Revisiting Anpo through Historiography

We have been examining the historiography of the Anpo upraising—specifically, the fundamental approaches scholars have taken in writing about it. We found two books on this topic: *Protest in Tokyo: The Security Treaty Crisis of 1960* (1966) by George R. Packard III, an assistant to Reischauer (one of the founders of Japan's modernization theory), and *Japan at the Crossroads* (2018) by Nick Kapur, a professor in the History Department at Rutgers University. We are analyzing these works through a theoretical lens. The narrative differences largely reflect distinct conceptions of the modern nation. *Protest in Tokyo* is written primarily in what Homi Bhabha calls "pedagogical time"—stable, sequential, and grand in scope. As Bhabha argues, "The people are not simply historical events or parts of a patriotic body politic. They are also a complex signification of cultural difference, constructed through the pedagogical, discursive, and disciplinary processes of the nation." We will demonstrate how *Protest in Tokyo* is more didactic, attempting to construct a narrative of the new Japanese nation for both American and Japanese audiences, as Packard was deeply influenced by Reischauer and the McCarthyism that contributed to the death of modernization theory's opponent, Herbert Norman.

In contrast, *Japan at the Crossroads* (2018) reads more like a novel, devoting the final third of the book to cultural and social aspects of the period. It functions more as a social history or encyclopedia of the Anpo era, making it naturally more neutral—or, as we might say, more performative than pedagogical. However, we must acknowledge that this comparison is somewhat unfair: *The Protest in Tokyo* focuses exclusively on

the Anpo movement itself, covering the peak period of 1959-1960 and ending shortly after Prime Minister Kishi's resignation, while *Japan at the Crossroads* dedicates significant space to Kishi's successor, Hayato Ikeda. Nevertheless, we believe this limited overlap is sufficient to identify fundamental differences between the two books.

Before proceeding to the historiographical analysis, we should clarify what the Anpo movement entailed. The two books offer slightly different definitions, but the essential facts are these: After World War II, the United States and Japan signed the United States-Japan Security Treaty in 1951. The Cold War situation, strong opposition within Japan, and the ambitions of Nobusuke Kishi led to a treaty revision in 1960. Mass protests occurred before and after the signing of the revised Anpo treaty, heavily involving college student organizations like Zengakuren (All-Japan Federation of Students' Self-Governing Associations). Because this was such a massive movement that dramatically affected U.S. foreign policy toward Japan and influenced subsequent Japanese government domestic policy—particularly the decision to focus primarily on economic development—many scholars from that era onward have studied it, resulting in the two books under discussion today. *Crossroads* argues from many perspectives that Kishi's claim that he "blamed the protests entirely on a small minority of communists" overlooks the fact that masses of Japanese people were also opposed to him, thereby undervaluing the power of ordinary citizens. The text cites the "Concentric Circles" of Protesters model, explaining that while anti-American sentiment was confined to the communist hard core, the outer and largest circle consisted of people who were anti-Prime Minister Kishi. Almost everyone who walked in the streets did so partly because Kishi was a suspected Class-A war criminal who appeared to be trying

to bring back pre-war politics and a secret police state. It is also mentioned in the *Protest in Tokyo*: "They were convinced he was an unreformed fascist plotting to turn back the hands of the clock" (p. 52). Daily protests drew upwards of 135,000 participants; however, Packard didn't discuss women's engagement in the protests as extensively as Kapur does. Packard attempts to describe the variety of protesters: "All kinds of people participated in the more peaceful demos: sons and daughters of wealthy financiers, Christian groups, office girls, young businessmen—even a few high school students." However, in Kapur's writing, there is clearly more than just "office girls". Women did support work in the early stages, then went out into the streets starting in spring 1960, and eventually became part of their own political awakening (p. 171).

Let us now examine the most general differences between the two books' writing styles and structures. *Crossroads* opens with a cinematic scene: the introduction depicts the massive, movie-like protests against Kishi and the treaty signing at the Diet building in Tokyo, including the destruction of public property such as shops and aggressive confrontations with Japanese police. This followed the "underhanded" tactic of allowing the treaty to pass automatically after the Diet session closed, one month before Eisenhower's scheduled visit to Japan—a visit that was ultimately canceled in what many saw as a humiliating capitulation to the protesters. The remainder of the book explores the reasons for and aftermath of these events. *Protest in Tokyo*, by contrast, follows a more traditional chronological structure: it first discusses socialism in Japan, including different schools of thought within the Japanese left and debates over whether the Meiji Restoration led Japan toward capitalism. It also provides background on U.S.-Japan relations at the time. The Anpo crisis itself appears in the middle of the book

and concludes with Kishi's resignation. In my view, this structural difference suggests that *Crossroads* aims to engage readers' interest more immediately. It also includes more "conspiracy theory"-like content, such as secret deals and communications between the two governments, which *Protest in Tokyo* does not mention—the latter relies primarily on public known sources such as Japanese local newspapers, which Packard cites directly numerous times. We will discuss the differences in their opening approaches in greater detail in the next paragraph, as this directly illustrates the prescriptive nature of *Protest in Tokyo*.

