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Hiroshima Traces

Time, Space, and the Dialectics of Memory

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS
Berkeley Los Angeles London

University of California Press
Berkeley and Los Angeles, California

University of California Press, Ltd.
London, England

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Yoneyama, Lisa, 1959–
Hiroshima traces : time, space, and the dialectics of memory / Lisa Yoneyama.
p. cm. — (Twentieth-century Japan ; v10)
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 0-520-08586-8 (alk. paper)
ISBN 0-520-08587-6 (alk. paper)
1. Hiroshima-shi (Japan)—History—Bombardment, 1945. I. Title. II. Series.
D767.25.H6Y66 1999
940.54'25—dc21 98-31739
CIP

Printed in the United States of America
9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of American National Standards for Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI Z39.48-1984.

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Prologue

Hiroshima Traces is a product of unfolding dialogues. It grows out of, and has undergone numerous transformations as a result of, the conversations and other interactions I have had with many individuals over the years. Intellectual trajectories are full of wonder. They are shaped by unanticipated personal encounters, both within and outside academia, and this book reflects the many pleasurable, unexpected, and sometimes painful turns that I have made during the years in which it has been in progress. I can at long last thank all those who have contributed in many different but equally valuable ways to my research and writing.

The intellectual and philosophical guidance I received from two teachers, Tsurumi Kazuko and Murai Yoshinori at Jōchi University in Tokyo—where I majored in German language studies in the early 1980s and then in international relations as a graduate student—has greatly influenced my outlook on society and culture. In large part, this study remains faithful to the sensitivities these two scholars communicated to me about the necessity of attending to local specificities even when analyzing global political, social, and economic structures.

While I was a graduate student in the Anthropology Department at Stanford University, Harumi Befu, Renato Rosaldo, and Sylvia Yanagisako guided me through the changes that were going on in the field of cultural anthropology during the mid-1980s. They nurtured me, as they did many others, with a rare blend of critical intellectual sophistication and down-to-earth manner. Through them I especially learned that

CHAPTER 4

Mnemonic Detours

What science has "established," memoration can modify. Memoration can make the incomplete (happiness) into something complete, and the complete (suffering) into something incomplete. That is theology; but in memoration we discover the experience (*Erfahrung*) that forbids us to conceive of history as thoroughly a-theological, even though we barely dare not attempt to write it according to literally theological concepts.

Walter Benjamin, "N: [Re the Theory of Knowledge, Theory of Progress]" (1989 [1937–40])

This space protects the weapons of the weak against the reality of the established order. It also hides them from the social categories which "make history" because they dominate it. And whereas historiography recounts in the past tense the strategies of instituted powers, these "fabulous" stories offer their audience a repertory of tactics for future use.

Michel de Certeau,
The Practice of Everyday Life (1984)

For our very first encounter on 20 March 1989, Numata Suzuko, whose testimonial practices I discuss in this chapter, designated a meeting place inside the Peace Memorial Park: a particular parasol tree. I immediately understood why; from the visual and print media, I knew well that the tree had served her as a kind of totem. A parasol tree had been growing in the courtyard of the building where Numata worked at the time of the bombing but it had died in the nuclear blast—or so it was thought. Yet it miraculously revived several years after the war. Though scarred and painfully disfigured, it thrives today with its new growth of leaves and branches. A branch was taken from this original tree and transplanted in the Peace Park, there to be memorialized as "the atom-bombed parasol tree" (*hibaku shita aogiri*). In her testimonies, Numata frequently projected her mutilated body and spirit, as well as her rebirth, onto the story of the tree's life history.

At the tree, Numata briefly introduced herself and then proceeded to explain how learning of the tree's resilience and tenacity had saved her life. We then started walking toward the nearby building where most of our conversation would take place. However, rather than head straight toward the main streets, she first guided me through and around the Peace Memorial Park. We briefly walked through the meandering narrow streets to a graveyard behind a small temple. Numata pointed to the tombstones on which the dates of deaths prior to August 1945 were engraved. Many of them were fractured, worn, and discolored; the graves bore clear marks of the atomic blast. Even the dead had not been able to escape the destruction. She then drew my attention to relatively newer gravestones. A number of these were inscribed with the names of family members, which is not unusual for individuals with extended households. But Numata's point lay elsewhere. She noted the narrow range of the dates on the stones: the summer after the nuclear destruction, the next year after that, and so on—almost all of the dates seemed to fall within a few years following 6 August 1945. Numata guided me out of the graveyard and into the bright daylight, onto the main downtown thoroughfares where it became impossible to see the graves that were still only a few meters away.

Numata's short guided tour alerts us to the necessity of being attentive to space when considering *hibakusha*'s testimonial practices. Spatial metaphors of the city have powerfully conditioned both the memories of Hiroshima's atomic obliteration and the rememberers' subjectivities as witnesses. Almost without exception, the survivors' accounts include the distance they were located from the hypocenter, precisely given in meters or kilometers, at the instant of the bomb's explosion. The witnesses' memories are mediated by the visual image of a city map on which the by now familiar concentric circles, radiating outward and measuring distance from the hypocenter, have been superimposed. Since the witnesses' utterances were encouraged within such a spatial paradigm during the postwar years, references to precise "distances from the hypocenter" (*bakushinchi kara no kyori*) determined to a great extent the narrators' identities as *hibakusha*.

At the same time, the image of concentric circles radiating outward over a map of the city replicates the vision of the pilots who dropped the bomb and inspected its aftermath. The power of the bombsight to objectify, determine, and name everything that survived beneath it was

such that hardly anyone has been able to narrate postnuclear Hiroshima from outside this perspective. This gaze from above, a transcendental sight, was forever inscribed on the landscape and came to condition any subsequent attempt to represent the incident. It has also subsumed survivors' diverse experiences and subjectivities under the universal and anonymous identity of *hibakusha*. The testimonies concerning Hiroshima's nuclear disaster have always been shaped by and against this dominant spatial representation. As was mentioned in the previous chapter, this spatial re-cognition of the city has also been one of the crucial components of both medico-legal and antinuclear discourses on Hiroshima's atomic bombing.

In this chapter, I will track the sites of memory that emerge out of a variety of spatial tactics *hibakusha* and others deploy in order to construct their narratives about the past. To be sure, the space of storytellings that emerges out of such geographic traffickings does not exist beyond the hegemonic spatial representations of late-twentieth-century Hiroshima, nor are they capable of taking over the dominant memoryscape. Yet it is also possible that linking sites that ostensibly have no historical relevance to one another may elicit knowledge that has not otherwise been manifest. The physical and discursive movements guided by these storytellers traverse not only urban surfaces but also the geopolitical boundaries of the nation-state—and in this sense the storytellers' tactics operate through what might best be understood as "mnemonic detours."

The sites of storytellings that proliferate through these mnemonic detours generate memories of Hiroshima that are hardly reconcilable with its official historical self-portraiture. The latter is grounded on memories of the hometown's collective victimization and the image of a peace-loving, cosmopolitan metropolis that has miraculously recovered. Even those sites and stories that previously had been related exclusively to the nuclear disaster begin to enunciate various social relations and meanings that are not necessarily confined to the discourse of the city's, and by extension the nation's, victimization, or to the dominant narrative of postwar prosperity. The spaces enunciated in the survivors' performances may be processual and transient, appearing only briefly at moments of remembrance. Moreover, they are conditioned by the structure of the official memoryscape and at times may even unwittingly underscore its dominance. Yet because the survivors represent the authoritative embodiment of the original catastrophic moment, they ensure that the interjected sites will continue to disrupt Hiroshima's urban

scenery, even in its renewed state. In what follows, we will consider the specific ways in which some survivors' testimonial practices and spatial tactics help destabilize, and often even challenge, hegemonic ways of knowing about the past and present.

NARRATIVE MARGINS AND CRITICAL KNOWLEDGE

Narrators' testimonial practices often have the effect, whether intended or not, of unsettling the world that listeners accept as self-evident. The narratives and activities of Numata Suzuko—one of the founding members of Kataru Kai, who already has been introduced as an opponent of recent renewal efforts—perhaps illustrate this best. Numata's narrative practices generate what might be called critical knowledge: that is, knowledge that works to denaturalize the taken-for-granted realities of society and culture.

Numata Suzuko was twenty-two when she lost her left leg to the bomb. Because the bomb almost completely destroyed all hospitals and medical equipment, as well as killing medical crews, her wounded ankle was left untreated for three days, resulting in suppuration. She was accommodated at what was left of a ruined hospital, where her leg was amputated without anesthesia. Even after the war's end she remained bedridden, and by the time she was finally released from the hospital she had undergone four operations. Today, she lives with her younger sister, Fusako, who is also a survivor.[1] Although her injuries from the explosion were relatively minor, Fusako developed breast cancer at the age of thirty-nine. She had two operations and continues to suffer from various side effects of cobalt therapy.

In March 1989, shortly after my arrival in Hiroshima, I made an appointment with Numata Suzuko over the telephone. I had learned from others that although some elderly survivors find it improper for strangers to arrange meetings except through letters, Numata welcomes anyone who makes the effort to talk with her. The following day, we met at exactly the appointed time outside the former Peace Memorial Building in the Peace Memorial Park.

I only learned a few months later that the place she would bring me to is a multipurpose space used for conferences, small meetings, accommodations, and consultations for various *hibakusha*-related matters. As we walked into it, she greeted an elderly man who was working at a desk on the first floor and invited him to join us in the upstairs meeting room. His role was to facilitate the application procedures for

survivors wishing to obtain *hibakusha* certificates. He immediately appeared with a large quantity of materials to remedy my possible lack of basic knowledge about Hiroshima's atom bomb. These included leaflets that explained atom bomb damages in general, literature with statistical data concerning the survivors, and a map of the city on which the familiar concentric circles radiating out from the hypocenter had been superimposed. After the man left the room, Numata provided me with a few additional photocopies: printed and handwritten materials that transcribed excerpts from her testimonies, and again, a map with the concentric circles. She then told me her story, a story that began on the morning of "that day," 6 August 1945.

The following transcription translates her narrative almost in its entirety. Later we will examine how the structuration of her stories constitutes a politics of knowledge, both within the text and in relation to other texts she has produced.

