning's paper, which was printed downstairs from the editorial offices by union typesetters. The editor in chief that year was Tom Hayden, who became an active participant in the civil rights movement after graduating from Michigan, and a few years later was one of the Chicago Seven activists who were tried on charges of conspiracy and inciting to riot for their involvement in anti-Vietnam war protests during the 1968 Democratic National Convention. In the early 1960s, local civil rights activity by students was not only reported by the *Daily* but was often planned and discussed in the *Daily* offices by student activists involved in student government or connected to Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), who hung out in the building.

During that year under Tom Hayden's leadership, the *Michigan Daily* finally went public with information its editors had been collecting for years about serious invasions of privacy by the Dean of Women. When the *Daily* published its front-page story and signed editorial, it attracted national attention. For a tense period it was not clear whether the newspaper and editors would be penalized for confronting a senior administrator, but eventually the Dean was forced out of her position. The *Daily*'s exposé challenged the prevailing view that the university acted *in loco parentis* and should oversee the private behavior of students under 21. It was an early indication of new attitudes and challenges by students in the 1960s.

Through *The Michigan Daily* I learned about a summer 1961 trip to Japan sponsored by the US National Student Association that changed my life. There were 8 or 9 American students on the trip, and I was the only participant who was actually studying Japanese. Half the trip was

spent in Tokyo, where we stayed at International House of Japan and our guides were two young men who had been active in the 1960 Apmo protests the previous year. We were treated as an official delegation from the US National Student Association, even though we had simply paid to come on the trip. We were taken to meet members of the National Diet, and even had an audience with the Crown Prince and Princess. Princess Michiko, now Empress Michiko, had been a student leader at her university, and she began asking us in English about student government in the United States. I was the only one familiar with student government because of my involvement with the *Michigan Daily*, so I ended up discussing student government at American universities with her. For the other three weeks we traveled around western Japan with Japanese students from the Wakayama University English Speaking Society and their American professor. I returned from the trip with a deepened commitment to the study of Japan, and much improved spoken Japanese. On my return, I wrote story for the *Daily* about participating in the August 6 commemoration of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima.

As I neared the end of my undergraduate studies, the people around me were thinking about graduate school. Since I had avoided becoming a high school teacher and had rejected the suggestion that I stay in Ann Arbor as the secretary to the student government association, the only viable alternative was to go to graduate school. By that time I knew that I wanted to use Japanese language as a tool, but not as my academic focus, and chose sociology as a broad field that would help me make sense of Japanese society. In my junior year I had also been allowed to take the required graduate seminar for the interdisciplinary MA in Japanese Studies and subsequently began working part time for the two faculty members teaching the course, helping them find materials for an interdisciplinary book of readings on Japan. Through them I learned about the Inter-University Center for Japanese Studies in Tokyo, a consortium of American universities that offered an intensive year of advanced Japanese language training. I applied to Stanford's MA program in Japanese Studies, thinking that after a year they might send me to the Center, but they admitted me and awarded me an NDFL fellowship to attend the Inter-University Center for the first year. That bit of serendipity set the course of my life in more ways than one.

The Inter-University Center was housed that year on the campus of International Christian University. The intensive program pushed my language skills to a functional level, but there were additional benefits. When the first housing arrangement that I had worked out before going to Japan did not work out, the ICU housing office helped me arrange to live with the

family of a Japanese management consultant just a few train stops away from the Center. I learned enormously from the wife's beautiful Japanese as well as long conversations with the husband about Japanese management and have remained in touch with four generations of that family.

