

Japan, 1968: The Afterlives of Nichidai-Zenkyōtō

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This paper examines the Nihon University 930 reunion and Nichidai-Zenkyōtō organizations that were involved in campus-related activism in 1968. Furthermore, the paper reviews the pattern and significance of activities illuminated during a roundtable discussion during this reunion and records their experiences. The alumni association published the book series, *A Record of Activism of Nihon University: Unforgettable Moments*, and asked alumni to document their memories of the struggle. They have continued to devote themselves as activists to recordkeeping in order to objectively examine themselves as objects of history.

Keywords: Nihon University, campus demonstrations, student movements, recording activity, oral history

Introduction

The tumultuous year of 1968 is considered to be revolutionary not only in Japan but worldwide and is important when discussing Japan's postwar history. After the 1960 protests against the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, the New Left Movement, including Zengaku Kyōtō Kaigi 全学共闘会議 (“All-Campus Joint Struggle Committees”; from hereon in, Zenkyōtō 全共闘), became the focus of a hegemonic struggle, realizing a new counterculture against the norms of mainstream ideology.

Throughout the late 1960s, Zenkyōtō protests nationwide against authoritative power and the Vietnam War started in universities through the promotion of solidarity among all students in Japan. The main purpose for organizing Zenkyōtō was to oppose the university authorities while promoting the slogan “dismantle Imperial [Tokyo] University.” During the rapid economic growth of the postwar period in the late 1960s, universities were effectively converted into institutions for producing a labor force rather than existing as higher educational institutions.

These struggles, which began to break down the class structure that existed within the university system, developed a universal ideology of self-negation as a form of sincere self-expression. Accordingly, the New Left and Zenkyōtō Movements organized the anti-Vietnam War Movement,

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the Haneda struggle¹ in 1967, and college demonstrations all over the country.

Nihon University, or Nichidai, was the largest private university in Japan, and its board of directors used sports organizations to suppress and censor various student activities. In 1968, when the National Tax Service exposed the fact that this same board of directors had amassed a slush fund worth some two billion yen, students formed the Nichidai-Zenkyōtō organization, built barricades, and began their struggle to dismantle the university system (figure 1).²



Figure 1: Mass bargaining at the Nichidai auditorium, September 30, 1968. Nichidai-Zenkyōtō in 1968. Courtesy of Nihon University 930 reunion.

Fifty years later, in 2018, an illegal tackle was carried out by a player of Nihon University's American football team. This case—considered a vicious foul—became a social issue. This incident led to suspicion that the team coaches forced their players to commit foul play, which led to controversy over institutional issues at Nihon University. In short, it revealed various problems within the organizational structure of the athletic department as well as of the whole university. A statement was then made by the members of the Nihon University 930 reunion (Nichidai Kyūsanmaru no Kai 日大 930 の会) on the occasion of the party commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of Nichidai-Zenkyōtō (figure 2). As Nichidai-Zenkyōtō had struggled against the corruption of the board of directors and that of the monitoring system for physical violence by sports club members, the alumni members deplored that the university still uses its sports associations to violently suppress students and raised questions about the university system, which has not changed for fifty years.

1 The Haneda struggle occurred on October 8 and November 12, 1967, when the New Left parties clashed with riot police defending Tokyo International Airport (Haneda Airport) to stop Prime Minister Satō Eisaku from visiting South Vietnam. After this incident, armed struggles using helmets and lengths of wood became a fixture in the student movement.

2 Cho Sojin 趙沼振, “1960 nendai kōhan no gakuentōsō o kangaeru: *Asabi Jānaru* de tadoru Nichidai Zenkyōtō” 1960年代後半の学園闘争を考える：『朝日ジャーナル』でたどる日大全共闘 [The Review of Student Movements in the late 1960s: Focused on NichidaiZenkyoutou in *Asabi Journal*], *Journal for Japanese Studies* (International Center for Japanese Studies, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies) no. 8, 2018, pp. 91–116.



Figure 2: Party commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of Nichidai-Zenkyōtō, June 10, 2018. Photo by author.

In this regard, the activities of the Nihon University 930 reunion are worth studying. At this reunion, named after the date of an important victory for mass bargaining,³ the members devote themselves as activists and keep historical records in order to examine themselves as objects of history. Their activities have been important for improving the constitution of the university. They have also made a conscious effort to record the genealogy of the Nichidai Movement and shared their experiences with their old university peers, to understand the differences with their own memories.