A closer example can be found on page 35 in the chapter "Popular Attitudes Toward U.S. Troops and Bases," which begins with the assertion that Japan is traditionally sensitive to foreign soldiers. With this "preoccupied" attitude, the book assumes that regardless of how professional and well-behaved U.S. soldiers were—and regardless of any statistical proof—"Had each U.S. soldier been a model of good behavior, there would still have been misunderstandings and friction." This leads to an educational tone that attempts to downplay the later William S. Girard accident. Girard "shot an empty shell case from his grenade launcher and killed an elderly Japanese woman brass-collector on a U.S.-leased firing range on January 30, 1957." The book then includes a paragraph that uses a very official tone to explain the controversy over which legal system should try the soldier. Later, it attempts to make excuses for U.S. troops again, stating that "In stressing these sources of friction, it would be unfair to overlook the honest efforts of military commanders and personnel to create good will and understanding" (page 37). On page 38, it mentions the 25,000 marriages between U.S.

soldiers and Japanese women as evidence of "so much goodwill." It then describes how the U.S. bases interrupted the normal daily lives of local people, leading to additional fatal accidents. Interestingly, the book creates another narrative about how leftists demonized the U.S.—narratives that do not appear in *Crossroads*, which does not attempt to make excuses for the Girard accident and provides much more detail about the incident, making it almost a different story. This makes me wonder: why did the author Packard include discussion of U.S. soldiers' goodwill in his description of the Anpo movement? He also attacks leftists multiple times; for example, while the masses wanted to improve the Anpo treaty with a relatively mild attitude, the extreme leftists "took the mood as a signal to launch new and harsher attacks on the treaty." One cannot ignore the Cold War background and the resulting bias. *Crossroads* also uses the term "extreme leftist," but in a different narrative context—as citations from other people rather than the author himself calling the left extreme.

In contrast, *Crossroads*' narration of the incident is very different. One excerpt states: "William S. Girard shot an empty grenade cartridge, apparently for his own amusement, at Sakai Naka, a housewife and mother of six who was collecting spent shell casings at a US military base to sell for scrap…" The phrase "for amusement," or anything similar, is not mentioned anywhere in the *Protest in Tokyo*, which leaves almost no comment on the soldier himself and merely argues that it was an isolated accident. Conversely, *Crossroads* does not mention any "good things" the US Army did, as these are not central to the Anpo movement—the book does not need to justify the occupation forces. There are many more details about the Girard incident in *Crossroads*, such as how the Kishi government was heavily pressured by public outcry against allowing the trial to

occur in the US, forcing them to insist that the case be tried inside Japan instead. *The Protest in Tokyo* does not mention this at all. The author clearly knows about this from newspapers and Japanese polls, which are part of his primary sources—so why doesn't he mention the possible causality? Or perhaps we should say that Packard doesn't bother to put much effort into it; it was never a major part of his book.

The Soviet view of the Anpo Treaty, as presented in one book, characterized it as "reviving Japanese militarism" and as an "Anglo-American imperialistic pact aimed at the further exploitation of the peoples of Asia" (p. 9). On page 59, a list of the USSR's achievements is presented, such as the first Sputnik satellites, in contrast to the US's Vanguard rocket explosion on the launch pad—raising the question of whether Japan had chosen the right side, the winning side. Kapur's book does not emphasize the attractiveness of the USSR's achievements; instead, it focuses more on Khrushchev's Secret Speech condemning Stalin and the invasion of Hungary, which made Japanese leftists lose hope in Russia. Packard does not mention Khrushchev's Secret Speech at all. This choice must be considered within the Cold War context: Packard may have believed the USSR was considered attractive to Japan, whereas Kapur focused more on the attractions of socialism and communism as ideologies themselves, rather than the Soviet‘s version specifically. Both books use the U-2 shootdown over Soviet soil in 1960 to argue that Japanese people feared they would be involved in another major war.