> On that morning, I went to work at the Hiroshima Telegraph and Communication Services Department, which was located 1,000 meters away from the hypocenter. Three members of my family worked at the same place. My father worked on the fourth floor, my younger sister on the third floor, and I worked in an office built on the roof of the building. My older brother was working at the Hiroshima Main Post Office, which was located 1,500 meters away from the hypocenter. My mother stayed at home. . . .
>
> I was engaged then. My fiancé was conscripted and sent to the front five months after we became publicly engaged. Our wedding was arranged for the fall of 1945. By the time he left for war, I had met him only three times. I hadn't had a chance to even hold his hand. It was the older days, you see. Just as many other young women of those days, I too was yearning for marriage and I was determined to become a good wife. My heart was fluttering. In those wartime days, marriage was indeed something cheerful, something we could look forward to.
>
> So, on that day too, not having even the slightest idea that Hiroshima was chosen as an atomic bomb target, I went off cheerfully to work. I was especially excited then because I had just received a postcard from my fiancé, noting that he would come back to Hiroshima sometime in August. So my heart was fluttering even more, as I thought, "Oh, I can see him again." But at that hour, the plane was in fact already up to here [pointing to the Enola Gay's navigation map and its position at 7:31 A.M., 6 August]. But nothing was revealed to me (*nanimo shirasarete inakatta*).
>
> [At the workplace,] since the three other workers were not around, I cleaned the office by myself. Although I usually put away the cleaning stuff on the rooftop, somehow on that morning, I decided to use the fourth-floor bathroom. So I walked down the stairs with a bucket in my hand, looking at my colleagues outside the building. I stood in the hallway in front of the bathroom, and suddenly, I clearly saw in front of my eyes a flash of brightly colored light, like a magnesium explosion. And the next second I was completely unconscious.
>
> When I became conscious, I was in a dark room, crushed underneath something extremely heavy. My body was apparently blown away by the blast because I had been standing in the hallway. I heard some people yelling and running down the hallway. I was shouting half unconsciously, "Please help me," and a rescuer found me underneath [the collapsed building] and hurriedly pulled me out. My left ankle was already almost entirely cut off. . . . We escaped to the courtyard. There is a fire ahead of us; the surrounding trees, too, are burning. When I looked back at the building, the inside was red and flames were leaping out from many windows like billowing curtains. If there had been a second's delay in my rescue, I would have vanished groaning and in agony, with tears of enmity (*onnen*). . . .
>
> The doctors amputated my leg without anesthesia. When I was told that my leg must be cut off from my thigh, I cried and resisted, saying, "My fiancé is coming back. I can't get married." But then someone told me, "It is not only you that's suffering. If you cut off your leg, you will be able to live." So I decided. . . .
>
> Later in August, I was told that my fiancé was killed in the war. He was already dead in July. All the while I was feeling thrilled about his returning to Hiroshima, he had in fact already passed away. I knew nothing about it.
>
> Thus, I was made to live (*ikasareta*) among thousands of those who fell victim to the bomb. After forty-some-odd years of this agonizing life, I came to believe that what I must do is embrace the voiceless voices of the dead—so that they do not have to feel they died in vain—and also to convey my own experience to youths like you who do not know the reality of the atomic bomb. Through telling stories (*hanashi te iru uchi ni*), I gradually begin to understand the sentiments of the dead and begin to see (*mie te kuru*). Had it been me before I ever told the stories (*hanashita koto no nai watashi datta ra*), even when someone might have said to me, "This is so, that is not so," I would have simply dismissed them, saying, "Ah, is that so." What is important is to become able to see with eyes wide open and to know (*shiru to iu koto*) so as not to repeat the tragedy ever again. We must become aware that even if we are having a fun time now, no one knows what may happen the next minute. . . .
>
> It is great that you came to see me. Let's cherish this encounter. To come to meet people like this is really a form of actual practice (*jissen*). This, too, must be some kind of *en* (karma). I hope you will learn a lot [from Hiroshima] and you, too, will someday become a storyteller.

Numata worked as a home economics teacher for twenty-eight years. She recalls that in those days she almost never told others of her memories of the bombing.[2] She would tell her students, for example, that she lost her leg in an automobile accident. In 1979 she retired in order to assist her younger sister in caring for their bedridden mother. At the nursing home where her mother stayed for nearly five years until her

death, Numata met a number of senior survivors who were ill, poor, and isolated. Their sufferings, she later recalled, were forgotten in what she called the "ravine" (*tanima*) of the nation's affluence and economic prosperity. This encounter with senior survivors was certainly one of the profound moments of awakening in her life.

Yet it was not until she became involved in a documentary film project on Hiroshima's atomic bombing that she decided to become a witness/storyteller. This film, *Ningen o kaese* (*Give Me Back Humanity*), the title of which was taken from Toge Sankichi's often-recited poem, was based on footage originally shot in April 1946 by American military crews as they surveyed the atom bomb's effects. The film, which captured the physical destruction caused by the bomb, also included visual examples of wounded survivors. Over 85,000 feet of film was brought back to the United States, classified, and stored in the National Archives in Washington, D.C., together with another documentary that had been made by a Japanese private film corporation immediately after the bombing and was subsequently confiscated by U.S. officials.[3] In 1980, several Japanese filmmakers who discovered that the film could be copied for 3,000 yen per ten feet started a campaign to "purchase back" the film from the United States. Their fund-raising campaign, called the "ten feet movement," met with great success. Contributions amounted to over 100 million yen, and four separate documentaries were eventually produced from the original footage.[4]

Numata told her biographers of her violent reencounter with the past through the film footage.[5] Since it depicted persons, rights to privacy were involved; the campaign organizers therefore contacted the survivors who appeared, or their families, in order to obtain their approval to release the relevant scenes. Numata recalls her shock when Nagai Hideaki, who spearheaded the campaign, somehow discovered where she lived and one day appeared at the front door, abruptly asking permission to disclose to the public that she was a survivor of the bomb. When she later previewed the film, she spotted the image of herself displaying her amputation to the American film crew. The violence of this representation ruptured the superficial calm of her everyday consciousness. The encounter with her own filmic image, she recalls, put her in a state of emotional disarray: the cathartic moment of remembering left her feeling appalled at the gap between the objectified self-image projected on the screen and her long-standing denial and silence. Another *hibakusha* who had already been active in testimonial

activities approached Numata, hoping to convince her of the preciousness of her witnessing as one who had survived the historic moment of a human-made catastrophe. Convinced, Numata then began to tell her stories about the bomb to the public.

In Numata's narrative, phrases such as "I knew nothing about [the bombing]," "Nothing was revealed to me," or "not having the slightest idea" appear repeatedly. Although the contents of the story she tells vary to some degree depending upon the type and size of the audience, they generally work by juxtaposing two types of knowledge: for example, she was unaware that the Enola Gay was approaching precisely at the moment when she blithely appeared in her office; or, she endured the pain of amputation in order to save her life without knowing that her awaited fiancé had already been killed a month earlier, and so on. By coupling the two disjoined temporalities, and by incorporating multiple discursive levels, Numata's narrative puts into relief both the immediate presence of the world she experienced and the reality that "was not revealed" to her.

One of the central morals of her story concerns the importance of "knowing." On the one hand, there is a knowledge that Numata at times calls "*chishiki*," which she describes as made up of "surface facts" (*omote no jijitsu*). While *chishiki* is usually rendered into English as "knowledge," her usage of the term suggests instead "information," or instrumental knowledge, which equips individuals with enough information to achieve particular objectives. On the other hand, she refers to "hidden knowledge" (*ura no jijitsu*)—what I would call, following Foucault, subjugated knowledge.[6] This unrevealed or peripheralized knowledge about the world is indispensable in establishing and sustaining the centrality of instrumental knowledge. At the same time, subjugated knowledge has the power to unsettle the surface facts precisely because it has been marginalized.

Numata's warnings about the fallibility of knowledge are most clearly heard in her portrayals of the ways in which, within the contexts of nationalism and colonialism, she came to understand herself as a *hibakusha*. Having established herself as a witness/storyteller, Numata also became a traveler on crutches. She made trips to various sites of violence—not only of war, genocide, and nuclear disaster but also of poverty, discrimination, and oppression. Trips that were initially arranged for her to tell stories about Hiroshima's disaster gradually turned into broader encounters and opportunities to listen. Numata recalls that

this all began at a meeting in Tokyo with a survivor of the Rape of Nanjing. As she traveled, she met an ever-wider range of people: Filipina women factory workers, residents of Pingdingshan in northeastern China where the Japanese army had massacred nearly 3,000 villagers, survivors of U.S. napalm bombing hospitalized in Vietnam, members of a women's antinuclear group in Belau, survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki now residing in the Republic of Korea, and so on.

One travel narrative that she incorporates into her storytelling recalls her encounter with Malaysian representations of the atomic bomb. At that moment, she realized how differently the atomic bomb is perceived by those who stand on "the other side of the history." In Malaysian official history, the atomic bomb attack on Hiroshima and Nagasaki is celebrated as a sign of liberation from the war, torture, and massacres that were brought on by the Japanese invasion. At small gatherings of Kataru Kai and a few other groups, she often spoke of a trip to Yi Long Long village in Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia. There the Eleventh Regiment of the Japanese Imperial Army's Fifth Division, formerly headquartered in Hiroshima, is known to have massacred over 1,400 Chinese residents:[7]

> there was a sign on the street [in Hiroshima] with the name of the Eleventh Regiment. . . . As young female students we would walk—back and forth, back and forth—right in front of the gate [where the troops were stationed], trying to become friendly [with the soldiers]. In those days, [the soldiers were] objects of our romantic admiration (*akogare no mato*). And we paraded with lanterns in our hands, celebrating, "Nanjing surrendered!" "Singapore surrendered!" Did we ever imagine that such horrible things [as massacres and tortures] were happening behind those scenes?[8]

Again, we find two unreconciled temporalities juxtaposed. On the one hand, Numata remembered herself as a "military girl" (*gunkoku shōjo*), innocently participating in exultant celebration of the enemy's surrender; on the other hand, the troops she so adored were slaughtering ordinary Chinese citizens. Her story about survivors now residing in the Republic of Korea is also told through such contrasts. It brings into relief at once the overseas *hibakusha*'s deplorable conditions, conditions due in large part to Japan's colonial and postwar/postcolonial policies, and Numata's focus on the immediacy of her own victimization. In other words, as she accumulates and processes newly obtained knowledge about the past through fresh encounters and new travels, her memory work reconstitutes her "experiences."

The mass media and some progressive educators have praised Numata as one of the few *hibakusha* courageous enough to have broken out of the mold of infatuation with victimhood to talk about Japan's history of invasion and colonialism. In the climate of the 1980s, which I described in chapter 3, individuals such as Numata who were willing to publicly reflect on historical responsibility were readily welcomed: Numata fulfilled the desire to demonstrate the Japanese conscience. However, this new interpellation carried with it the danger that testimonial practices would once again be subjected to the existing discourses of mainstream history; the narrator might again be contained by a position from which she could speak only the nation's newfound Truth.

The media and the educators expected witnesses/storytellers like Numata to edify their audiences, through firsthand accounts, about the history of atrocities committed by the Japanese. They anticipated that storytellers would fill the silences in official history by making manifest knowledge that had previously been censored or deleted. Yet those eager for progress and enlightenment have oversimplified the nature of the knowledge produced in *hibakusha* testimonial practices. Witnesses like Numata do not necessarily consider the history of Japan's military and colonial aggression to be self-evident knowledge. Nor do they tell this alternative history in the belief that the meaning of this knowledge is preestablished within the nation's existing historical narrative. Their narratives do not simply fill the gaps in the official history or satisfy others' desire to know. Instead, they refer to what is everywhere and always present: the haunting absence of knowledge, the inevitability of memory's deficiency.

This narrative margin, the segment of history that is not recalled by the narrator as manifest knowledge, marks a void in the wholeness of established, official knowledge about society.[9] At the same time, this deficiency is indispensable to establishing and defining what constitutes the center, or the mainstream. By intimating the presence of an absence, the *hibakusha*'s narrative practices suggest that manifest knowledge, about both the past and present, is predicated on what has been subjugated. It is this narrative margin in three senses of the term—the peripheral, the void, the surplus—that is essential to the economy of testimonial engagement. The unimagined proximity of the Enola Gay, the unknown death of the fiancé, the bloodshed of over one million Chinese as set against the Japanese nation's euphoria, the continuing

agony of South Korean survivors during postwar Japan's rapid economic growth, the jubilation of liberated Malaysians over use of the new weapon of mass destruction—these emplotments in Numata's narrative point toward realities beyond what is imaginable. By suggesting to her audiences something exterior to the world of self-evidence, her narrative makes them suspect that knowledge can never be complete.