This paper traces how the Nihon University 930 reunion has enabled its members to write the history of the Nichidai-Zenkyōtō and its campus-related activism of the late 1960s. The expression “afterlives” in the title refers to Kristin Ross’s *May’68 and Its Afterlives* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004). The book recaptures the memory of May 1968 in France, and Ross states that the May 1968 story and images have been transformed and coded as official stories by the media and people in a society which tends to be neoliberal. This means that this process leads to social oblivion depending on how it will be interpreted in the media in the future. Japan’s 1968 and its afterlives will be coded by the media and also by those who were involved in the struggle. Associations such as the Nihon University 930 reunion are working on keeping their memories on record by organizing the narratives of when they fought together in the 1960s and 1970s. My research attempts to consider what “collective memories” the reunion people form of the Nichidai struggle and the form that each narrative takes. Based on interviews with reunion participants, this paper reviews the significance of Nichidai-Zenkyōtō.

1. Previous Research on Zenkyōtō

Research on Zenkyōtō is often organized as one-sided leftist radicalism, highlighting ostensible ferocity and militancy. Previous studies I will discuss later on in this chapter evaluated Zenkyōtō as containing a horizontal organizational structure in contrast to the old left of the Japanese Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party of Japan. Zenkyōtō, especially Nihon University and Tokyo University, showed the political potential to mobilize mass supporters from

3 On September 30, 1968, about thirty-five thousand students attended a twelve-hour public meeting in the Nichidai auditorium, and executives of the board, including Chairman Furuta Jūjiro, fully acknowledged Nichidai-Zenkyōtō’s requirements.

the new movement even though it was bound by traditional partisanship. In short, Zenkyōtō was regarded as a process of breaking away from the old left's vertical structure.⁴

In order to make it easier to construct the story of the Zenkyōtō generation, Oguma Eiji (2009)⁵ used various materials, such as leaflets, to illustrate the situation of Japan in 1968. By pointing out the subjectivity that may lurk in people's memories, and in order to be free from prejudice against the established image of Zenkyōtō, Oguma did not interview those who were involved in the student movement of the 1960s. He showed that it was possible to describe the Zenkyōtō Movement by using abundant materials, for those who did not directly experience it. Nevertheless, Oguma's work illustrates the risk of adding a descriptive discourse when recalling that time in 1968.

On the other hand, there are two earlier studies that present a different image of Zenkyōtō from the above research: Arakawa Shoji's⁶ research on the materials donated by Nichidai-Zenkyōtō to the National Museum of Japanese History, and Kosugi Ryoko's⁷ research based on interviews with forty-four former student activists of the 1960s, including former members of Tōdai-Zenkyōtō (All-Campus Joint Struggle Committees of Tokyo University). Arakawa and Kosugi carefully verified facts based on their own survey data of interviews and Zenkyōtō materials. These can be seen as studies that examined the Zenkyōtō of the late 1960s from the hindsight and wisdom of historical distance.

Even today, half a century after the Nichidai struggle, the alumni of Nihon University 930 continue to record their struggle. In accordance with Arakawa and Kosugi's research methods, I myself was involved in Nichidai-Zenkyōtō's recent activity and conducted a review based on participant observation. Next, this paper will focus on how the activists continue to record their Nichidai-Zenkyōtō experiences at alumni meetings.

2. The Afterlives of Nichidai-Zenkyōtō: Archival Activism

In 1968, in each faculty of Nihon University, some students formed a struggle committee spontaneously, and they decided to call themselves Nichidai-Zenkyōtō. In the case of the other

4 This had come out of the New Social Movement that emerged in the 1970s. Japan's new social movements contained aspects of feminism and environmentalism such as the Women's Liberation Movement and the Anti-Pollution Movement.

5 Oguma Eiji 小熊英二, *1968 Wakamonotachi no hanran to sono haikai* 1968 〈上〉若者たちの叛乱とその背景 [1968, Vol. 1: The Youth Revolts and Their Background]; *1968 Hanran no shūen to sono isan* 1968 〈下〉叛乱の終焉とその遺産 [1968, Vol. 2: The End of the Youth Revolts and its Legacy], Tokyo: Shinyōsha, 2009.