Finally, there was the biggest serendipity of all. There were five students from the University of Michigan at the Inter-University Center that year. Besides me, three were graduate students whom I knew already from my classes, and the other was an older undergraduate who had been in the military. Our first meeting at the Inter-University Center was inauspicious because he made a disparaging comment about the Michigan Daily, but later I got to know him better. Bill Steinhoff and I celebrated our fiftieth wedding anniversary last year. During the year in Tokyo we had a Japanese society class together that was held at the home of the Japanese professor. One day Bill lent me a manuscript he had received from a friend. It was written by David Riesman, who was famous for the book *The Lonely Crowd*, and described the people he had met during a VIP lecture tour to Japan. Riesman was a sociologist in the Social Relations department at Harvard, which also had two established Japan specialist sociologists and seemed to be an ideal place for me to continue my graduate studies. I was surprised to learn that Riesman had a Japan connection, but I knew he subscribed to a number of student newspapers as a way of keeping tabs on the pulse of student life. During the Michigan Daily's troubles two years earlier, David Riesman had written a letter supporting the newspaper, which we had published. After reading the manuscript, I wrote him a letter telling him how much as a Michigan Daily staffer we had appreciated his letter. I explained my background in Japanese and my desire to do further graduate work in sociology, and asked whether if I learned some more sociology, I might become his student at Harvard in the future. He wrote back saying that if I had worked at the *Michigan Daily*, I already had an education in sociology! He said he did not teach graduate students, but he would pass my letter on to the Japan specialists who did. That serendipitous sequence of events led to my admission to the PhD program in sociology at Harvard in fall 1964.

After my year of language study in Japan, I abandoned the Stanford MA program, and went straight to Harvard to begin my doctoral studies. My generational location is particularly relevant here, because my experience is quite inconceivable for sociology graduate students today. It has much more to do with **when** I was in graduate school than anything about my personal qualifications. By 1964 the Vietnam war was heating up and male students were subject

to the draft unless they had a student deferment. At the same time, higher education in the United States was expanding rapidly to meet the growing demand for a college-educated work force, which in turn fueled the rapid expansion of the middle class. Universities were expanding their faculties to meet the demand, and graduate programs were pushing out graduate students to fill those positions. Harvard's sociology graduate program addressed the situation by accepting students directly into a PhD program in which students took their comprehensive exams at the end of the second year. If they passed their comps, they immediately began doing dissertation research. If they failed, they left the program with an MA.

Harvard's program was unusual in another way. It was part of a multidisciplinary department called the Department of Social Relations that combined Sociology, Social Anthropology, Clinical Psychology, and Social Psychology. The department had been formed a number of years earlier by dissidents who broke away from anthropology and psychology departments that were less interested in the social aspects of behavior and joined with a small sociology department to focus on "social relations." I knew none of that before I got there, just as I knew little about the formal discipline of sociology. Within the Social Relations department, we had some core courses that covered the whole range of the interdisciplinary department, plus others that were sociology. It was hard even to know which of the faculty members were actually sociologists. There were nine students in my sociology cohort; I was the only woman, although there were plenty of female graduate students in the other parts of the Social Relations department. The nine of us studied together amicably, and I experienced no discrimination at all from either students or faculty in the department.

The Harvard sociology program was dominated by Talcott Parsons and his complex structural-functional model. While most American sociology departments at the time were functionalist, Parsons' particular theory permeated the air at Harvard. You learned it by osmosis because everyday conversation referred to the L box and the G box of Parsons' model. And once you were inside that model, it could be used to explain anything. Moreover, the only statistics course required for the PhD was a seminar in non-parametric statistics and Bayesian inference. I saw no reason to take the real statistics course that was offered as an elective. The one course that profoundly shaped my understanding of sociology was a seminar on Symbolic Interaction taught by a young faculty member from UCLA. Those readings have shaped my approach to sociology ever since.