A public lecture that Numata delivered on the interplay between what she sees as instrumental knowledge and a critical way of knowing reveals her own perspective on this issue. Numata began by describing how the difficulties of living with "a disabled body" (*shōgai no mi*) and "a bombed body" (*hibaku shita mi*) had long confirmed her belief that she was simply a victim, a legitimate object of sympathy. She recounted how she had gradually come to realize "how dreadful it can be to remain indifferent and ignorant, [when one imagines] what might result from such attitudes." She continued: "After having been made to live for forty-four years [after the bombing], I finally became an individual who can think [critically]. . . . I had always thought I was knowledgeable at the level of instrumental knowledge (*chishiki*) about various issues—issues concerning the disabled, the Korean minority, or the so-called discriminated against communities. . . . [But through telling stories] I became convinced that somewhere there are always hidden facts."[10] Numata's reflections on the doubleness of knowledge, which emerge dialectically from within her autobiographical narratives about the past, extend further to become commentaries on the contemporary conditions within which her own narratives are constructed:

> During the war, I was turned into a person who could not listen [to other stories]. I only believed in unidirectional truth (*ippōteki na koto*). . . . And now, as I live in the present, I am once again becoming yet another human being who cannot see. This very process is the most frightening. . . . I believe that what enables me to rise up like this is my desire to pursue the unseen. I feel that I have been transforming myself in such a way [since I became a storyteller]. . . . In this information society age, facts appear to be conveyed. But I am afraid that this is only a sham (*misekake*).[11]

To be self-aware as perpetrator as well as victim does not reaffirm the historical causal linkages often seen as justifying the United States' use of the atom bombs. Indeed, Numata's point can be applied to yet another side of the same history: namely, the ways in which United States policy makers and citizens welcomed the bomb. The "enemy's" casualties and deaths were similarly erased and forgotten during the United States' more recent wars (e.g., with Vietnam and Iraq).

It is important to note that Numata does not use the idea of "surface" to mean a "false" image that distorts "real" conditions. The "surface knowledge" she refers to in her narrative—about victories in war, for example—is no less real than the "hidden knowledge" of such matters as the war of invasion. Both participated in the constitution of the nation's momentary communal dreaming. Her positions as victim and victimizer, moreover, are two immediate dimensions of her past and present existence that are equally engraved onto her body. To this extent, the critique of knowledge in Numata's narrative should be distinguished from the conventional Enlightenment practice of critiquing ideology. Hidden knowledge is not assumed to be any more complete or more authentic than surface knowledge, and even when exposed, "the unseen" does not represent any final truth. The instant it is revealed, it forms yet another layer of surface knowledge that may well conceal other subjugated knowledge. Furthermore, the self-reflexive narrator, as the above quote suggests, can situate herself within this infinite negative dialectical process.

One might argue that Numata's testimonial practice promotes the indefinite deferral of ultimate referential truth, the endless task of deconstruction. The open-ended and dynamic nature of her narrative practice certainly helps deter containment and appropriation within either the powerful national narrative or late capitalism's hegemonic cultural restructuring. But one a priori truth does in fact exist for this narrator/author: namely, that whenever and wherever knowledge is manifest, there is always already another knowledge that is hidden and that these two knowledges are never in equilibrium. Indeed, her understanding of their configuration by asymmetries of power is precisely what prevents her from degenerating into an abyss of relativism and the ambiguities of a simple and uncritical pluralism.

FABULOUS MEMORIES: THE TEMPORALITY OF THE "NEVER AGAIN"

The mnemonic detour, as understood in this discussion of the politics of memory, is not limited to physical movements over the cityspace. It also concerns discursive happenings in *hibakusha* testimonies. Like Numata's narrative, composed of stories from discrepant geographical locations, the following illustrates such testimonial practices. In order to meet the witness and hear this narrative, however, the ethnographer also was required to undertake a small detour.

One July evening, as was usual after formal meetings, I sat with several members of Kataru Kai and joined in their conversations. Just then we happened to see a brief feature about a survivor on a TV news show. Typically, broadcasts of specials on the atom bomb increase as 8.6 approaches every year. Yet the portrayal of this survivor caught the group's attention. The following is a paraphrase of the news report:

> Matsuda Go, a survivor in Kure city whose days are numbered because of terminal lung cancer, devotes the remaining days of his life to telling his life stories to schoolchildren. He has been cultivating warm and heartfelt ties with these youngsters. Since Kure city provides a base for the Self-Defense Forces, one of the themes of his stories concerns Japan's present military situations. "There isn't much time left," he said in the interview, "so it must be told now. . . . My anger—anger toward prewar education and toward that day—keeps me going." He does not wish his audiences, most of whom are from primary to high school students, to learn only about the atom bomb. Rather, he wants them to think about the conditions of war more generally. He himself learned to kill in the name of the country. Wars could make people willing to abandon their own children. And it is too late to realize this after the war. His extremely soft and hoarse voice almost sounded as if it were being strained out of his slender body, word by word. He concluded, "I try to convince myself that I will remain strong, that I will stay healthy and retain the energy to tell stories, until the very day of my death." For Matsuda, to live means nothing but "to carry on the storytelling" (*kataritsugu koto*).[12]

After the program ended, a deep silence engulfed us; Numata was first to break it. Agreeing with Matsuda's statement in the TV interview we had just heard, she underscored a point that she too has repeatedly made—namely, that the survivors should not limit their storytelling to their experience of the atom bomb but should tell other stories of the war as well. Other members concurred, saying that stories of the atomic bomb alone only served to foster a sense of pity and did not help create an active desire to "do something for peace." Another survivor sympathized with Matsuda's comment that time was running short for the survivors. Our discussion that evening ended with the unanimous suggestion that I should meet Matsuda as soon as possible during my stay in Hiroshima. I little realized at the time that Matsuda had earlier been criticized by other survivors, though not by these members of Kataru Kai, for being "too radically political."

A week later, I was on a train bound for Kure, a city located only a few miles away from Hiroshima, to meet Matsuda. During its modernization period, beginning around the turn of the century, Kure had developed around its military harbor and munitions industries. Hiroshima had been a "military capital" in a symbolic sense, prospering through diversification and accommodating a wide range of modern facilities in finance, industry, and education (such as banks, museums, universities, factories, a harbor, entertainment facilities, and so on), but Kure had developed around a single resource, the Imperial Navy. During the war, unlike Hiroshima before the atom bomb attack, Kure was among the many Japanese cities that had suffered massive damages from conventional air raids. In the postwar period of rapid growth of heavy industry, Kure prospered through its shipping industry, like many other coastal cities along the Seto Inland Sea, while offering a naval base for Japan's Self-Defense Forces.

As I rode on the train I thought about a statement that an antinuclear activist in a grassroots organization had once made at a public gathering. He had said that a spatial "division of labor" exists between Hiroshima and its neighboring cities, Kure and Iwakuni: while Hiroshima sells peace, Kure stations the Self-Defense Forces and Iwakuni accommodates the U.S. military. The name of this activist's organization, Peace Link (*pīsu rinku*), was aimed precisely at connecting the three geographical sites in a spatial imaginary in order to foster critical perspectives on Hiroshima's sanctification of peace, thus dismantling mystifying ideas about the region's present conditions. Members of Peace Link have criticized Hiroshima's peace-related administrative policies (often referred to as *heiwa gyōsei*), on the grounds that while the city ostensibly promotes world peace and antinuclear ideals, it also masks the hazards that threaten the environment of the surrounding regions. They warn, for instance, of the dangers posed by the continuing military buildup, the numerous accidents involving the U.S. nuclear submarines stationed nearby, and the area's increasing dependence on nuclear power. The train ride to Kure took only a few minutes. Though suspicious of too facile a notion of false consciousness, I found myself deeply convinced that such a spatial division of labor does indeed mystify the nation's present remilitarized conditions and landscape. The proximity of the two cities confirmed how easily one could forget the realities outside the self-contained space of peace-full Hiroshima.

From the bus that I had boarded after reaching Kure, I could see Matsuda standing alone at the stop closest to his home. As I stepped down to the street, Matsuda greeted me. I bowed to him. From the news segment I knew of his terminal lung cancer, and I wondered about his condition. His wiry physique bespoke not so much a physical as a

spiritual strength. He walked very slowly and spoke softly. As we approached his house, a junior high school student, apparently a neighbor, passed by and cheerfully greeted him. Matsuda smiled and waved to her. I was led to a modest wooden house where his wife awaited. Vegetables grew on a small strip of ground near the house's entrance. He closed the windows and turned on the air conditioner so that the smell of organic fertilizer would not bother me.

I immediately discovered that, like Numata, Matsuda was most adamant that his testimonies have a critical effect on his audiences; he carefully crafted them with his relationship to audiences in mind. This self-consciousness about how narratives affect audiences further attests to the fact that testimonies are understood to be more than self-contained acts. Whether viewed as cultural critiques or memorial services, *hibakusha* testimonies are always conceived as practices that are enabled by the storytellers' interactions with their audiences. In Matsuda's case, his narratorial intention was to create audiences who, to borrow his own words, can begin to "see Japan with different eyes" (*chigatta me de Nihon o miru*).

Most survivors recall that when they first began storytelling they were unexpectedly surprised by the enormous intensity and fascination of their listeners. Many, in fact, attribute their desire to become *shōgensha* and then to continue the practice to this original experience. But it is also true that many *hibakusha* have expressed a sense of futility about narrating to student audiences. Observers of survivors' testimonial engagements have noted how immensely disappointed storytellers are when, after forcing themselves to recall the unbearable, they receive only bland responses, such as "Thank you for the stories. I wish to cherish this peaceful time."[13] This kind of audience reaction to the survivors' storytelling is also often reflected in the anonymous comments left by visitors at the Peace Memorial Museum: for example, "I feel terribly sorry for what happened. And I feel grateful that I was born in this peaceful age."

Individual propensities aside, such reactions may be related to the flood of simulations to which audiences have already been exposed. Many *hibakusha* believe that teachers present students with too much material in the classroom before their actual visits to Hiroshima. Often students have already been bombarded with information, including detailed scientific data about nuclear explosions, numbers of casualties, crucial dates, and so on. In some cases students' comments have been prepared even before they actually hear the *hibakusha*'s testimonies. Moreover, most visitors to Hiroshima have been preexposed to many versions of stereotypical stories that the mass media provide year after year, constantly converting survivors' testimonies into commodities. Saturated with such simulations and a deluge of objectified information, many of us feel that we have enough knowledge about the atomic bomb, even prior to our visit to the site. As a result, we, like many of these students, often conclude our visit to Hiroshima by reaffirming what we already know.

While many survivors and observers of survivors' testimonial engagements have noted these problems, Matsuda believes that the potential of survivors' testimonies to transform listeners ultimately resides in each storyteller's philosophy and his or her relationship to those listeners. Thus Matsuda vehemently objected to the news report that introduced him as a "*kataribe*" (storyteller), quoting from a dictionary to assure me of just how distinctly antithetical his narrative practice was to that of the traditional *kataribe*. According to the formal definition, the term *kataribe* refers to professional troupes that recited legends and mythical histories in the preliterate era. The traditional storytellers, as Matsuda and other *hibakusha* emphasized, were forced to learn these stories by rote, regardless of their individual will. Moreover, their narrative knowledge about the past, unlike the survivors' testimonies, was neither scrutinized for its facticity nor actively remembered as their own experiences. Rather, the knowledge was simply handed down from generation to generation to serve the establishment—or, more precisely, the imperial court. Furthermore, Matsuda refused to be associated with another meaning of *kataribe*, which refers to entertainers who used to make a living by telling tragic, "tearjerker" (*onamida chōdai*) stories, as he put it, to gain sympathy. His disavowal of this label succinctly evidences the self-conscious, self-responsible, and antiauthoritarian political subjectivity that permeates his testimony.