6 Arakawa Shoji 荒川章二, "1968 nen Daigaku Tōsō ga toutamono: Nichidai Tōsō no Jirei ni sokushite" 1968年大学闘争が問うたもの：日大闘争の事例に即して [What University Student Movements in 1968 Entailed: The Case of Nihon University], *The Journal of Ohara Institute for Social Research* (Hosei University) no. 698, 2016, pp. 1–24; "Nichidai Tōsō: 9.30 Taishūdankō igo" 日大闘争：9.30 大衆団交以後 [Nihon University Struggle: The Aftermath of the 9/30 Mass Bargaining], *Bulletin of the National Museum of Japanese History* (The National Museum of Japanese History) no. 216, 2019, pp. 213–242.

7 Kosugi Ryoko 小杉亮子, *Tōdai Tōsō no Katari: Shakai Undō no Yoji to Senryaku* 東大闘争の語り：社会運動の予示と戦略 [Life Histories of Japanese Student Activists in the 1960s: Prefiguration and Strategy in the Campus Protest of the University of Tokyo], Tokyo: Shinyōsha, 2018.

Zenkyōtōs, executives such as the president, vice president, and secretary were selected from among the students belonging to the student council, and the organization was formed around them. Therefore, most of the college struggle began with an awareness of the executives, and their policy was smoothly determined in macroscopic terms. The case of Nichidai-Zenkyōtō was different because President Akita Akehiro was the sole figure frequently reported on in the mass media, and the faces of other executives were rarely known throughout the school.⁸ Nichidai-Zenkyōtō did not have a vertical leadership system because the members gathered freely. For this reason, Nichidai students may have had very different ideas, and started an uprising despite holding different political views. Nonetheless, Nichidai-Zenkyōtō played a pivotal role in gathering all students. The reason was that Nichidai-Zenkyōtō students had defined the existence of right-wing organizations and sports clubs that were mobilized for the oppressive governance of universities as “organized violence.”

So, what kind of activities are the students who participated in the Nichidai struggle still doing today? Nichidai-Zenkyōtō was formed autonomously by gathering individual students to object to the corruption of the university authorities in 1968. Half a century later, Nichidai-Zenkyōtō is recording its memories of the Nichidai struggle under the name The Nihon University 930 reunion.

The reunion was initially formed as a general alumni association on September 30, 1995. However, fewer people participated in its activities during the following ten years. It was only after the current bureau members⁹ joined the alumni meeting that the activities of the reunion were put on track.¹⁰

With what ideas do they participate in the reunion? Also, how does the position of Nichidai-Zenkyōtō in 1968 and the 930 reunion members differ? Through interviews with members of the reunion, I quote the answers to the questions below.

Mihashi: At first, I started to participate in this reunion of Nihon University 930, keeping my distance from alumni parties. I participated as an editor of the documentary records (the journal series, *A Record of Activism of Nihon University: Unforgettable Moments*), but I did not make the series or write papers on behalf of Nichidai-Zenkyōtō. I used to mention the name of this reunion, but I was not conscious of myself as a member of this group. The current reunion can be said to still be a group (Nichidai-Zenkyōtō) in which individuals freely participate, just like in the Nichidai struggle.

Yazaki: I think it is necessary to say that rather than thinking from the position of a 930 reunion member, it is now simply fifty years later. The people who created this alumni association would have pushed for a simple meeting and thought, well, the Nichidai

8 Mihashi Toshiaki 三橋俊明, *Zenkyōtō, 1968 nen no yukaina hanran* 全共闘、1968年の愉快的な叛乱 [Zenkyōtō: 1968's Pleasant Revolts], Tokyo: Sairyūsha, 2018, p. 81.

9 The current members are Yazaki Kaoru 矢崎薫, Mihashi Toshiaki, Ōba Hisaaki 大場久昭, Nakamura Jun 中村順, Okamoto Tatsushi 岡本達思, Aoki Masami 青木正巳, Mataka Yoshiyuki 真武善行, Shigaguchi Hiroto 志賀口博人, Tomizawa Rikurō 富澤陸郎, Kobayashi Kazuhiro 小林一博, Kiyonaga Hiroshi 清永博, Yamamura Takateru 山村貴輝, Okusumi Yoshio 奥住好雄, and Kurigami Mitsuyuki 操上光行.

10 Interview conducted by email with Kawana Kazuo 川名和夫 on February 5, 2019. As an early member of the Nihon University 930 reunion, Kawana gave me information on former members.

struggle was great, the 9/30 mass bargaining was also great, so yes, why don't we gather at the reunion, or something like that. They didn't have the sense to record Nichidai-Zenkyōtō properly, unlike us who are gathered here now.