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During the second year while my classmates and I were preparing for comps, my advisor, Japan specialist Robert Bellah, asked me what I was thinking about for a dissertation topic. I offered two possibilities: politeness levels in Japanese and *tenkō*, or ideological conversion. I had read an article by psychiatrist Robert Jay Lifton, who had interviewed young Japanese participants in the 1960 Apmo protests and reported that many of them had made a *tenkō*. I already had met two Japanese participants in the Apmo protests, and the topic of protest resonated with my experiences at the *Michigan Daily*. Bellah ignored the politeness topic and pounced on *tenkō*. However, he said I needed to study the REAL problem of *tenkō*, the mass *tenkō* of Japanese participants who had renounced their commitment to the illegal prewar Communist movement under pressure from the authorities. Okay, why not? Bellah had done historical research, so I wrote a grant proposal to do research on prewar *tenkō* in Tokyo. This was another instance of serendipity that has profoundly shaped all of my subsequent research on Japan. It also reflected the atmosphere of the Harvard sociology doctoral program. They did not teach a lot of sociology, although we studied with some of the biggest names in the field. Instead, the program instilled a confidence that we could figure out how to do whatever our research required. In fact, more than a third of our small cohort ended up doing historical dissertations.

I received a fellowship to spend the next year in Tokyo studying *tenkō*. Bellah had arranged for me to be affiliated with the Institute of Social Science at the University of Tokyo, which has been my academic home in Japan ever since. My advisor there was political scientist Ishida Takeshi, who had a broad historical perspective. *Tenkō* was a major phenomenon in Japanese history of the 1920s and 1930 and was understood as history of thought (*shisōshi*). The major three-volume research study on the topic, which had come out a few years earlier, was a series of chapters by individual authors who had each studied the transitions in one individual's thought over time. I knew I did not want to take that approach.

As a sociologist, I wanted to understand how mass *tenkō* had been organized by the government, and how all the participants interacted and understood what they were doing. That also meant I needed to understand how the underground communist movement arose and who participated in it. There was very little available in English, so I had to read even the background material in Japanese. I discovered that after the war ended, a lot of previously classified administrative documents turned up in the used book stores of Tokyo. The librarian at the Institute had been collecting such documents from the Thought Bureau, the government agency

that had prosecuted violators of the law under which members and associates of the illegal communist party had been prosecuted. I found many formal *tenkō* statements of individuals, and also collected fictionalized accounts by writers about their *tenkō* experience. At the time I was doing my research in the mid-1960s, a lot of people who had been involved in the *tenkō* process in the late 1920s and 1930s were still alive. I was able to round out my library research with interviews of several participants.

The resulting study was distinctly sociological and reflected my symbolic interactionist approach of trying to understand the situation holistically, as an interaction between various actors that also changed and developed over time. It included the structural conditions of the prewar Japanese criminal justice system, specific features of the law under which people were prosecuted for acts motivated by ideology, and the mindset of the bureaucrats who were not content with prosecuting violators but wanted to eradicate their dangerous ideas to complete the process. I also wrote sympathetically about the kinds of people who found themselves in jail because of their political activities, ranging from intellectuals who were supporting a cause they believed in, to ordinary workers who had provided minor forms of support to front organizations during a legal election campaign. I learned to “see” institutions and social structure, and “listen” to how people experienced it. I used statistics from the documents, but also did content analysis of the *tenkō* statements and quoted passages from the short stories that people had written to process their prison experiences.

After a year and a half of field work in Tokyo, I returned to Harvard, where I was invited to become a teaching assistant for a large undergraduate course taught by David Riesman. It was an amazing experience that cannot be duplicated outside the environment of a special, well-funded course at Harvard, and included weekly dinners at the Riesman home. Later that spring, before I had finished my dissertation, I was hired to become the first woman faculty member in the University of Hawaii sociology department.

I was married that summer in Michigan and came to Hawaii in August to start teaching a 3-3 course load. I had no time during the first semester to do much more on the dissertation. On the day after Christmas my husband announced that the dissertation needed to get finished, and I would have no newspapers, no television, no phone chats, and no beach outings until it was finished. I set to work under his watchful eye and six weeks later the dissertation was completed. Following Harvard’s practice at the time, if my three readers thought it was satisfactory, I did not

have to do an oral defense. So I received my degree that June, without having returned for a defense. As I began teaching at Hawaii, I also realized that I was walking away from Parsonian functionalist sociology. I had framed the dissertation with an argument from Durkheim that seemed to fit my narrative, but I no longer found it satisfactory I set the dissertation aside until I could reframe it and began thinking about my next project, which would return to my interest in postwar social movements in Japan.