Matsuda consciously deploys several tactics to preclude the possibility that his testimonies would merely endorse the present state of knowledge. For instance, Matsuda's firsthand accounts of the Hiroshima atom bomb make up no more than one-fifth of the entire narrative. What remains are supplements to this main story; but it is these subplots that Matsuda regards as crucial in determining the effects and nature of his testimonial practices. As he explained to me on the day of our interview,[14] his first supplementary stories concern atrocities committed by the Japanese Imperial Army during the war, and the nation's present militarized condition. To emphasize the latter point, Matsuda reinforces his

storytelling with several photographs of missiles and submarines he has taken at Kure harbor. These enlarged photos serve as further witness to Japan's current full-fledged remilitarization. Another material resource that he adds to his testimony is a copy of a 1947 booklet published by the Ministry of Education, titled *The Story of the New Constitution* (*Atarashii kenpō no hanashi*). It explains in plain language the virtues of Japan's postwar constitution and the renunciation of the use of military force to resolve international conflicts.[15] In the early postwar years, the booklet was assigned as a textbook for use in every junior high school in order to educate students about the new constitution's underlying principles, including basic human rights, equality between the sexes, democracy, the new role of the imperial household, and, above all, the permanent abdication of war. After the booklet ceased to be used officially in classrooms, a branch of the Japan Teachers' Union reprinted it and began to use it as supplementary material for their peace pedagogy.

His narrative, Matsuda noted, contrasts this early postwar governmental stance on the new constitutional ideals with the reality of Kure's military harbor. According to his audience, he might also comment on the institutional linkage between national tax revenues and the procurement of weaponry from the mega-military-industrial complex. He underscores that such preparations for war have consistently benefited and will continue to bring profits to industry and to politicians who represent corporate interests. By reminding young audiences of the gap between constitutional principles and reality, Matsuda interrogates the failures of the government's own institutional memory. Matsuda stressed that he seeks to relentlessly de-romanticize and de-heroize militarism and military achievements through his stories. He often reads aloud an article of the constitution in which the Self-Defense Forces are described as defending the "country" (*kuni*), but not the "people of the nation" (*kokumin*). He emphasizes that "the people" do not ultimately benefit from the military: "The article states that the Self-Defense Forces will defend the country, but nowhere does it say it will defend the people. In order to defend the country, the first and largest obstacle is its own people. Think about Okinawa." Historians and local witnesses have shown that the ground battle of Okinawa produced over 200,000 casualties as a result not only of U.S. attacks but also of Japanese Imperial Forces who exploited the islanders as shields. Recent research and grassroots interviews have revealed that under the mission privileging military and national security, Okinawan civilians were forced to demonstrate their loyalty to the country by killing themselves and members of their families and communities.[16]

To complement his narratives, Matsuda deploys photographs of the Rape of Nanjing committed by the Japanese Imperial Army. The enlarged black-and-white reproductions he showed me are included among the various visual materials that the Hiroshima Peace Institute has compiled and made available for classroom use. Matsuda pointed to a picture in which a Japanese soldier holding a Japanese sword stands next to a young Chinese woman. Her belly is torn, presumably after having been brutally raped. "He stands next to her and is able to smile. But he doesn't look like a person who can commit murder, does he? He is still just a little boy." Matsuda quickly links the scene captured by the photograph with his own memories by returning to accounts of Hiroshima. The temporal context of war remains the same, but the location is different: "One is numbed by seeing so many people killed. It didn't feel odd at all to burn layer after layer of corpses [after the atomic bombing]. . . . Even mothers could kill their children. That is what war is about. . . . I, too, learned to kill like this. It was natural to kill. The schools taught me how to kill. Girls learned to also, with bamboo spears." Such a recounting of the past would be immediately linked to his audience's own time, as Matsuda would add, "This soldier [in the photo of the Rape of Nanjing] could be your own grandfather." His testimony would then conclude with a warning for the present day: we support the military "without realizing it." Matsuda makes sure to remind his audience, "You are all taught in such a way that you do not have a critical view of reality . . . in just the way I was taught during wartime."

His supplementary stories would end here. Matsuda tells of his own experience in Hiroshima, on 6 August 1945, only with and only after these detours through space and time—from Nanjing, via Okinawa, to the harbor of Kure, and through the 1930s, extending into the immediate postwar period, and up to the contemporary moment. A transcription of Matsuda's customary testimony informs us that he was seventeen years old at the time of the bombing. He then worked at a prefectural government office located about 800 meters away from the hypocenter:

> A person was stripped of skin; walking without noticing that pieces of clothing that had remained around his hip had caught on fire; groaning grotesquely and hands dangling. A body completely blackened from soot

collecting on the blood that covered the surface of skinless human flesh; enormously huge eyeballs; and eyeballs drooping out—the figures of children are even more pitiful. Hands and legs squirming underneath collapsed buildings, but not even a thought given to rescuing them.

Heard someone, apparently an old woman, whose body was so utterly disfigured that it was impossible to distinguish her sex, saying, "Damn it! Americans . . . Get back at them, please." . . . The voice reminds me of the fact that I am still alive and I feel spurred on to somehow rise up for the emperor, yet the next second I am thinking, it's all over. Yet there is a firm conviction that the Divine Wind will bluster without fail, that Japan is a divine country, that there is the emperor, and that we will never lose, even if stripped of skin or with lives taken. . . .

Everywhere in the city I saw corpses; some ten people were dead, their heads in a water tank; their legs were half burned, some bones were exposed and smelled horrible. A baby girl grinned at me, sucking on the skinless breast of a woman who appeared to have been alive until a few minutes earlier. . . . We were taught to believe in the Imperial Rescript on Education, with loyalty to the emperor and love for the country (*chūkun aikoku*), and in selfless devotion to the nation (*messhi hōkō*). We were also made to believe in the slogan, "we will not desire anything until we win"; and many were killed even without having been provided with sufficient food. In the eyes of these individuals, the names of those responsible for the war have not yet been disclosed.[17]

The detours in Matsuda's narrative might be understood as producing stories of universal victimhood. They could appear to flatten out historical specificities and political relations: all wars are bad, war victimizes everyone equally, and there are no victors in the age of nuclear warfare.[18] Matsuda's story also suggests that everyone may indeed be complicitous in the conduct of wars. Indeed, it is the sense of shared victimhood that allows the audience to identify with the storyteller, thus generating an important moment of sympathy. As we will see below, the audience becomes capable of sharing resentment toward those who caused that fatal moment only by empathizing with the storyteller's agony as a *hibakusha* and by mourning his approaching death. Yet, at the same time, the narrative's deliberate naming of every responsible actor at every scene of violence—for example, Japanese soldiers in Nanjing and Okinawa, the Ministry of Education, the Self-Defense Forces, the military industry, Americans who used the bomb, the emperor for whom many were killed, and lastly the storyteller himself, who had not been able to give "even a thought" to rescuing victimized children—relentlessly reminds the audience of critical differences within the community of universal victimhood.

That Matsuda's narrative detours through time and space can strongly affect his listeners is clear from letters and comments from people in various audiences. The commentaries, though in somewhat inchoate language, offer a critique of knowledge and power gained from shock and amazement at Matsuda's testimony.

I had learned about Hiroshima's tragedy throughout elementary and secondary school. So I thought I knew some things. But I keenly felt that what I had known and learned were only superficial. What impressed me most [in Matsuda's story] was that we have been increasing our military strength, although unwittingly.

(A female high school student.)

There is a magazine I read every day. It is a kind of magazine that is made up of illustrations and opinions sent in by readers. One-third of the illustrations are filled with "battles" and "blood." It is not that the editors prefer them, but they only seem to receive those kinds of letters. The majority of the letters also have comments like "the fighting is cool," or "the person who coughed up the blood was beautiful." In other cartoon magazines, about 90 percent of them have "battles" as their themes, as if to say that not fighting is outdated. Although I too used to feel up until now that these things are "cool," teacher Matsuda's story made me think, if I were in that situation, I would never think it was "cool." Maybe I was able to enjoy them because they seemed too unreal.

(A third-grade elementary school girl.)

Mr. Matsuda's story began to make me feel uneasy, for I came to realize that we are going through things that are similar to [what went on] in prewar Japan.

(A male high school student.)

Until now, whenever I heard stories, saw movies, or read books about war, I only thought "how pitiful" or "I don't like it." But today, I felt that these feelings won't do any good. Until now, I thought, "wars are to be blamed"; but now, I feel we are lending our hands in making our situation close to one in which making wars is inevitable.

(A third-grade elementary school girl.)

Listening to your story about Hiroshima as you actually witnessed it, I thought peace is nothing more than a fancy word. Mr. Matsuda said, please think about what "peace" is. I thought, but could not come up with words. . . . Whenever listening to war stories, I used to feel they were "pitiful" or "horrible"; but after having heard Mr. Matsuda's story, I now realize that those words can never fully express wars. The story about the Self-Defense Forces made me feel for the first time that the country we live in is dirty. I felt that we must change this dirty country created by the adults into a cleaner one, little by little.

(A third-grade elementary school girl.)

> I went home . . . and I asked my parents, as you told us, "If today my arms or legs were amputated; and if I asked you, why didn't you do something to prevent the war? What would you do?" Then both my mother and father became silent. "You cannot respond, can you?" I asked them. Then they said, "You're right." So I told them exactly as you told us. Then my mother said, that person seems to have grasped the world. I don't think I will ever forget those words.
>
> (A sixth-grade elementary school girl.)[19]

These reactions suggest an important general observation that can be made about the communicative dynamics between *hibakusha* witnesses and their audiences—namely, that many listeners are in fact moved by Matsuda's authoritative presence as a witness, by the compelling understanding that, as I will later discuss at greater length, the storyteller is one who has survived an actual, real historical event. More important for our purpose here, they demonstrate that Matsuda's young audiences do indeed often begin to "see Japan with different eyes," as was intended by the narrator. They show that Matsuda's testimonial practices have produced a community of listeners who have at least begun to feel skeptical about the familiarity of the accepted world. It is also evident that audiences often sense the instability of language. Their comments make explicit that they in fact perceive the limitations of the storyteller's ability to represent atrocities in Hiroshima and elsewhere. At the same time, it is possible to see that they begin to question the transparency of accustomed signs, such as peace, "self-defense," and war.

What distinguishes Matsuda's testimony from others who might induce tears but not critical reflection on the status quo may be his "anger," the profound resentment that saturates his stories. When I inquired about what had initially prompted him to become a storyteller, a question that I asked whenever interviewing *hibakusha* witnesses, he described a particular incident. In 1971 skeletal remains of over six hundred individuals were excavated in Ninoshima, a small island off Hiroshima's south shore, where hundreds of the wounded had been accommodated in the immediate aftermath of the bombing. Many died and the corpses were either buried or cremated there. On hearing the news, Matsuda visited the site to pray for the unearthed dead and took some photographs of the bones that had been exhumed after some twenty-six years. Shortly thereafter, members of the Hiroshima Peace Institute asked him to present his photographs to some schoolchildren. He recalled for me his feelings at the time:

> [When I saw those bones] my own experience overlapped with [those of the dead]. I felt anger rising inside of me. Shedding tears was not enough. Instead, I felt genuine anger—anger against the prewar education I had received, anger against my own ignorance, and anger against the present system. But today, no one seems to be angry. I want people to be angry. What are we engaged in storytelling for? Isn't there a place where we should direct our anger? To simply give up, thinking that it could not be helped, is not the right attitude. But today everybody's anger has somehow completely disappeared.

His "anger" toward the establishment, toward the decision makers, and toward his gullible, uncritical self is what prevents audiences from being able to aestheticize Matsuda's testimony. This anger distinguishes his narratives from the conventional storytellers' "sob stories," which might well move audiences to cathartic tears but which rarely lead to any further thoughts or sentiments. Once such audiences have left the enchanted scene of storytelling, they tend not to reflect on their own conditions. In this sense, the traditional sob stories reentrench the status quo. Matsuda's anger forbids listeners from immersing themselves in feelings of pity or sorrow for victims, for his audiences are constantly confronted with the vengeful rancor of those victims—from Nanjing, Kure, Hiroshima, and elsewhere—against their perpetrators. While liberal and humanist antiwar discourse sustains the idea that what happened to others might happen to oneself, that all wars are bad, and that we are all equally potential victims, Matsuda's testimony unmistakably distinguishes the structural positions occupied by the perpetrators from those of the victims, even as it is enabled by the shared horizon of the two. Matsuda's anger furnishes his historical knowledge with a sharp critical edge.