Ōba: No, they wanted to make some kind of documentary records, too. But the plan they were thinking of did not go well, and eventually it didn't go this way or that. No plans can proceed unless someone initially puts it all down on paper. As Yazaki participated in this meeting, he held an annual alumni party that was divided into a symposium in the morning and a social gathering in the afternoon. The number of participants increased because the vice president of Nichidai-Zenkyōtō, Yazaki, was at the center.

Yazaki: When I held the first symposium, someone told me to stop this kind of assembly. I was told to stop holding symposiums and social gatherings separately. It meant that everybody could drink and enjoy the party from the beginning. Some people came all the way from the countryside to Tokyo, so they wanted to talk about the old days while drinking with their friends. I was surprised that even if I was a Nichidai student like them, and my goal was to record the Nichidai struggle, our experiences were so different. All the Nichidai students were and are different. So, the 930 reunion members are also different. Not all one hundred thousand students were the same just because they were Nichidai-Zenkyōtō. Everybody's motives for participating in the Nichidai struggle were different, every Nichidai-Zenkyōtō person was born and raised differently and in different places, the reasons for entering Nihon University were different, and the time spent by grade was different. Since such people made Nichidai-Zenkyōtō, even after fifty years, their feelings about Nichidai-Zenkyōtō will still be different.¹¹

From the outset, and despite holding different views, the reunion members aimed to record their experiences at Nichidai-Zenkyōtō. Their goal was to write down their own experiences to check each other's disparate memories of the Nichidai struggle. For this reason, their record-keeping activities were certainly not meant to be read by others first. To start restructuring the collective memories of the Nichidai struggle, the reunion members focused on their own efforts to discuss their student movement as history.

As a result, they were able to collect material amounting to about forty boxes containing fifteen thousand documents on Nichidai-Zenkyōtō. However, it was not easy to keep this vast amount of material and use all of these data for their recording activities. Thus, the reunion decided to donate all of their material on Nichidai-Zenkyōtō to the National Museum of Japanese History, and the records serve as evidence describing a social movement in contemporary Japan.¹² The donated data was comprised of about fifteen thousand documents.¹³ This was a big step for-

11 I interviewed a few members of the Nihon University 930 reunion (Yazaki Kaoru, Mihashi Toshiaki, Ōba Hisaaki, Nakamura Jun, Kobayashi Kazuhiro, and Mori Yūichi 森雄一) at the Café Renoir in Shinjuku Sanhome BYGS building on January 6, 2019.

12 The National Museum of Japan History held the special exhibition "1968" from October 11 to December 10, 2017. Nichidai-Zenkyōtō's materials were also exhibited.

13 Mihashi Toshiaki, *Nichidai tōsō to Zenkyōtō undō: Nichidai tōsō kōkaizadankai no kiroku* 日大闘争と全共闘運動：日大闘争公開座談会の記録 [Nichidai Struggle and the Zenkyōtō Movement: The Record of the Roundtable Talk on the Nichidai Struggle], Tokyo: Sairyūsha, 2018, p. 14.

ward because the history of student activism in the 1960s can be factually reconstructed. While physical material is of course significant, the reflective content of the activists' remarks is also important. It is only recently that they have begun to discuss the struggle of Nihon University although many of them have published their own recollections of the late 1960s. The vice president of Nichidai-Zenkyōtō, Yazaki Kaoru, has led many recent activities of the alumni association in order to compile numerous materials into archival records.

3. Sharing the Memories of Nichidai-Zenkyōtō: Recording

The Nihon University 930 reunion finally published the first issue of its journal series, *A Record of Activism of Nihon University: Unforgettable Moments*, on February 15, 2011. The members ask alumni to participate in order to document a vast amount of memories from the late 1960s. This work is to reflect on those who had not been able to talk about the Nichidai-Zenkyōtō, and to understand the significance of recording these memories while reminiscing about the Nichidai struggle.

This book series ended with the ninth edition published on January 30, 2019. The published records have been sent to six hundred and fifty readers and are preserved as research material, including donations to public libraries and major university libraries in Japan (figures 3 and 4). Nihon University graduates who were student activists spontaneously organized the Nihon University 930 reunion as an alumni association. In principle, it is not necessary to pay membership fees because the members have indicated their willingness to cooperate with each other in their recording activities. Accordingly, the voluntary gathering enabled lively discussions and allowed the compilation of the journal's themes and special features for public consumption to be planned. Although the publication has been completed, if there are any members who wish to document their experiences, it is likely that another issue of the journal will be published.¹⁴



Figures 3 and 4: The reunion members work to prepare delivery of the final edition, no. 9, on January 29, 2019 (photo by author).