I had learned from the *tenkō* study how vulnerable prewar Japanese were to external social pressure when they were isolated and subjected to pressure to change their ideas. In the Japanese context, most of the people who made a *tenkō* had been unable to maintain their commitment to particular political ideas when they were isolated from other members of the group that shared those ideas and subjected to severe pressure in a criminal justice system that was heavily tilted toward confession and contrition. The end of World War II and subsequent Allied Occupation of Japan had led to a new constitution that gave people a lot more individual rights and shifted the balance in the criminal justice system. It had also transformed the educational system in ways that initially encouraged more individual thinking and independence. I thought this might constitute a kind of natural experiment. If a new postwar generation of students who grew up under these new social conditions were to make a similar commitment to ideological beliefs that brought them into direct conflict with a criminal justice system that had similarly changed to give them more protection, would they be better able to withstand pressures to give up their ideological beliefs? Once the dissertation was finished, I began looking for such a situation in postwar Japan. While I had been doing library research in Tokyo, a major period of political protest was beginning to erupt on the streets outside. I had not paid much attention to it while I was there, and I left Japan before it reached its peak.

Meanwhile, developments in Hawaii drew my attention away from Japan. In our first year in Hawaii, my husband Bill attended a public forum about the issue of abortion law. He had been interested in the legalization of abortion for some time, and in that forum, he learned that a key Hawaii legislator was seriously considering legislation that would remove all the penalties for abortion. When the state legislature held hearings a few months later, he pushed me to testify. The hearings at the Capitol spread over two evenings and I met two other UH professors who were also testifying, Roy Smith, a pediatrician in the School of Public Health, and Mickey Diamond, a sexual behavior researcher in the Anatomy department of the new medical school.

Soon national media were paying attention to the possibility that Hawaii would become the first state to legalize abortion. When we gathered at the legislature to watch the final passage of the legislation, the three of us realized it was now our responsibility to do some research on the newly legal procedure.

Mickey Diamond negotiated with the Population Council to fund a book about how the law had passed, which enabled me to collect the materials from the legal process. I wrote the book during my first sabbatical, and Diamond wrote the chapter on the opposition. In today's terms it was a social movement study, but at the time there wasn't really a field of social movement studies. What existed then was the now-discredited functionalist theory that social movements were carried out by dysfunctional, marginal individuals who disrupted the social order. My generation that came of age in the 1960s had seen up close that people we respected and admired were committing themselves to social movements for social change, but it took a while for new theories to be developed. Meanwhile, I simply applied some of the tools I had used in my dissertation to try to understand how Hawaii's abortion law came to be passed. The study itself came about by serendipity, in the sense that it happened to occur in a place where I was living, my husband encouraged me to get involved, and I ended up as part of a research group that had the unique opportunity to study it.

For the main study, Roy Smith and Mickey Diamond secured initial support to begin studying who was getting legal abortions and what kinds of medical issues there were. We added Jay Palmore, a demographer with the East-West Center and the Sociology Department to our team and began the research. Through Smith, we soon had secured the cooperation of the major hospitals where all abortions would be performed. There were no institutional review boards then, so we were able to send researchers into the hospitals to collect medical records data, distribute questionnaires, and later interview patients. We obtained federal funding and the study expanded. Much of it was basic survey research, which needed to be analyzed quantitatively. I had learned virtually no statistics at Harvard, but Jay Palmore patiently taught me what I needed to know. We conducted the original federally funded study for several years, and then a subsequent follow-up study that linked our data on abortions and births with state vital statistics records on all births and induced abortions. Because of our federal funding, these studies also supported a fair number of graduate students, including Meda Chesney-Lind, who wrote her dissertation using our data, and Joyce Chinen, who was a research assistant. Through

participating in this study for a decade, I learned about more traditional forms of sociological research, but my perspective remained symbolic interactionist. I still tried to understand how people interacted in social situations and made sense of their surroundings, and how the situations changed over time.