Furthermore, while the conventional form of Hiroshima narratives does not question the linear course of history, thereby reinforcing a sense of fatalism about what happened, Matsuda's narrative challenges the very notion of inevitability. Other witnesses commonly open their testimonies by recalling an innocent morning in August that was suddenly engulfed in the utterly unexpected catastrophe, and then proceed to describe hellish scenes of survival and later adversities. In contrast, Matsuda's narrative reminds his audiences that his approaching death is not a matter of course. It was caused, or could have been prevented, by the decisions of people in power. To put it differently, his narrative shows young listeners that power produces knowledge, action, and historical consequences.

Detractors may claim that the students' comments are in fact predictable, showing compliance to authority—whether that of the storytellers or of the classroom teachers. In the elementary school system particularly—where a single teacher is responsible for evaluating a child, not only in school subjects but also in overall personal behavior—students may indeed be savvy enough to detect what is considered to be desirable, and they eagerly seek to meet the expectations of their teachers. Some educators judge that the survivors' stories have instrumental value for disciplining youths. Furthermore, it can be argued that even if these momentary critical reflections are indeed genuine, their immediate social effects cannot be measured; nor can we expect them to be sustained until the young people mature into full-fledged political subjects. At the same time, and even given that such an outcome is certainly not inevitable, it is equally possible that the storyteller's indignation, inscribed in listeners' memories, may reemerge at some later point in their lives. Like haunting dreams, the storyteller's anger may be translated into future questionings of the mundane and the familiar, albeit in ways that may not seem remotely to concern the issues originally problematized by the storyteller.

As we have seen, Matsuda's narratives were deliberately fashioned to induce young audiences to begin to think critically about their knowledge of the nation's past and its supposedly "peaceful" present, as well as about the general questions of war, life, and death. Yet why is it so important to be critical? Isn't any message about Hiroshima's nuclear disaster already critical? Moreover, according to the domestic values of our bourgeois society, children should remain happy and innocent. "Parental discretion" ought to protect young people from being emotionally disturbed by shocking stories of violence and bloodshed. To my question, Matsuda responded plainly that critical thinking was necessary "so that children will not have to go through what I experienced."

Matsuda's testimonial practice is thus propelled by a desire for deterrence, to prevent what once happened from recurring. And this is perhaps the basis of any kind of "never again" discourse, a warning for the future that is extracted from a lesson about the past. But retelling the past, no matter how accurately the horrors may be reproduced, does not in itself guarantee against recurrence. To be effectual, the witness's testimony must be heard as resonating across time: the audience must be able to imagine the story about the past as a possible future event. The "never again" aphorism is therefore predicated on a dialectics of memory—a constant movement between memory constituted by the authenticity that derives from the witness's capacity to tell what actually happened and memory cast into the future. While the former establishes the story's historical truthfulness, it is the latter process that transforms what is remembered in testimony into that which should be anticipated.

Matsuda's testimony also involves a different yet related dialectics of memory. It compels audiences to envision the possibility that the suffering and agony of an enormous number of war victims—including the storyteller's belated but now imminent death—might have been averted, that they were never inevitable. Like Benjamin's materialist historiography discussed in the introduction, Matsuda's testimony, even while recollecting the events as they actually occurred, emplots alternative courses of history. While the call "never again" gains its force by seeing the past as a possible future, this memory work makes it possible to imagine multiple possibilities in the past. By interrupting the linear sequence of conventional historical narratives, Matsuda's remembrance generates a space in which counterfactual histories can be told.

To understand that space and fully grasp the fictive nature of the knowledge generated by Matsuda's storytelling, the writings of Michel de Certeau are particularly suggestive. In the passage quoted as an epigraph to this chapter, de Certeau asserts that spaces telling popular tales and fables create a space that protects "the weapons of the weak." The fictional popular legends of magic and heroes do indeed allow one to imagine alternative "hands" in the game one has been dealt. But more important, the "'fabulous' stories" told in such spaces make available to their audience imaginative means with which they may intervene in the future course of history. As powerful prophecies that are at the same time scrupulously empirical, the survivors' testimonies produce knowledge that is splendidly mesmerizing, spectacularly extraordinary, and filled with precious wisdom "for future use," in a way that reminds us of fables.

NARRATIVES OF AND FOR THE DEAD

In a statement quoted earlier, Numata Suzuko explained that her commitment to testimonial practices stemmed from a "desire to pursue the unseen." But such a pursuit is not necessarily the only reason why *hibakusha* witnesses begin and continue to tell their stories. As we have seen, Numata has also said that as a survivor who was "made to live among thousands of those who fell victim to the bomb," she feels a

need to "embrace the voiceless voices of the dead—so that they do not have to feel they died in vain." Testimonial practices are thus believed to serve the mystical task of recuperating the presence of the deceased, even as they work to spark a critical rethinking of what seems self-evident.

Many storytellers are sole survivors of wartime collectivities—for example, of families, classrooms, neighborhoods, or workplaces. Yamazaki Kanji, for instance, lost all seven members of his household when he was seventeen, including his fifty-four-year-old single mother and an aunt and her five young children, who had relocated from Nagoya—ironically, to escape air raids.[20] Yamazaki is also one of the few survivors of his neighborhood of Tenjinmachi Kita-gumi; located less than 300 meters southwest of the hypocenter, it was thoroughly obliterated by the bomb. This downtown community on the banks of the Motoyasu River had once been crowded with small shops, inns, houses, cafés, and movie theaters. The space of the annihilated community now takes up the Peace Memorial Park's southern end. Yamazaki's own research confirmed that among the estimated total of over three hundred Tenjinmachi residents who are known to have been killed by the bomb, there are about thirty whose names are still missing from the 148,177 recorded on the Name List of the Atom Bomb Dead (*genbaku shibotsusha meibo*).[21] While the city's official registry has been recording the names of victims as they are reported and confirmed, these individuals have not been listed because no one survived who witnessed their deaths or who could testify to having seen them when they were living. About ten of them are believed to have been sojourners at inns; their traces can perhaps never be recovered.

After taking early retirement from a successful career in a large corporation involved in heavy industry, Yamazaki joined Kataru Kai. He says that his current job as a water bill collector for the city is demanding but good for maintaining his health. A man of inexhaustible exuberance and energy, Yamazaki has for some years been organizing, among other things, an annual memorial service for his former neighborhood community. On 6 August, at the Memorial for the Tenjinmachi Kita-gumi Community, Yamazaki puts up panels of photos filled with the faces of about two hundred former residents. The small circle-shaped memorial was built in 1973 in the approximate location of the former town.

In his narrative Yamazaki recalls how he managed to escape from

underneath the collapsed school building where he had worked as a substitute lecturer. He walked through a city raging in flames, dragging his severely injured leg. He returned to his home only to discover that everything had disappeared. Occasionally rescuers would glance at him but quickly moved on. Deserted, Yamazaki survived for three nights and three days, alone and immobile on a street filled with death and stillness.

His narrative, however, does not dwell exclusively on scenes of devastation. Perhaps even more significantly, it describes the early modern Hiroshima of several centuries before that had developed as a prosperous castle town, and the city since the turn of the century—how it came to be equipped with the material signs of modernity, railroads, motion pictures, the cultural products of returning emigrants (such as the "Café Brazil"), men in military uniforms, and the like. Tenjinmachi was at the heart of all these changes. Yamazaki reminisces that the streets always bustled with commercial and other downtown activities. "In the olden days, Hiroshima's riverbanks were not raised as high as they are today. People who commuted on the ferryboats could access the streets more easily." Peddlers and barterers commuted to Tenjinmachi on ferryboats; ferryman would wait, chatting and drinking until high tide. Graceful geishas and other entertainers who performed in local inns walked along the streets. Soldiers used to visit the town to spend recreational time at cafés and movie theaters. Yamazaki and his friends caught fish and small crabs along the river and when the tide was low, the riverbank became transformed into an open field that was perfect for playing baseball—"riverbed baseball," as he and his friends used to call it. Yamazaki's narrative, however, does not fail to add that the river that was a "source of life" metamorphosed into a space of death, where he and others "pushed away piles of corpses to drink the water." Yamazaki's narrative, rich in stories about lively everyday scenes of community on the river, attempts to recuperate in their full plenitude the time and space that were thoroughly and instantaneously exterminated.

For Yamazaki, therefore, the space that is now the Peace Memorial Park is a vast graveyard, a site of memorial prayer. He refers to his testimonial practice as an act of *irei,* that is, memorialization or, more strictly, "consoling dead souls." He also calls it a form of *kuyō*, a Buddhist term for a memorial service, which literally means to provide for and nurture the dead. He memorializes not simply his own family

but all those affiliated with the neighborhood, and in fact all of the livelihoods that had unfolded in this space. He also considers his narrative to be a means of recovering and reclaiming the existence of the enormous number of people whose deaths no one can fully confirm, and whose remains will forever be missing. The subject of his narrative, therefore, is at once the narrator himself, an irreducible individual who possesses the singular experience of survival, and the many collectivities, both of the dead and the living, of all those who experienced the moment of destruction.

Similarly, the grammatical subject in Saeki Toshiko's testimony oscillates between one that recollects memories of her own survival and one that re-members the collective experience formerly shared with those who did not survive. Anyone in Hiroshima who has even the slightest interest in the history of the bomb and its consequences easily recognizes Saeki by her distinct silver-gray hair, her dark-colored outfit, and her regular appearances at the Memorial Mound.

The Memorial Mound accommodates the remains of tens of thousands of victims, including both those who have been identified but are as yet unclaimed and those who have not been identified. While the anonymity of the latter is conducive to collective remembering, the former remind visitors of the moment's unprecedented brutality. One is struck not so much by death in and of itself but by the totality of destruction that deprived the dead of anyone who might offer proper tributes and remembrances. The Memorial Mound fosters the urgent sense that memorial services for the victims must be held, while the belatedness of such acts only reinforces the feeling that no form of memorialization could ever suffice. Because of this quality of the site, and in part because of the need to maintain the separation of church and state, the city conducts its formal religious memorial service here, with various denominations participating, and not at the central cenotaph where the name registry of all identified victims is kept.

Saeki visits the Memorial Mound almost daily to sweep its interior and surroundings. There, this custodian of memory remembers and nurtures the dead. In one storytelling scene, Saeki began by reminding the audience that memories of the day of the bombing persist into the present: "For us, yesterday was 'that day.' Today is yet another 'that day.'"[22] She then briefly described how Hiroshima's postwar reconstruction had been obstructed on a number of occasions by the exhumation of bones at construction sites, emphasizing that the streets we walk form a palimpsest with the layers of debris from the destruction lying just below.

Since Saeki entered the city immediately after the explosion to search for her mother and sister, she encountered the city in total chaos and devastation. As she wandered through the charred streets, someone abruptly grabbed her leg from beneath the rubble, pleading to be rescued. But noticing Saeki in tears, the person let go. "This was truly a great relief—I can escape freely." No longer did she desire to search for her sister; she could barely save herself. Her older brother, who had initially escaped to safety, went back into the city to find their mother. He returned with something bundled in wrapping cloth. To Saeki's disbelief the wrapping cloth contained not some broken bones but a solid skull. Her brother embraced the skull and howled in tears, pledging to return with the rest of the body. He gradually lost his sanity. Wrapping himself in layers of white sheets, like a bandaged mummy, he would claim that he was experimenting, that uranium had turned him into a giant, and that once he succeeded with his experiments he would save all the wounded. Her brother's remarks about the effects of radiation, Saeki adds, were not entirely wrong.