I can identify an existing theory influenced by modernization theory: the notion that Japan "doesn't know about democracy" or suffers from a "small village mentality." On

page 348, in the conclusion, Packard states five rules to balance majority rule and minority rights, which were lacking at the time. This leaves a tone questioning "whether this sort of rush will produce mature political behavior in the future." This reflects the limitations of writing in 1966, when Reischauer had just finished his term without fully witnessing the economic boom that would occur later—so raising such concerns would have been reasonable at the time. However, Kapur never adopts a similar tone about "immaturity." Instead, he presents Anpo as a very positive awakening and turning point, a "crossroads" that laid the foundation for future prosperity as a "revolutionless revolution" (p. 212)—a grassroots movement that made mass street protests less imaginable later on, regardless of critics who saw it as a naive or violent event.

Packard also claims that "docility in the face of authority philosophy has resulted in the massive protest movements," tracing this assertion back to the feudal period when Japanese people (peasants) traditionally endured pain unless dramatic social change occurred (Packard, p. 344)—which comes very close to Orientalism. Kapur never traces Anpo back to the pre-modern era; instead, he focuses realistically on the war's legacy, the occupation period, and Cold War geopolitics. These factors are sufficient for telling the story of Anpo; there is no need to excavate supposed rooted ethnic characteristics to engage in wishful thinking or unnecessary speculation. It is hard not to conclude that Packard was influenced by modernization theory, as he clearly views Japan as being on the path toward democratization but as extremely naive—with the "dark valley" period of militarization interrupting this process and Anpo serving as a legacy of that interruption. In this framework, the U.S. can serve as a parental figure to the country, and as I listed

earlier, the occupation is portrayed mostly positively in Packard's writing.

Kapur also discusses Reischauer as ambassador, noting that he traveled around the country to establish very close relations with the Japanese people while also maintaining an unusually close relationship with President Kennedy. He was an icebreaker who played a key role in leading to co-prosperity and the equality/normalization of the two nations. However, there is crucial information on page 63: Reischauer provided Ikeda with "advance notice of US foreign policy decisions," from nuclear testing to troop movements, as a key lesson learned from Anpo. This shifted the relationship from "open dictation" to "fatherly guidance." Reischauer played a major role in moving the relationship's security background forward, and this is part of the reason there were no more street protests in Japan—people would not clearly know what was happening, or issues were being resolved through collective PR.

Reischauer appears only a few times in *Protest in Tokyo*. In the preface, the book mentions that it was reviewed by the U.S. embassy, which automatically weakens the book's credibility. The last mention states that after Anpo, Reischauer was appointed by Kennedy and became highly popular in Japan, starting a "new era of 'equal partnership'" (Packard, p. 342). One could argue that such advanced confidential communication was top secret in 1966 and could not have been disclosed at that time—but what about Packard's new book published in 2010, *Edwin O. Reischauer and the American Discovery of Japan*?

I was expecting there would be more information in his new book; however, the book reads more like a third-person autobiography, beginning with how Reischauer was one

of the only few students interested in Japanese studies at Harvard. Not until Chapter 9 does it begin to discuss his ambassadorial term. Similar to Kapur's writing, it describes how Reischauer understood the people's needs and political needs (such as returning Okinawa), which made for a successful term. Yet it didn't mention anything about secret diplomatic communication, again. This raises a question: does Packard know about this? Even if he knows, would he think this is a necessary part to bring up? There are a few places where I can tell Packard has an attachment to Reischauer, such as the pattern of "if Reischauer were alive today… he would…" This attachment might have affected him and prevented him from bringing up the criticisms against Reischauer. Kapur didn't criticize Reischauer—in fact, Kapur complimented the efforts during Reischauer's term—but Packard's continued omission of secret diplomacy is strange.

My criticism of Packard's *Protest in Tokyo: The Security Treaty Crisis of 1960* focuses mostly on the introduction and conclusion chapters. Other parts of the book do not lend themselves to fundamental historiographical critique, such as its discussions of ideological differences among leftists—particularly between the Japan Communist Party and the Japan Socialist Party—or its detailed accounts of the 1960 Anpo protests, including Prime Minister Kishi’s motivations for pursuing treaty revision so aggressively. This may be because these are relatively stable historical facts, but also because my current level of expertise does not permit a more developed historiographical critique in these areas. Kapur's book's conclusion emphasizes the Anpo uprising makes the ruling class realize "... democratic structures and institutions are employed to manufacture consensus and legitimize the power of the powerful, they ultimately rest on the consent of the governed." Packard would argue that Anpo was concerned as a destruction to

fragile post-war democratic structures. I conclude that Packard's book, serving U.S. interests in the 1960s, was deeply affected by U.S. ideology or served as propaganda material. Kapur’s writing speaks to the present moment, when democracy appears increasingly dysfunctional. Could another Anpo serve as a democratic corrective?