While I was busy with this research in Hawaii, Japan was experiencing a major protest cycle in the late 1960s and early 1970s. I tried to keep abreast of what was happening, but the situation was too sensitive for the kind of research I hoped to do. Once again, serendipity opened the door. At the end of May 1972, my husband and I were watching the nightly news on television. In those days the local news was broadcast at 6 p.m, but the national news was taped in California and put on a plane, so it was broadcast at 11 p.m. Sometimes you would stay up until then only to be informed that the news hadn't arrived. On this particular night, the news reported on a terrorist attack at Lod Airport (now Ben Gurion Airport,) in Tel Aviv, Israel that had been carried out by three young Japanese men from a radical group. Two had died in the attack, but one had survived and was in custody. My husband immediately said, "You should interview him! Isn't that just what you've been looking for?" It took me a few minutes to recognize that this was, indeed, what I had been looking for. Three young Japanese men had carried out an extreme act out of political conviction, and now the one survivor was arrested and would be tested by isolation in a prison. But the prison was in Israel, not Japan. How was I going to interview him? Once again, my resourceful husband came to the rescue, reminding me that the Prime Minister of Israel at the time was a woman named Golda Meier, who had once been a Milwaukee schoolteacher. He encouraged me to write her a letter and simply ask if I could interview the Japanese prisoner. I tried to find out what I could about the situation over the course of the summer and followed the man's military trial through the news media.

Right after the trial ended, I received an air letter from the Attorney General of Israel, giving me permission to interview the survivor, Okamoto Kōzō. Once I had traveled to Israel and interviewed the survivor, that was just the beginning. I needed to know about the organization that had ended up doing this, how they related to other groups, and how the social control agencies had dealt with the protests. A decade later was I free to concentrate on Japan again, and with a Fulbright grant for my next sabbatical in 1982-83 I went back to the Institute of Social Science at the University of Tokyo. Once again, there was an important element of serendipity in how my research developed. My sponsor was the same professor who had supervised my

dissertation research, Ishida Takeshi. He asked me what help I needed, and I said I wanted to find a female research assistant who was close enough to the recent period of protest to help me make the necessary contacts. Within hours his wife had found the perfect assistant, an older graduate student whose husband had been imprisoned during the protests, and who later became a major Japanese feminist. She took me to the office of the Relief Contact Center, *Kyūen*, the support agency that had been created during the protests to provide social and legal support to students who had been arrested. The *Kyūen* staff told me that a major trial had recently ended, and while the cases were being appealed, I would be able to visit the defendants in prison using the regular visiting procedures. My assistant guided me through the process because she had done it herself. I could have used Fulbright contacts to get permission to do a single set of interviews, but using the ordinary visiting system allowed me to return for additional short interviews and has enabled me to continue prison interviews for this research with new prisoners over more than 35 years. Of course, at the time I never dreamed I would still be doing it for such a long time. It also took me a while to recognize that *Kyūen* itself embodied exactly the sort of capacity to resist the state that I was looking for. It arose as part of the dynamics of the protest cycle and took the form of a social movement, which I had not anticipated.

News reports in English had attributed the Lod Airport attack to the Japanese Red Army, an international offshoot of the Red Army Faction in Japan, so my research strategy involved trying to learn about the origins of the original Red Army Faction and trace it forward. I was soon introduced to Takazawa Kōji, an independent journalist with ties to the Red Army Faction, who had become a recognized authority on the Japanese New Left and published a number of reliable sources about it. He lent me early Red Army publications to copy and introduced me to early members to interview. I traced the Red Army Faction's subsequent offshoots, the Yodogō groups that had hijacked a plane to North Korea in 1970 and remained there, the Japanese Red Army based in the Middle East, and the United Red Army, which had formed in Japan when remnants of the Red Army Faction merged with another group. It was the trial of that group's leaders, the United Red Army Leaders trial, that had just concluded and whose participants I was interviewing at Tokyo House of Detention. I was beginning to attend other trial sessions and do participant observation of the activities of support groups associated with specific trials. I also discovered Mosakusha, the underground bookstore in Shinjuku that was also a creation of the late 1960s protest cycle and continues to serve as a distribution point for materials produced by,

for, and about social movements in Japan. After that first year of continuous fieldwork, I began returning to Japan for a few weeks every summer to touch base and collect new materials. I always made the rounds of the Kyūen office, Mosakusha, and Takazawa, who for many years had an office near Mosakusha.