Insofar as the scenes of 6 August are concerned, Saeki's testimonial contrasts strikingly with Numata's. While Numata's testimony centers upon her own pain, the torturous amputation without anesthesia, and her struggles thereafter to come to terms with her radically transformed state, Saeki's speaks of the miscellany of sights she witnessed at different locations. Typically, her testimonies are filled with references to one apocalyptic sight after another—people's demonic appearances, their screams and groans, the river overflowing with floating corpses, smashed abdomens, unrescued infants, disfigured bodies, charred corpses, blistered faces swollen like balloons, sagging and bloody skin, naked burned bodies, people stripped of their clothes, piles of festering horse carcasses, drooping eyeballs, and more. They recount, as in an inventory, the random fragments of objects destroyed. Like the mother's skull that appeared out of her brother's bundle, or his thoroughly bandaged figure, each of these powerful images encapsulates the cataclysmic event. They are still images, encouraging an arrested consciousness dislodged from an endless dialectics. They remain frozen, divorced from the wholeness and stability of everyday contexts. These fragmentary images challenge audiences, inscribing in their minds not so much the meanings of the devastation as its simple and awful extraordinariness.

By subjecting the event and its sights, bodies, and voices—the objects of recounting—to her gaze, the witness establishes her testimonial authority. Yet at the same time, Saeki's authenticity derives from

her identification with what the narrative objectifies—that is, from the audience's understanding that the narrator was also a part of the catastrophic scene. When she testifies, the subject and object of representation are constantly conflated, and it is this convergence that produces the narrator's authoritative presence as a survivor. From that position Saeki challenges her listeners at this space reserved for the dead: "If the dead could utter words, I am certain that they would beg of you, 'Please grasp something in your very own language.'" Saeki's narrative comprises a number of sentences of this type, in which Saeki speaks in the first-person voice for the third person. In her narrative, utterances constantly shift between materialized voices *of* the dead and memorial testimonies *for* them.

As the desire to identify testimonial practice with memorialization has accelerated, so has the acute sense that memories of the nuclear devastation have become increasingly obsolete and irrelevant. Protests against the engineering of "bright" cityspaces, as we saw in chapter 1, are most illustrative in this regard. These resistances emerged as a normative discourse arguing that we ought not to forget the incinerated and the drowned, including those who to this day remain unexhumed beneath the city's streets. Those who survived now protest in proxy for the dead.

The aspiration to speak for the dead has also been intensified by what is often described as the "withering of Hiroshima" (*Hiroshima no fūka*). The phrase is often used in reference to the lessening of commitment and will to protest against war and the nuclear buildup. It also suggests that this "mecca of peace" has lost much of its former status within peace and antinuclear discourse in postwar Japan. In the past, three premises have sustained the historical originality and charismatic character of Hiroshima, and to a lesser extent Nagasaki: the atomic disasters of the two cities were historically unprecedented events that were brought about by the new scientific technology, nuclear fission; the new weapons produced a type of destruction unprecedented in its instantaneousness and its long-term effects; and finally, it has been, and should forever be, unrepeatable. And yet representations of nuclear catastrophe have been produced and reproduced during the past decades in various media forms, including film, photography, print, paintings, and so on. Print and electronic media have annually planned "8.6 specials." Visitors' emotional reactions to Hiroshima have been reported in great detail in television news programs and documentaries. *Hibakusha* storytellers, as noted earlier, have also observed that classroom lessons and

peace education prior to visiting Hiroshima have produced a numbing effect on young students. The withering of Hiroshima marks the disintegration of the city's charisma, its reduction to yet another banality. The mystical move toward identification with the dead is inextricably linked to the attempt to recover experiential authenticity and originality against the hegemonic tendencies of the late capitalist information society.

Tawara Genkichi's activities are relevant to this resistance. The former journalist—who once participated in a project to produce a white paper on the A- and H-bomb disasters and who currently represents the Pika Resource Center (Pika Shiryō Kenkyūjo) under his new pseudonym, Seseragi Ryō—has committed himself to scrupulously identifying and correcting every existing error in descriptions of Hiroshima's and Nagasaki's atom bombings. Erroneous illustrations and representations usually result from citations and re-citations. He thus instructs younger volunteer researchers who participate in his projects to refer directly to the primary sources, the originals. The amount of materials and historical sources Tawara has collected in order to expose all the lies about the atomic bombs is purported to be immense. For him, erroneous representations are tantamount to desecrating the dead. Yet those who are being misrepresented have been dispossessed of the power to expose the errors; someone must voice their objections in their stead.

The pseudonym "Genkichi" supposedly derives from a phrase Tawara fashioned to characterize himself, "*gen*baku *kichi*gai," the closest translation of which would be "atom bomb nut."[23] He travels throughout the city searching for data on the atom bomb, and he appears at ceremonies that are performed at various memorials. At bookstores he does not purchase books but skims through them, searching for lines that refer to the bomb. Few people, except for those whom he trusts as friends and working partners, know where or how he lives. Correspondence usually reaches him through his post office box. Some say he has a family, others say he lives by himself. Uncovering each mistake, every error, can be strenuous work. When exhausted, Tawara says, he visits the graves of the bomb victims and drinks till dawn. As he converses with the dead, he feels that his energy for the seemingly endless battle against distortion and misinformation is gradually replenished. Moreover, Tawara's research tenacity can make important contributions to critical public discourse, as will be seen when in chapter 5 I discuss his crucial, if unintentional, input into the controversy concerning relocation of the memorial dedicated to Korean atomic bomb victims.

Numata Suzuko's narrative practices, described earlier, are also indicative of how survivors have reacted to the hegemonic cultural trend of the late twentieth century. Arguably, her decision to become a storyteller was initiated by her reaction to the fragmented objectification of her experience in the documentary film. She can be seen as attempting to regain the "aura"—that which is original and irreproducible—of a storyteller. Her storytelling is a mode of resistance to the condition of modernity under which knowledge has become alienated from the individual's being and is constantly converted into shards of exchangeable information and manageable objects.[24] Through her authoritative presence, she hopes to restore a sense of materiality and substance to knowledge and thereby to the relationships between narrators and narratees—to the narrative scenes that are situated in a world where the aesthetics of ephemerality and depthlessness rule, where the superficiality of infinitely reproducible images dominates.

The desire to speak in proxy for the dead suggests that there is a tendency to regard the dead as the ultimate source of authenticity. Those who claim to speak for the dead also claim the ability to do so without error; to talk about the past incorrectly is to betray one's loyalty to the community of victims. Conversely, the capacity to accurately represent the past authenticates one as a legitimate member of that community and thus bestows authority and power on the narrator. In other words, the battle against the loss of charisma, caused by an excess of copies, is waged by attempting to be one with the dead, to reestablish unity with the truly authentic and original.

Nevertheless, the testimonial practices of survivors like Yamazaki and Saeki disavow mystical identifications with the community of the dead. The very presence of survivors who narrate in the present itself already attests to the absence of the past: the event narrated is indeed "past" and no longer exists. When narrators speak of how they witnessed the deaths of their closest family members, how they trod on corpses, or how they rejected hands that called for help, they foreclose the possibility of sentimentalizing and aestheticizing any such nostalgic unity. Rather, their stories make listeners conscious of the reality that those who survived and speak for the dead are not identical with the dead.

Oral narrative practices underscore the distance between living and dead even more painfully than written testimonials because the narrator and the narratee occupy the same time and space. As we have seen, the very task of speaking as proxy for the dead already marks the latter's silence. The survivors' narrative practice, as a trace, reminds us of the absence of what is presented, certifying that the dead and the surviving will never again share the same temporality. Knowledge produced by such narratives *for* the dead therefore necessarily defers and disidentifies. Furthermore, acknowledgment of this absence is precisely what generates a sense of mourning for the lost, while recognition of the limits of representation, of the fact that the past can never be recovered in its fullness and originality, is what allows the audience to glimpse the immensity and gravity of the catastrophic experience. The ceaseless process of disidentification generates the critical nature of the survivors' narrative practices.

Yet to acknowledge the nature of the *hibakusha*'s testimonial practices, particularly as acts of memorialization and prayer, we must also grasp that this critical process of disidentification occurs *even as* it is believed that a mystical oneness with the dead is achieved, though only momentarily. The survivors' testimonial practices, like a shamanistic ritual that summons dead souls, resurrect the deceased and endow them with voices. They intimate to the audience that no one will die a death devoid of significance—that no living beings, even those who meet seemingly "absurd" and cruel deaths, will perish without leaving traces from which the meanings of their existences can be retraced. For many survivors, their testimonial practices are attempts to represent the disappearing voices and sentiments of the dead, to convey the final feelings and thoughts of those who were silenced by the instantaneous mass killing. They do so by identifying with the dead, translating the latter's utterances into languages that are intelligible for those who listen. In this instance in which the narratives *for* the dead transfigure into those *of* the dead, the critical process of disidentification does indeed come to a halt. At that moment, when the negative dialectics is arrested, the deaths can be addressed as nothing else but deaths. No further process of signification is possible; there can be no appropriation and cooptation of memories of the dead by existing dominant discourses.

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Social and cultural systems have constantly reconstructed the dead as their Others, as that which is suppressed yet essential for existence. The dead have been left behind in the linear course of time; having aided in the nation's development, social and political progress, revolution, or the awakening of humankind, they are remembered only as those

who have "passed away." In the often-heard cliché—"the precious sacrifice of those victimized by the atomic bombings have laid a firm foundation for Japan's postwar peace and prosperity," or words to that effect—the atom bomb dead are endowed with teleological meaning. They are understood to have contributed to the uninterrupted history of national progress. In the mystical moment of identification between the narrators and the dead who are narrated, by contrast, the dead are emancipated from the endless chain of signification and recalled without being given any meaning, except as such. In this respect, the type of knowledge produced by the memorializing quality of the *hibakusha*'s testimonial practices can be characterized as utopian, redemptive knowledge, analogous to that which emerges out of what Walter Benjamin called "dialectics at a standstill."[25]

Benjamin regarded dialectics at a standstill, on the one hand, as being inseparable from one's uncritical aspiration for and identification with that which is believed to have the capacity to fully recuperate and represent one's life, sentiments, desire, and existence. This mystifying aspiration leads to the various dangers unique to modernity: fascism, wars between nation-states, and commodity fetishism. On the other hand, Benjamin also saw it as a necessary moment for politicizing historical knowledge and generating critical reflection on the ideology of enlightenment and progress. Fredric Jameson has articulated this duality within the context of Marxist literary analysis: "a Marxist negative hermeneutic, a Marxist practice of ideological analysis proper, must in the practical work of reading and interpretation be exercised *simultaneously* with a Marxist positive hermeneutic, or a decipherment of the Utopian impulses of these same still ideological cultural texts."[26] Jameson's formulation about the necessary ambivalence in critical intellectual practices is especially useful in understanding the effects of the *hibakusha*'s storytellings that we have been observing. The survivors' testimonial practices accomplish the double operation of simultaneously enabling an unremitting affirmation of one's existence and generating viable critiques about the ways in which the world is known to us. Listeners' reactions to the storytellers are very revealing in this regard.

Kizuna, the television documentary described in chapter 3, closely followed the exchanges between the members of Kataru Kai and a group of teenage students. It traced the course of the students' daily activities from their return to high school after their first visit to Hiroshima to their reunion with the survivors a year later. Director Kawara Hirokazu

has pointed out in his reflections on the documentary that their school is notorious for teenage violence and dropouts. Many of the students live under difficult economic conditions, in part because of troubled relations with their families. Many support themselves financially by working after school or when school is not in session. Some also face daily discrimination such as police harassment and negative stereotyping because of their ethnic backgrounds or because they are members of so-called discriminated-against communities (*hisabetsu buraku*). These students are keenly aware of the social injustices committed against them and feel deprived, frustrated, and hopeless. The documentary highlights the curious metamorphosis that several students experienced as a result of their encounter with the *hibakusha*. Those who had been known for their "problematic behavior," for committing violence and cutting classes, began to take initiative in school activities. They became engrossed, among other things, in planning a second Hiroshima trip. These students also became actively involved in students' affairs, negotiating with teachers to improve the overall educational environment; they succeeded, for instance, in helping to institute special measures for self-supporting students.