14 Nihon University 930 reunion 日大930の会, *Nichidai tōsō no kiroku: Wasurezaru hibi* 日大闘争の記録——忘れざる日々 [A Record of Activism of Nihon University: Unforgettable Moments], vol. 9, Tokyo: Nichidai tōsō o kirokusuru kai 日大闘争を記録する会 [The Group to Record the Nichidai Struggle], 2019, pp. 5–7.

In the final edition, Yazaki finally explained why he had not been able to write about Nichidai-Zenkyōtō so far, even though he is a former vice president. He could not write why he was at the scene of the student uprising, what he was going to do with his thoughts, and what happened as a result. All he could think of was simply a question mark. At this point, he realized that the Nichidai Movement became a movement for all Nichidai students, and not his own, even though he participated in the college struggle out of his own free will. He became aware that each student involved in Nichidai-Zenkyōtō actually had a wide range of experiences, recognizing the importance of recording the struggle as “a chronological timeline.”¹⁵ The members of the Nihon University 930 reunion devoted themselves to publishing the journal nine times from the first to the final issues and put the facts in chronological order; this process led them to share their memories and perspectives.

The reunion was formed as a common space where various opinions and information were exchanged and voluntarily shared. For the participants in Zenkyōtō, it was a chance to form ideas by repeating the process of producing, transmitting, and absorbing knowledge independently. Through the record-keeping activities of this reunion, the members are able to continue to judge and act on themselves as Zenkyōtō. Therefore, Yazaki attempted to understand the big picture of the Nichidai struggle through alumni meetings. Through interviews with the reunion members, I quote Yazaki’s thoughts on Nihon University 930 reunion below.

Yazaki: When I go to the alumni party, I hear lots of good stories all the time. Even though I don’t have any great purpose as such, I have held reunions for the sub-committee of each faculty. I also held a memorial service when my Nichidai colleague died. So, I made a list of 670 Nichidai alumni. At first, I didn’t have the idea to make a book, I just wanted to meet everyone. As I heard interesting stories at the reunion, I wanted to record them. I wanted to record the Nichidai struggle of others. Hosting an alumni meeting was one way of knowing why I fought in Nichidai-Zenkyōtō. Listening to other people’s stories of the Nichidai struggle, I was able to have the time to learn about Nichidai-Zenkyōtō.¹⁶

Conclusion

This research uses interviews not simply to examine the background of a university reform movement led by Nichidai-Zenkyōtō, but to study how the Nihon University 930 reunion has fostered its own intellect during its documentation activities. The reunion was and is a space for exchanging opinions and information and then sharing and spreading knowledge voluntarily. Any members of Nichidai-Zenkyōtō are able to deliver their thoughts by producing, transmitting, and absorbing “intelligence” on their own. Thus, they again lived and judged themselves and acted as student activists through their activities. They have also continued to record the background and the purpose of the struggle, which is not easily integrated into previous studies on Japan of 1968. In short,

15 Ibid., pp. 154–158.

16 I interviewed two members of the Nihon University 930 reunion (Yazaki Kaoru, Mihashi Toshiaki) at the Café Renoir in Kichijoji on December 22, 2018.

it is essential to consider Nichidai-Zenkyōtō as a subject of history. Their work is an attempt to break away from the cliché of the historical context by rewriting their own stories. All the protests that occurred in the late 1960s are apt to converge on 1968.

For the generations who did not experience 1968, the Nichidai struggle should be presented as a historical issue. In order to deal with what happened in 1968, it needs to be recognized as a problem of Zenkyōtō's afterlives that still continues rather than described as a tale of heroism.

日本の「1968年」——日大全共闘とその後——

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本稿では、1968年に日大全共闘に結集した仲間たちで成り立つ同窓会組織「日大930の会」に着目し、彼らに行ったインタビュー調査の内容を通じて、日大闘争の経験を言語化して記録することの意義について考察する。日大930の会は、『日大闘争の記録——忘れざる日々』と題する書籍をシリーズで発行し、当事者へ、各自の体験を記録するよう呼びかけた。彼らは今日もなお、日大全共闘としての自らを、歴史の対象として客観的に考察するための記録作業に取り組み続けている。

キーワード：日本大学、大学闘争、学生運動、記録活動、オーラル・ヒストリー

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