By the mid-1980s I was ready to start writing my book about the Red Army Faction and its offshoots. The United Red Army leaders' trial that I had dropped into by chance in 1982 was a key puzzle, so I started there. It involved a terrible internal purge in the winter of 1970, when remnants of the Red Army Faction and another group had joined forces and retreated into the mountains, harboring a number of people who were on Japan's most wanted list at the time. Knowledge of the purge had sent shock waves through the Japanese New Left from which it never recovered; the movement could not understand how it had happened because they were trying to analyze it from within a Marxist framework. As a total outsider, I used what had become my standard analytical approach to examine the purge as a process, trying to reconstruct what had happened from the various first-hand accounts that had been written plus my prison interviews with some of the surviving participants.

On one of my annual short trips, Takazawa encouraged me to give him a manuscript that he could have published in Japan. On my next trip I brought him the book manuscript, which opened with my interview in Israel with the survivor of the Lod Airport attack, then moved back to trace the origins of the New Left through the emergence of the Red Army Faction and its offshoots, centering on the my analysis of the United Red Army purge, and concluding with very brief accounts of the Yodogō group in North Korea and the Japanese Red Army in the Middle East. I had written it as a straightforward analytical account of the movement, not as an academic work of sociology. He read it, approved, and made the arrangements with a Japanese publisher that had an in-house translator.

I returned to Japan in 1989 for another sabbatical year of fieldwork on the related topic of anti-emperor protest, a topic that Takazawa had brought to my attention as an interesting research topic for me. Surrounding the death of the Shōwa emperor and the ceremonies for his successor's accession, there was a year-long cycle of small but very politically sensitive protests related to these ceremonies. Being in Japan for that period gave me the opportunity to experience some aspects of what the late 1960s protest cycle had been like in terms of styles of protest activity and how the police controlled it.

During that year the translator and I worked on the book's translation, one chapter a month. The translator produced very natural, readable Japanese that matched the tone of my English. Near the end of my time in Japan, Takazawa arranged to take the translator; Shiomi Takaya, the theorist of the original Red Army Faction who had just been released from prison; and me to see the sites in the mountains where the purge had taken place. My writeup of that experience became the final chapter of the book. It was published the following year and was in print in Japan through two publishers over more than a decade.

When I returned to Hawaii in 1990, I intended to revise the original English manuscript for a more academic American audience, adding more about the two offshoots of the Red Army in exile in North Korea and the Middle East. However, just at that point, people who had returned from exile and been arrested (or arrested overseas and deported) began to go on trial in Japan. There was an enormous amount of new material that changed my understanding of many aspects of the movement. I spent the next two decades following those trials and their trial support groups, doing more prison interviews, and trying to understand what had really happened, particularly inside the two exile groups in North Korea and the Middle East.

As I continued to follow events more or less in real time, I began to realize that the trial support groups I had been following constituted an interesting social movement in their own right, and were a small part of a much broader network of activists. I expanded my focus from trial support groups to encompass the wide range of small, informal groups that constitute what I came to call Japan's invisible civil society, and eventually that piece fell into place as the long-term result of the repression of the protest cycle on its former participants. They continued to live in Japanese society, participating in small social movement groups advocating for a wide array of social and political issues. They embodied some of the characteristic features of New Left values and organizational style, while remaining low-key and informal in order to avoid intrusive police surveillance of their legal activities. I called them the invisible civil society partly to counter social scientists who were proclaiming that there was no social movement activity in Japan, because they did not know where to look.