In his documentary Kawara asked these students why they felt so attracted to Hiroshima's survivors. One male student responded:

> I feel like I am in a similar situation. [People always say,] "It's a dumb school," "Only dumb kids go to that school." It seems like those *hibakusha* must be having a hard time from discrimination. . . . When I listen to those kinds of stories, I feel that I really understand them well—at least every once in a while. Because we share the same situation we can learn [from them] when we go [to Hiroshima], you see. About how they have struggled, or how they were discriminated against—things like that. People normally won't praise you for those things. . . . It also makes me feel that I should try harder.[27]

The student's identification with the survivors derives from his feeling as if the latter were "similar" or in the "same situation," when in fact *hibakusha* occupy positions that have been constituted by radically different historical and cultural conditions. The testimonial event at which narratees are moved to tears as they listen to narrators and feel compelled to protest against war and nuclear weapons is analogous to what Naoki Sakai has described as a "ritual of sharing a pathos in synchronicity."[28] As testimonies *for* the dead turn into narratives *of* the dead, the event further allows a "community of sympathy"

to emerge between the narrators and the narratees, and thus the perception of a unity between the living and the dead develops. The danger of such sympathy, or what Sakai rereads as the synchronicity of pathos, is the tendency to generate the (mis)perception that the dead and listeners always share the same horizons beyond time and space—for example, a common nation, experiences of injustice, and so on—while occluding heterogeneity and actual contradictions.[29]

Yet we must remember that listeners are also constantly compelled to critique their own recognition of unity and identification, whether with the narrator or with the narrated dead. I have already shown how testimonial scenes ceaselessly forbid any complete identification between survivors and the deceased, between the spoken and the unspeakable, between memories and events. The survivors' desire to accurately convey the past is likewise in constant tension with their profound awareness of its incommunicability, the recognition that their immediate experiences can never be conveyed to others as they really happened. Moreover, the narrators' various positionalities and their multivocal subjectivities also obscure the object of empathy and identification. The survivors' testimonial practices indeed foster the communal sense that narrators and narratees, the narrators and the narrated dead, and presumably the remembered victims and those who listen to their voices share sentiments and experiences. Nevertheless, the critical nature of the testimonial practices simultaneously generates a sobering warning that this sensation of identification, fullness, and unity can only take place in fleeting and fragmentary instances, in what we might call moments of sympathy. As the high school student filmed by Kawara remarked, listeners can feel that they have understood the catastrophic destruction and agony told by narrators—but only "every once in a while."

The "standstill" in the negative dialectics of survivors' narratives allows the dead to be referred to in their fullness. It promises listeners that no matter how death comes, no one vanishes without leaving any traces; and it will always be possible for someone to recuperate the sufferings of one's life in singular and authentic form. It is this sense of plenitude and wholeness that endows their testimonies with a quality of a utopian fulfillment and salvation. At the same time, the survivors' narratives reveal that the promise of totality can only be fulfilled in quickly passing moments. A profound tension exists within the *hibakusha*'s testimony as memorialization—a tension between the hope that such an ultimate redemption might in fact be possible and the knowledge that the temporal and spatial recuperation of the past in the present can never be accomplished.

But the promise is what matters. Without provisional trust in the possibility of utopian moments of sympathy, any attempt at a dialogue would be vain and meaningless. To be sure, the identification generated by the *hibakusha*'s testimonies does not necessarily work to maintain collective unity and consistency in the fashion of, say, "all the oppressed," or "all victims." Rather, the fleeting and fragmentary moments of sympathy for the dead produce coalitional social and cultural practices. They provide opportunities to link the diverse relations—of subordination, absurdity, complicity, alienation, and so on—that constitute the heterogeneous and contradictory structural elements of one's positionality.

considered politically avant-garde (*"Hankaku" iron,* 90). However, he rightly observes that giving nuclear issues priority over other equally important social issues is problematic. He is also correct in pointing out that criticizing antinuclear discourse is not tantamount to promoting nuclear armament (see 105).

19. See *Chūgoku shinbun,* 20 June 1990.

20. It has not yet been scientifically demonstrated that radiation exposure does *not* have an effect on cancer rates in later years. For an unusual and intriguing account that interweaves the author's personal history with his lifelong scientific research on radiation's effect on children in Japan and the Marshall Islands, see James N. Yamazaki, *Children of the Atomic Bomb: An American Physician's Memoir of Nagasaki, Hiroshima, and the Marshall Islands* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1995).

21. *Mainichi shinbun,* 30 August 1989.

22. Hiroshima o Kataru Kai, ed., *Hiroshima o kataru* (Hiroshima: Hiroshima o Kataru Kai, 1987).

23. Although John Beverley's definition of *testimonio* refers exclusively to first-person narratives of recollection in printed form, his observation that the narrators in *testimonio* represent historically and socially constituted collectivities is very relevant to the relationship between the witness survivor and his or her lost sociality, as I have described it here; see "The Margin at the Center: On *Testimonio* (Testimonial Narrative)," *Modern Fiction Studies* 35, no. 1 (spring 1989): 11–28.

24. It may also be worthwhile to note that the Japanese word *kataru,* like its English equivalent, "to narrate," does not necessarily require an object of narration, nor an assumed narratee. For example, in the sentence "*Kare wa katari hajimeta,*" which means "He began to narrate," the act of narrating, not the object of narration, constitutes the subject. At the same time, the act of *kataru* can also entail an acute awareness about the presence of the narratee. When the association was named, the word was deployed with the clear idea that what is narrated needs to be communicated to the narratee. The term *kataru* thus evokes a double effect: while the act itself constitutes the narrating subject, the assumed presence of the audience also significantly shapes both the act and the narrator.

25. I am grateful to the medical and social workers, who were also members of the Rifuton Kenkyū Kai (Lifton Study Group), for sharing with me many of their reflections and long-term observations on the daily lives and psychological conditions of *hibakusha.*

26. See, for example, Oe Kenzaburo's *Hiroshima Notes* and Ishida Tadashi's *Han genbaku.* Yet a number of politically active *hibakusha* seriously question the representations of themselves in such writings as *Hiroshima Notes.* Lawrence L. Langer's critique of Charles Taylor may be useful in understanding why not a few *hibakusha* feel revulsion toward singular, integrated representations of their identity, morality, and desire. In his analysis of Holocaust testimonies Langer challenges Taylor's adherence to the ideas of unitary selfhood and integrated morality, arguing that such conceptualizations fail to grasp the post-Holocaust condition of selfhood. He stresses instead the need to imagine the possibility that survivors of extreme situations, such as the Holocaust, might live with multiple identities and inhabit multiple moral spheres simultaneously. See *Holocaust Testimonies: The Ruins of Memory* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), 198–204.

27. Kawara Hirokazu, *Kizuna: kōkōsei to Hiroshima* (Tokyo: Komichi Shobō, 1987), 39.

28. Funahashi Yoshie, "Hibakusha no jibunshi ni torikunde," in *Ikiru: hibakusha no jibunshi,* ed. Hibakusha no Jibunshi Henshū Iinkai (Hiroshima: Hibakusha no Jibunshi Henshū Iinkai, 1989), 521–28. For an intriguing discussion on the implications of the recent popularity of writing practices of personal histories, see Gerald Figal, "How to *jinbunshi:* Making and Marketing Self-Histories of Showa among the Masses in Postwar Japan," *Journal of Asian Studies* 55, no. 4 (November 1996): 902–33.

29. The emphasized sentence is *sore ga sonogo no kakegae no nai jinsei no nakade, dono yōna imi o mottaka;* Hibakusha no Jibunshi Henshū Iinkai, ed., *Ikiru* (n.p., n.d.).

30. Funahashi pointed out to me the historically specific implication of the word *ikizama* in a conversation we had, together with the social worker Murakami Sugako, on 1 April 1995.

31. Miyagawa's statement was made at a small gathering of several members of Kataru Kai and other associations held on 2 April 1995. At this function I was able to obtain valuable commentary and criticism on a piece I had contributed to their booklet, *Ikasarete* (Made to live), which was published in the previous year to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the association's establishment. In addition to Miyagawa, I would also like to thank Kwak Poksun, Katō Yōsuke, Chu Sŏk, Toyonaga Keisaburō, Yamazaki Kanji, and Yamada Tadafumi for candidly sharing their opinions with me.

32. See Julia Watson and Sidonie Smith, "De/Colonization and the Politics of Discourse in Women's Autobiographical Practices," in *De/Colonizing the Subject: The Politics of Gender in Women's Autobiography,* ed. Julia Watson and Sidonie Smith (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), xxiii–xxxi. See also Sidonie Smith, *Subjectivity, Identity, and the Body: Women's Autobiographical Practices in the Twentieth Century* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), esp. 1–23. A similar rethinking of the politics of autobiography can also be found in Françoise Lionnet, *Autobiographical Voices: Race, Gender, Self-Portraiture* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989).

CHAPTER 4. MNEMONIC DETOURS

1. I also learned much about Numata Fusako's life story from Nagai Hideaki's interview of her. See *Kakehashi,* no. 19 (January 1989): 4–5 (a monthly pamphlet published by the Hiroshima YMCA).

2. There are two important biographies of Numata: Hiroiwa Chikahiro, *Aogiri no shita de: "Hiroshima no kataribe" Numata Suzuko monogatari* (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 1993), and Kawara Hirokazu and Yamada Mariko, *Hiroshima hana ichirin monogatari: hibakusha/Numata Suzuko no owari naki seishun* (Tokyo: Komichi Shobō). On my visit to Hiroshima in March 1995, Numata gave me the two books as a gift.

3. A portion of the film was returned to the Japanese government in 1967, but the Japanese government, fearing infringement of individuals' privacy, made

only part of it public. The U.S. government's suppression of the films that were brought back to the United States is discussed by Abé Mark Nornes, "The Body at the Center—The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki," in *Hibakusha Cinema: Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and the Nuclear Images in Japanese Film,* ed. Mick Broderick (London: Kegan Paul, 1996), 121–60; see esp. 152–55.

4. For a detailed account of the campaign, see Nagai Hideaki's *10 fīto eiga sekai o mawaru* (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha, 1983).

5. See Hiroiwa, *"Hiroshima no kataribe,"* 141–52; Kawara and Yamada, *Hiroshima hana ichirin mongatari,* 186–88.

6. Michael Mahon explores Foucault's notion of "subjugated knowledge" in detail in *Foucault's Nietzschean Genealogy: Truth, Power, and the Subject* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), 120–21.

7. For detailed descriptions of atrocities committed on the Malaysian peninsula by the Japanese Imperial Army troops, see Takashima Nobuyoshi and Hayashi Hirofumi, eds., *Maraya no nihongun: Negurisenbiran-shū ni okeru kajin gyakusatsu* (Tokyo: Aoki Shoten, 1989). Takashima, a high school teacher, together with Hayashi, a college professor, have untiringly excavated archival documents regarding military operations in Malaysia and accumulated extensive interviews with survivors. They have also been instrumental in organizing conferences called "Ajia/Taiheiyō chiiki no sensō giseisha ni omoi o hase, kokoro ni kizamu shūkai," which began in 1986 after a series of nationalist statements and moves toward remilitarization by conservative political leader Nakasone Yasuhiro and his cabinet members. The conference is held at a number of major cities throughout Japan every summer and invites witnesses and survivors of Japanese colonial and military aggression from the Asia Pacific region. The meeting at which Numata met survivors of the Rape of Nanjing was one of the earliest of these conferences.

8. Numata Suzuko, lecture, 3 June 1989, at Heiwa Kaikan.

9. The concept of "narrative margin" is also deployed by Saul Friedlander to refer to the realm of the unspeakable within a given narrative—a gap, so to speak, that cautions us of the limits of realist representation. Friedlander, introduction to *Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the "Final Solution,"* ed. Saul Friedlander (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992), 1–21; see esp. 17.

10. Numata's lecture is transcribed in Zenkoku Dōwa Kyōiku Kenkyū Kyōgikai Jimukyoku, *Heiwa/jinken/minshushugi o motomete—dōwa kyōiku e no teigen IV: dai 41 kai zenkoku dōwa kyōiku kenkyū taikai tokubetsu bukai kōenshū* (Osaka: Zenkoku Dōwa Kyōiku Kenkyū Kyōgikai, 1990), 5–36; quotation, 11.

11. Ibid., 29.

12. Broadcast on Hiroshima Terebi, *Weekday Evening News,* 14 July 1990.

13. Kawara Hirokazu, *Kizuna: kōkōsei to Hiroshima* (Tokyo: Komichi Shobō, 1987), 17.

14. Unless otherwise indicated, quotes from Matsuda are from our meeting of 23 July 1990.

15. First published by the Ministry of Education in 1947 and reprinted by Minshu Kyōiku o Mamoru Shimane Kenmin Kaigi, *Atarashii kenpō no hanashi* (Matsue: Minshu Kyōiku o Mamoru Shimane Kenmin Kaigi, n.d.).

16. Ishihara Masaie has compiled a number of oral testimonies in order to reconstruct long-suppressed knowledge about the Okinawan civilians' victimization by the Japanese military. See, for instance, *Gyakusatsu no shima: kōgun to shinmin no matsuro* (Tokyo: Banseisha, 1978) and *Shōgen, Okinawasen: senjō no kōkei* (Tokyo: Aoki Shoten, 1991). See also Norma Field's discussion of how remembering the community's trauma has led to protests against the subordination of Okinawa to Japan in current politics; *In the Realm of a Dying Emperor* (New York: Vintage Books, 1991), 33–104. Tomiyama Ichirō offers an insightful analysis of Okinawan residents' mass suicides during the Battle of Okinawa by placing them in the broader context of Japanese nationalization policies toward Okinawans during the first half of the twentieth century. See his anthology, *Senjō no kioku* (Tokyo: Nihon Keizai Hyōronsha, 1995).

17. From Matsuda's privately compiled pamphlet, "Konnichiwa—iwasete, iwasete." This testimony was also published in Shin-nihon Fujin no Kai Hiroshima-ken Honbu, ed., *Konoha no yō ni yakare te* (1966; reprint, Tokyo: Shinnihon Shuppansha, 1985), 19.

18. The problematic effects of such universalist understanding of war victimization on the historical consciousness in postwar Japan has been discussed by journalist Honda Katsuichi. Some of his essays are translated in *The Impoverished Spirit in Contemporary Japan: Selected Essays of Honda Katsuichi,* ed. John Lie, trans. Eri Fujieda, Masayuki Hamazaki, and John Lie (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1993).

19. Excerpts from a collection of letters Matsuda received from his audiences and privately compiled: "Shūgaku ryokōsei wa kataru: migi ni katamuku Nihon—kako mitsume saguru mirai."

20. While I had a number of opportunities to learn of Yamazaki's ideas and attitudes toward storytellings, my most extensive interviews with him took place on 9 November 1990 at his house in Fuchū, and 4 August 1995 at the Peace Memorial Park.

21. This figure is accurate as of 6 August 1987. See Kosakai Yoshimitsu, *Hiroshima tokuhon* (1978; reprint, Hiroshima: Hiroshima Heiwa Bunka Sentā, 1988), 41. The destruction of the Tenjinmachi community and Yamazaki's relationship to its memorialization have been well publicized by the media; see, for instance, *Mainichi shinbun,* 5 August 1990; *Asahi shinbun,* 9 May 1994.

22. All the quotations from Saeki are taken from her storytelling on 7 August 1995 and a conversation I had with her thereafter.

23. For the origin of Tawara's pseudonym, see Hiroshima-shi, ed., *Hiroshima shinshi: shimin seikatsu hen* (Hiroshima: Hiroshima-shi, 1983), 418. The conversations with Tawara took place on 25 January, 29 January, 7 February, and 23 February 1990.

24. Though in a different context, James A. Fujii similarly points out that the twentieth-century notions of orality and storytelling cannot be dissociated from the modern experiences of fragmentation and alienation. Fujii, discussing the writings of an early-twentieth-century folklorist, Origuchi Shinobu, demonstrates how Origuchi's writing about performative communication, about the narrativity of the dead, and about storytellers attempted to produce "the intensity and reality of pure experience that has been lost of 'quotidian experience'—upon which the *kindai shōsetsu* [modern prose fiction] ostensibly rests."

See *Complicit Fictions: The Subject in the Modern Japanese Prose Narrative* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 222–56; quotation, 254.

25. Walter Benjamin, "N: [Re the Theory of Knowledge, Theory of Progress]," in *Benjamin: Philosophy, Aesthetics, History,* ed. Gary Smith, trans. Leigh Hafrey and Richard Sieburth (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 43–83; quotation, 61.

26. Fredric Jameson, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981), 296. Elsewhere, Jameson reiterates the doubleness of the task of critique: "[In aura] a mysterious wholeness of objects becomes visible. And where the broken fragments of allegory represented a thing-world of destructive forces in which human autonomy was drowned, the objects of aura represent perhaps the setting of a kind of utopia, a utopian present, . . . a kind of plenitude of existence in the world of things, if only for the briefest instant"; "Walter Benjamin; or, Nostalgia," in *Marxism and Form: Twentieth-Century Dialectical Theories of Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), 64. Following Jameson, Christopher Norris described the ambivalence of Benjamin—in whose writings both the allegorical view of the world and a trust in the "aura" of messianic power coexist—as "the tension . . . between a 'negative hermeneutic' which deconstructs the forms of ideological mystification, and a positive or 'utopian' impulse which keeps alive the image of human fulfillment"; see "Image and Parable: Readings of Walter Benjamin," in *The Deconstructive Turn: Essays in the Rhetoric of Philosophy* (New York: Methuen, 1984), 107–27; quotation, 119.

27. Kawara, *Kizuna,* 82–83.

28. Naoki Sakai, "Kyōkan no kyōdōtai to hinin sareta teikokushugiteki kokuminshugi: 'yukiyukite shingun' josetsu," *Gendai shisō* 23, no. 1 (January 1995): 117–32; quotations, 131.

29. The effect of uncritical and nondialectical identification does more than homogenize social relations within a "community of sympathy": to claim that one understands the others' thoughts and experiences is to preempt their territory. The dangers of such an identification can be illustrated by the meaning of "empathy" itself. While of course focusing on a very different situation, Jonathan Boyarin's analysis is quite useful here. In his pioneering work on the politics of Jewish memory, he has noted that within the Western convention of hermeneutics, the notion of "empathy" has an affinity with the concept of "empire." "Empathy," which posits the idea that "I am you," has been one of the philosophical foundations for the nineteenth-century colonial expansion over non-Western others. The hegemony of empathy that enabled imagining that "I" feel and think like "you" made possible an identification with and command over the spatial other in ethnology and over the temporal others of historicism. See Boyarin, *Storm from Paradise: The Politics of Jewish Memory* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), 86–89.

CHAPTER 5. ETHNIC AND COLONIAL MEMORIES

1. The figure is taken from a leaflet published by Zaikan Hibakusha o Kyūen suru Shimin no Kai, *Zaikan hibakusha no jittai* (Osaka: Zaikan Hibakusha o Kyūen suru Shimin no Kai, 1982), 18. Hiroshima-shi, ed., *Hiroshima shinshi: shimin seikatsu-hen* (Hiroshima: Hiroshima-shi, 1983), 284, indicates that among the approximately 20,000 Koreans who were victims of the Nagasaki bombing, 10,000 were killed. For testimonial accounts of the Korean survivors, see especially Pak Su-nam, *Chōsen/Hiroshima/panchoppari: watashi no tabi no kiroku* (Tokyo: Sanseido, 1973), and Hiroshima-ken Chōsenjin Hibakusha Kyōgikai, ed., *Shiroi chogori no hibakusha* (Tokyo: Rōdō Junpōsha, 1979). Among the journalists, Hiraoka Takashi, Hiroshima's current mayor, began to deal with the condition of survivors in Korea at a relatively early stage: see his *Henken to sabetsu: Hiroshima soshite Chōsenjin* (Tokyo: Miraisha, 1972) and *Muen no kaikyō: Hiroshima no koe, hibaku Chōsenjin no koe* (Tokyo: Kage Shobō, 1983). On the development of Japanese citizens' relief efforts for survivors in Korea, see Zaikan Hibakusha Mondai Shimin Kaigi, ed., *Zaikan hibakusha mondai o kangaeru* (Tokyo: Gaifūsha, 1988). Many of those who settled in Hiroshima were from Hyopch'ŏn, a village in southern Korea; they had immigrated to Japan and settled in Hiroshima at the turn of the century. Since most of those who left Hiroshima returned to their natal villages, the area has had the highest concentration of atomic bomb survivors in Korea; thus Hyopch'ŏn has become known as "the Hiroshima of Korea." See Kankoku no Genbaku Higaisha o Kyūen suru Shimin no Kai, ed., *Hiroshima e: Kankoku no hibakusha no shuki* (Hiroshima: Kankoku no Genbaku Higaisha o Kyūen suru Shimin no Kai, 1987). Also, for a critical assessment of how the governments of the United States, Japan, and South Korea have neglected Korean survivors both in Korea and Japan, see Michael Weiner, "The Representation of Absence and the Absence of Representation: Korean Victims of the Atomic Bomb," in *Japan's Minorities: The Illusion of Homogeneity,* ed. Michael Weiner (New York: Routledge, 1997), 79–107.

2. See, for instance, Hiroshima-ken Chōsenjin Hibakusha Kyōgikai, *Shiroi chogori no hibakusha.* For attempts to reconstruct the record concerning forced mobilization, see especially Pak Kyŏng-shik, *Chōsenjin kyōsei renkō no kiroku* (Tokyo: Miraisha, 1965), and Hayashi Eidai, *Kesareta Chōsenjin kyōsei renkō no kiroku* (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 1989). An example of local grassroots efforts in excavating historical evidence for forced Korean labor is Hyōgo Chōsen Kankei Kenkyūkai, ed., *Chika kōjō to Chōsenjin kyōsei renkō* (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 1990). Many of the victims and survivors were made to work at munitions industry factories, including Mitsubishi Shipbuilding Company and Tōyō Kōgyō. A *hibakusha* poet, Fukagawa Munetoshi, was one of the earliest to begin to focus on the relationship between Korean atom bomb victimization and forced labor mobilization. See his *Chinkon no kaikyō: kieta hibaku Chōsenjin chōyōkō nihyaku yonjū rokumei* (Tokyo: Gendaishi Shuppankai, 1973). For a personal memoir of an atom bomb survivor who was mobilized at Tōyō Kōgyō, see Chŏng Chun-he, *Chōsenjin chōyōkō no shuki,* trans. Inoshita Haruko (Tokyo: Kawai Shuppan, 1990).

3. See Kang Jae-ŏn and Kim Dong-hun, *Zainichi Kankoku/Chōsenjin: rekishi to tenbō* (Tokyo: Rōdō Keizaisha, 1989); Norma Field "Beyond Envy, Boredom, and Suffering: Toward an Emancipatory Politics for Resident Koreans and Other Japanese," *Positions* 1, no. 3 (winter 1993): 640–70; and