In 1994, Takazawa Kōji donated his invaluable archive of Japanese social movements materials to the University of Hawaii and I became the *de facto* curator of the Takazawa Collection of Japanese Social Movement Materials, responsible for overseeing and finding funding for its cataloguing. We finished cataloguing the original donation over a decade ago and

produced a bilingual bibliographic website that makes the materials accessible. We have received several additional installments that will keep us busy for the next few years. Visitors come from all over the world to visit the collection as part of their research, and my own research has been enriched immeasurably by having the Takazawa Collection materials readily available.

While we were cataloguing the Takazawa Collection in the 1990s, Takazawa was visiting North Korea regularly, became suspicious about what the tiny Yodogō group there had actually been doing during their years of exile, and began tracking the clues down all over the world. In 1998 he published a book about his findings that won the Kodansha Prize for Nonfiction and exposed the Yodogō group members in North Korea not as the lonely, trapped survivors of the 1970 hijacking that took them to North Korea, but instead as converts to North Korea's national ideology of Juche. They had made a *tenkō* and had been working as North Korean operatives, including getting involved in luring several young Japanese to North Korea. After reading the book I shared it with our students working in the Takazawa Collection and they decided we should translate it into English. The project was delayed for a number of years for various reasons, but I finally finished editing it and UH Press published it in 2017 as *Destiny: The Secret Operations of the Yodogō Exiles*.

In the same time period, through some comparative work with two other social scientists who had studied similar radical groups in the United States, Italy, and Germany, I began to understand the deep parallels between the Japanese protest cycle and the parallel New Left protest cycles in other countries, which put into different perspective some features I had thought were characteristically Japanese. That led me to begin participating in the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR), which has a lively section on political violence. My colleague Gilda Zwerman and I shared our comparative studies of the U.S. and Japanese protest movements to a European audience and gained new insights from their work.

Through all of this research, which has appeared piecemeal in dozens of journal articles and book chapters, I also came to see the Japanese New Left protest cycle from a new perspective. Because of my own sympathies and my research approach of trying to understand the social context and dynamics of these movements from the inside, from the perspective of their participants, it took me a long time to recognize the shock that the protest cycle had caused to ordinary Japanese society. This is both a strength and a weakness of my sociological

approach. I knew that the repression of the protest cycle had stifled and delegitimized protest activity for several decades and came to understand the role of both the state social control agencies and mass media in perpetuating fear of protest activity throughout the society. Yet until recently I had not appreciated the extent to which the protest cycle itself had produced an unprocessed cultural trauma that overwhelmed mainstream Japanese society and left traces that are still visible nearly half a century later.

As I struggle to bring closure to my seemingly endless research project on the Japanese New Left and the Red Army groups, my original plan of adding a couple of chapters to the book I had published in Japanese to cover the groups in North Korea and the Middle East is no longer adequate. Instead, I now envision it as a trilogy. Takazawa has done for the Yodogō group what I could never equal, so our English translation makes it part of the trilogy. The second piece is the revision of my Japanese book that has never appeared in English, although it has been translated into Korean from the Japanese version. I am updating and reshaping it to focus primarily on what happened in Japan: the emergence of the New Left and the rise and repression of the late 1960s protest cycle; the emergence and changes in the Red Army groups as part of that protest cycle; the invisible civil society that I believe is one consequence of the repression of the protest cycle; and finally, the long-term domestic impact of these events on Japanese society. The third book will contain my research about the Japanese Red Army in the Middle East. While I can never know that movement in its entirety, I intend to counter many myths about it that exist in the limited English literature and produce a more nuanced account based on my years of research in the available Japanese sources and interviews with participants.

In analyzing my academic life using the tools of sociology, I have emphasized the role that serendipity has played. When I began to study Japanese in 1960, I never imagined where it would take me. When I finished my dissertation on prewar *tenkō* and thought about finding a postwar parallel, I never dreamed that the group I happened to latch onto would have offshoots that persisted into the 21st century, and that I would still be writing about them even after I retire.